

DEIXIS AND LOCATION

LETI

Questionnaire

1. Which language is this questionnaire on and where is it spoken?

The Leti language, spoken on the west-side of Leti Island in Southwest Maluku.

2. Are this language and its speech community indigenous to the region? If not, where do they originally come from?

Leti is indigenous to the region.

3. Describe the pronominal system of the language. Does it distinguish singular from plural (cq Leti does, but Maccassarese does not). Does it have separate forms for dualis or trialis? Does it display an exclusive-inclusive distinction (as in Malay kami-kita)? Are there separate deferential pronouns (as for example Malay Beliau). If not, does one of the pronouns have a deferential or honorific function (f.e. ita 'we inclusive' in Tetun for 'you'). Does it use special nouns as deferentials (f.e. Leti aanmu 'your child' instead of 'I', or Classical Malay hamba 'slave' instead of 'I'). Does it use lexical parallelism, for example for honorific address (see the section on parallelism in the questionnaire on oral traditions)? Does it have a special set of possessive pronouns relating to the categorisation of the possession noun (f.e. alienable nouns have a preposed pronoun, whereas inalienable nouns are suffixed; in some languages, f.e. Buli (North Maluku) and Selaru (SE Maluku), nouns referring to food have separate possessive pronouns).

GLOSS	full pronoun	proclitics	possessive enclitic	
		Subject	agreement	
1 sg	au/iau	a	u-	-ku
2 sg	oa	o	mu-	-mu
3 sg	ea	e	na-	-ne, -nu, -ni
1 inclusive pl	ita	i	ta-	-ne, -nu, -ni
1 exclusive pl	ami	a	ma-	-ne, -nu, -ni
2 pl	mia	mi	mi-	-mi
3 pl	ira	i	ra-	-ne, -nu, -ni

4. Is the language's deictic system related to the environment in which this language is spoken (coastal, mountainous, riverain)? Is the system maintained or modified when the language is spoken outside its indigenous location. Motion verbs in Ewaw on Kei (SE Maluku) require a directional indicating whether motion is seaward (=downward) or landward (upward). This is not encoded by Ewaw speakers in Zwolle (The Netherlands)

where the environment lacks sea and mountains. Meher speakers in The Netherlands rely on the deictic terms meaning ‘left’ and ‘right’. In the original setting on Kisar Island (SW Maluku) they prefer the seaside-land-side axis, using ‘left’ and ‘right’ exclusively for left-handedness and right-handedness, respectively.

On Leti Island, speakers are compelled to encode the direction of motion. On the west shores (where the Leti language is traditionally spoken), motion towards or away from the shore is encoded by the terms *liöra* (seaside) or *rīaa* (land-side), respectively:

- (1) N-tikli ba:le la liör-o/rīa-o.
 3sg-kick ball go seaside-IND/land-side-IND
 “He kicks the ball in the direction of the sea/land.”

Except for Tutuwaru, all villages are located on capes. The beach, which runs from the west-side to the east-side via the North is the major route for travel between the villages. The southern shores can only be travelled on horse-back and are seldomly used. Travelling is always encoded as either ‘Eastward’ or ‘Westward’ between the the villages of Nuwewang and Luhuleli, respectively in the extreme West and East. For example:

- (2) N-delö Tomra=po n-our=tipru l-la Vatumīa-o.
 3sg-from Tomra=then 3sg-travel=east 3sg-go Batumiau-IND
 “He travelled from Tomra (west-coast) to Batumiau (north-east coast).”

5. How many sets of deictic terms does the language have (1, 2, 3 or more?). Do they encode number and/or noun class? Are the deictic categories (person, spatial, temporal and ‘psychological’) encoded by separate sets (as in Leti), or are they combined (f.e. Tetun *ne’e* (East-Timor) indicates the referent’s proximity to the Speaker in space and time (discourse) and its being known to the Speaker).

Leti has three sets of three determiners as given in the following table.

Gloss	term	Gloss	Example: asu ‘dog’
Psychological	Sai	‘the one I know/like’	As~s~ü~ai
	So	‘the one I dislike’	As~s~ü~o
	Se	‘the one I do not know’	As~s~ü~e
Spatial (stress-bearing)	Dí	‘the one here’	As=dí
	Dó	‘the one not here’	As=dó
	Dé	‘the one over there’	As=dé
Temporal	Di	‘the one discussed now’	As=di
	Do	‘the one discussed once by us’	As=do
	De	‘the one discussed once by others’	As=de

6. If the deictic categories are encoded by means of separate sets, do they co-occur in stacks of separate morphemes (f.e. Leti *Kus-dó-di* ‘cat-there-discussed now’ versus *Kus-dó* and *Kus-di*.) Is this feature preserved when the speakers switch to local Malay (f.e. SW Malukan Malay *itu kucing ni nya* ‘that cat here once discussed’, see the questionnaire on language contact)?

In Leti, the psychological and spatial terms are complementarily distributed but can occur in combination as stacks with temporal deictics. The contrastive temporal term *do* only combines with the contrastive spatial term *dó*. In combinations of temporal deictics, *de* ‘discussed once by others’ cannot precede *di* ‘discussed now’. Extreme deictic stacking is attested in topicalised NPs. This feature is preserved in local Malay (Melayu Tenggara Jauh), although it appears to be more elaborate than in the indigenous language. The following table gives some examples.

		‘the dog ...’	Malay calque
Psychological + temporal	As~s~ü~ai di	‘I know discussed now’	Anjing ni ni
	As~s~ü~o di	‘I dislike discussed now’	Anjing tu ni
	As~s~ü~e di	‘I don’t know discussed now’	Anjing nya ni
Spatial + temporal	As=dí de	‘here discussed once by others’	Ini anjing nya
	As=dó de	‘not here discussed once by others’	-
	As=dé de	‘over there discussed once by others’	Itu anjing nya

Combinations of temporal deictic stacks occur in for example subject topics, where the first deictic locates the introduction of the referent in the discourse and the second locates the event in time with reference to the speech event:

Leti	Local Malay	GLOSS
As=di de n-to:ru.	Anjing ni nya gonggong.	‘The dog discussed now (once) barked.’
As=do de n-to:ru.	Anjing tu ni gonggong	‘The dog we discussed once barks now.’
As=de de n-to:ru	Anjing nya nya gonggong.	‘The dog once discussed by others barked.’

7. How is location encoded, by means of prepositions, postpositions or so-called ‘circumpositions’: prepositions and postnominal location nouns (as in Ewaw and Leti). What is the origin of the ‘spatial grams’? Some may be linked to body-parts (f.e. Leti *üò:ne* ‘its face’ = ‘in front’), others may not (f.e. Ewaw *ratan* ‘top’ = ‘on’ from the verb *rat* ‘to go up’).

Leti has one neutral preposition indicating location: *lo* ‘at’. For directions it uses the transitive allomorphs of *la:va* ‘to go’ for direction away from the Speech participants, of *ma:va* or ‘to come’ for direction towards the Speaker and of *ti:va* for direction towards the Hearer. Leti has a special ablative verb *delo*, which is a combination of *dena* ‘to stay (at)’ and the locative marker *lo*. The following tables provide the spatial grams of specified location plus their source.

gloss	term	Source
On1 (same level as Speaker)	Vavna	-
On2 (level above the Speaker)	Vuvnu	'skull'
Behind	Tukra	'back(bone)'
In front	Üòò-ne	'face' (obligatory possessive inflection)
Under, in	Na:ni	-
Below	Ĭawa	-
Up	Sianni	-
Beside	Seri	side
Inside	Rĭarma	inner side (plus archaic locative infix)
In between	Letvaru	-

8. What landmarks does the language prefer in its spatial expressions. In how far is it deictically anchored to the Speaker/Hearer? Does it also use landmarks in the environment, for example a mountain or a mountain ridge (Kedang, Lembata, NTT), rivers (Paulohi, Seram, Central Maluku).

In Leti, spatial expressions are never deictically anchored to the Speech participants. On land, speakers use the sea-land axis, as in example (1) above. On the beach and on the reef the Speaker uses the reef too as a landmark, as in example (3).

(3) N-va:lu vatu ma meti po ma:nu ra-mta:tu.
 3sg-throw stone come reef then bird 3pl-afraid

'He throws in the direction of the reef (where I stand) to frighten the birds.'

'Front' (üò:-ne) and 'back' (tukra) are linked to 'East' (Tipru) and 'West' (Varta), respectively. The front of the traditional Leti house (the main entrance) faces the East. Most islands in SW Maluku have a front-side facing the East. These landmarks are confined to islands belonging to the same Alliance (all islands except for Wetar, Damar and the islands East of Babar). Outside this region, the East-West axis = front-back axis is no longer used. In a noncoastal environment Letinese use the left-right axis, rather than seaward-land-ward

9. Does the language distinguish separate levels or dimensions (f.e. Leti uses vavna for the notion 'on' if the referent is on the same level with the Speaker, but uses vuvnu (actually meaning 'skull') if the referent is located above the Speaker)?

Leti uses vavna 'top' to signal that the referent is on the same level as the Speaker. Above the Speaker the notion on is indicated with 'skull' (thus: lo lianti vuvan=nu 'in the Heaven (lit. in the skull of the sky) but lo sère vavan 'on the beach').

10. Which cardinal directions (North, South etc.) exist in the language? How does it encode the direction if it does not exist in the lexicon (f.e. on Leti one says eastward or westward depending on one's position on the island; on Pura (NTT) the island of Alor to its east is 'up', whereas Ujungpandang (Sulawesi) is 'down'). Is it encoded in the language franca?

Leti has two main cardinal directions, East and West, respectively ‘tipru’ and ‘varta’. South has a separate lexeme: tranna. There is no word for ‘North’. On the north-coast ‘North’ is indicated by ‘seaward’ (lìòra); on the south-side of the island ‘land-ward’ (riāa) is used instead. In the lingua franca the Malay terms, also the one meaning ‘North’ is used.

10a. Are the cardinal directions linked to other axes? (f.e. In Leti (SW Maluku): East=front - West=back, Ewaw (SE Maluku): South=up - North=down, Paulohi (C. Maluku): towards Ambon (w-sw)=up, Buli (N. Maluku) towards Ternate (w-nw)=up.

Yes, see also 8.

11. Does the language have a deictic and/or an inherent reference frame? Is the front or back region of an object always determined with reference to a landmark in the environment (f.e. the eastside of a house on Leti is always perceived as the front) or with reference to the Speaker (f.e. the front of a tree in Dutch is the side the Speaker looks at). Do all or some objects have a front and back region of their own that is not related to the Speaker and/or an environmental landmark. Are there objects that lack a front or back region (f.e. speakers of Indonesian, but not necessarily speakers of Dutch, perceive the labelled side of a bottle as its frontside). For more details, see Levinson 1996.

On Leti, all objects have an intrinsic front region (and consequently too a back region), which is determined by an characteristic irregularity (the label of a bottle, a major dent in a barrel). However, on the island itself the ‘East-West’ axis is preferred over the object’s own front region.

On Leti	In Jakarta
Lo pòtle viel~v~ĩ~arta/viel-tipru At bottle side~west/side~east ‘West/east of the bottle’	Lo pòtle üò-ne/tukar-ne At bottle face-POS/back-POS ‘In front/behind the bottle’

12. How does the language encode direction in motion events: by means of serial verb constructions (f.e. Ewaw (SE Maluku): *Noit in lek watuk kokat* ‘The wind **blew away** (lit. blow throw) the rice), deverbial or denominal adverbs (f.e. Leti (SW Maluku): *N-vaul-seri vatu* ‘He **threw** (lit. throw-side) the stone aside’) or other devices (f.e. prepositions or postpositions)? Which axes must be encoded (f.e. on Pura (NTT) both seaward-landward and up-down seem obligatory: *qana hu met ma bakung da* ‘he lifted (lit. take come.on.same.level rise come.upward) his spoon’). Which axes are complementarily distributed (f.e. on the Leti coast seaward-landward is preferred over the East-West axis, whereas outside the island or on sea the latter is preferred).

Leti has deverbial or demoninal adverbs added to motion verbs as is shown in the following table.

Adverb		Source/ related lexeme	Example
Ala	‘towards’	-	l-lèr-ala ‘he goes toward’
È:ra	‘asunder’	Vaiè:ra ‘to tear’	n-rèi-è:ra ‘he pulls apart’
Etu	‘off, loose’	Ketu ‘to cut off’	l-lèr-etu ‘he goes across’
Ernu	‘down’	Kernu ‘to descend’	l-lèr-ernu ‘he goes downward’
Lòla	‘through, via’	Lòla ‘to pass’	n-dait-lòla ‘he passes alongside’
Li:ru	‘afterward’	Li:ru ‘back’	n-sòpal-li:ru ‘he sails in the rear’
Nosri	‘following’	Osri ‘to follow’	l-lèr-nosri ‘he goes after s.o.’
Pa:sa	‘through’	Pa:sa ‘to explode’	n-dait-pa:sa ‘he passes through’
Peli	‘away’	Vedi ‘to dismiss’	n-vaul-peli ‘he throws away’
Seri	‘aside’	Seri ‘side’	n-vaul-seri ‘he throws aside’
Taru	‘behind’	-	n-den-taru ‘he stays behind’
Ulu	‘ahead’	nñaulu ‘first’	n-sòpl-ulu ‘he sails in front’
Vutu	‘together’	Vutu ‘to bind’	ra-mtiètan-vutu ‘they sit together’

13. Are the deictic and locative expressions in the first language copied into the contact language? Is the ‘social’ or temporal deictic function of lexical parallelism, if any in the indigenous language, pursued maintained in the contact language?

Melayu Tenggara Jauh structures motion events as the in the indigenous languages, yielding serial verb constructions. These constructions seem in most cases to copy the constructions found in the indigenous languages, as is exemplified below:

(4) Leti: Mü-ele tpaku m~ü~a-o.
 2sg-give tobacco 2sg-come-IND
 Malay: Kasi tembakau datang.
 Give tobacco come

‘Give me tobacco.’