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The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2021

Round 2



Problem 2. Hawu and Dhaο (15 marks)

Hawu (with around 110,000 speakers in 5 dialects) and Dhaο (with around 5,000 speakers) are spoken on three islands in the southernmost province of Indonesia. Similarities between the vocabulary and phonology of Hawu and Dhaο led some writers to conclude that Dhaο is a dialect of Hawu. For example:



Hawu	Dhaο	English
ana telora	ana talora	middle child
bè'i	bhè'i	sleep, lie down
b'èhi	bèsi	iron, steel
do	dhu	relativizer 'which'
d'ida	dedha	above
d'ue	dua	two
hupa	subha	swear an oath
pedutu	madhutu	follow
pepuru	papuru	lower (something)
puru	puru	descend

Below are some sentences in Hawu and Dhaο in arbitrary order, together with their English translations. Each English translation corresponds to one sentence in Hawu and one sentence in Dhaο.

Hawu or Dhaο	English
1 Na èra titu-kèna	A. She is walking along the edge of the sea.
2 Pebèlo noo ri roo	B. They keep walking to Seba.
3 Ra kako taruu asa Sèba	C. They see her head.
4 Ladhe ama na bhèlu, baku nasa	D. They made her forget.
5 Ta nèru ke noo oro ngidi dahi	E. If her father forgets, don't be angry.
6 D'ai-tèra noo ne rui	F. She was incredibly strong.
7 Ra pabhèlu na	
8 Na kako madhutu sebhe dhasi	
9 Ki bèlo ama no, b'ole bubu	
10 Ta ngède ke ri roo ne kètu no	
11 Ta nèru ke roo teruu la Hèb'a	
12 Ra nèdhi kètu na	

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Q2.1. In your answer booklet, indicate for each sentence 1-12 whether it is in Hawu or in Dao and which English sentence A-F is its translation.

Q2.2. Complete the table in your answer booklet.

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Solution and marking.

Scoring: (max 51)

- 2.1: (max 36)
 - 1 point for each correct language (H or D). (max 12)
 - 2 points for each correct translation (A-F). (max 24)
- 2.2: 3 points for each correct English sentence. (max 15)
 - 2 points with one error (one wrong word or wrong syntactic role assignment)
 - 1 point with two such errors.
 - Accept
 - *will Verb* for *Verb*.
 - *him/he/his* for *her/she*
 - *father* for *the father* – but not *the father* for *her father*
 - *end* for *edge*
 - *come down* for *descends*

Q2.1.

#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
H/D	D	H	D	D	H	H	D	D	H	H	H	D
A-F	F	D	B	E	A	F	D	A	E	C	B	C

Q2.2.

Hawu or Dhaو	English
Ra pa'èra ama	They strengthened the father. or: They made the father strong.
Ki pedutu roo ri ama no, pedute noo ri roo	If her father follows (them), they (will) follow (her).
Pebèlu roo ri noo	She made them forget.
Ladhe na puru, na nèdhi sebhe	If she descends, she sees the edge.
B'ole bè'i	Don't sleep/lie down/be asleep.

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Commentary

First, let's learn a little more about Hawu and Dhaο history and culture. It's nice to get some broader context, and it also shows respect for the people who speak and who have historically spoken the languages presented in this problem.

Today the majority of Hawu people practise Protestant Christianity, but until the 1970s most of the Hawu people maintained their ancestral religion, Jingi Tiu, and traditional ways of life. In pre-colonial times, the Hawu people maintained six religio-political domains on the island of Hawu (Savu), including the domain of Seba (after which the modern-day Seba, mentioned in the problem, is named). Each domain had a Council of Priests (of Jingi Tiu). These domains were reorganized during and after the colonial era until a 2001 autonomy law, which the East Nusa Tenggara province used to create new districts that largely reflected the structure of the ancient domains. The Hawu people traditionally transmitted their knowledge orally in a number of ways, for example by naming places in remembrance of key events in Hawu history and naming people by the roles they played in society. The Hawu remember long genealogies over tens of generations that have links at certain stages to the various parts of Hawu island. They recognize two matrilineal lines descended from two sisters as well as patrilineal descent groups and lineages. These genealogies structure Hawu society and are recited during ritual performances; for example, at funerals the reciting of the departed's genealogy memorializes the connection of the departed to his or her ancestors.

Source: Duggan, G. (2009). The Genealogical Model of Savu, Eastern Indonesia. *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2, 163–177. LIPI / KITLV Press.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20120302193735/http://www.kitlv-journals.nl/index.php/jissh/article/viewFile/URN:NBN:NL:UI:10-1-100162/8444>

The Dhaο people say their language and culture is similar to that of Hawu island. They recount that the first settlers of their island were three people named Rika, Jote, and Pesa Kèli. Pesa Kèli came from the island of Hawu and brought the indigo plant, dhaο, from which Dhaο (Ndaο) island and the Dhaο people get their names. (The Hawu also tell a version of this history.) Traditionally, many Dhaο men practiced gold- and silversmithing, traveling around the region to sell their creations. Today, most Dhaο men have shifted away from smithing to fishing and local business activities. Women traditionally wove fabrics dyed with a technique known as ikat and are still productive in ikat weaving today. They leave their homes to sell their products, to seek orders for new weavings, or to collect debts from their customers. Thousands of jewels and ikats are produced each year and are traded with neighboring islands. The men tend to leave the island during the dry season to sell jewelry and other products of smithing and the ikat weaving products made by the women. In contrast to the Hawu, the Dhaο trace their descent only patrilineally.

Source: Balukh, J. I. (2020). *A grammar of Dhaο: An endangered Austronesian language in Eastern Indonesia*. <https://scholarlypublications.universiteitleiden.nl/access/item%3A2967898/view>

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Solution to the problem

Sound correspondences (identified using the table at the beginning):

Hawu	Dhao
a	a
n	n
t	t
e	a
l	l
o	o/u
r	r
b	bh
è	è
j'	j'
i	i (but e in dedha)
b'	b
h	s
d	dh
d'	d
u	u
p	p (but bh in subha, m in madhutu)

Using the differences between Hawu and Dhalo shown in the above table, we can figure out which sentences in (1-12) are in Hawu and which are in Dhalo. For example, s is a sound unique to Dhalo, so any sentence with an s will be in Dhalo. Then we can match the six sentences in Hawu and the six sentences in Dhalo to their translations and analyze the grammar.

Hawu grammar (simplified for this problem)

Dhalo grammar (simplified for this problem)

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word order: either Verb (Object) Subject (Prepositional Phrase) or V S (O) (PP)

- in this problem, pronoun objects were only used in VOS order

tense/aspect/mood:

- ta** V = non-past tense; otherwise the default interpretation is past tense
 - ke** in this problem always appears immediately following **ta** V
- V ... **teruu** = *keep* Ving, *continue to* V
- b'ole** V = *don't* V

verbs:

- verbs have specific forms that agree with the absolute-marked noun phrase in number
 - pebèlo** = absolute NP is singular; **pebèlu** = absolute NP is plural
 - pedute/pedutu**
 - nèru/nèru**
- pe-**V = *to cause to* V (so we call **pe-** a *causative prefix*)
 - this changes an intransitive verb to a transitive verb
 - so **hewina** = *remember*, **pehewina** = *remind* (not in UKLO problem)
 - Note:** In the problem, **pebèlo/pebèlu** was translated as *make to forget*, but in actual Hawu usage, this verb means something more like *forget on purpose*.

pronouns:

word order: S V (O) (PP) only

tense/aspect/mood:

- no visible tense-marking
- V ... **taruu** = *keep* Ving, *continue to* V
- baku** V = *don't* V

verbs:

- pa-**V = *to cause to* V
 - another example:
 - puru** = *descend*, **papuru** = *lower (something)*
 - èra** = *(to be) strong*, **pa'èra** = *strengthen*

pronouns:

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- **noo** = 3SG, *she* (or *he*) → **no** = *her* (or *his*)
- **roo** = 3PL, *they* → **ro** = *their*

Noun Phrases:

- **ne** marks the object of a transitive verb and the subject of an intransitive verb (this is called *absolutive case*), as well as the predicate of a copular construction (e.g. in **D'ai-tèra noo ne rui** 'She really is a strong one.')
 - **ne** cannot be used with pronouns, unlike **ri**
- **ri** marks the subject of a transitive verb (this is called *ergative case*)
- if there is a possessor, the order is Possessed Possessor
 - so **ngidi dahi**, lit. *edge sea* = *the edge of the sea*

Prepositional Phrases:

- the order is Preposition NounPhrase

Adverbs:

- **d'ai-tèra** goes to the left of what it modifies

- **na** = 3SG, *she* (or *he*), *her* (or *his*)
- **ra** = 3PL, *they*, *their*

Noun Phrases:

- no visible case-marking
- if there is a possessor, the order is Possessed Possessor
 - so **kètu na**, lit. *head 3SG* = *her head*

Prepositional Phrases:

- the order is Preposition NounPhrase

Adverbs:

- **titu-kèna** goes to the right of what it modifies

Note: in Dحاو, the word meaning *if* is **ladhe**, the same as the word **ladhe**, which also means *see*. This illustrates the process known as *syntactic change*. The word **ladhe** was probably originally just a verb, but speakers reinterpreted it to also mean *if* and to serve a different grammatical function.