

Laihamek, or the Giant: A Folktale in Lole, a Language of Rote Island

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Lole is an Austronesian language spoken on Rote Island in eastern Indonesia. This article presents a Lole folktale titled “The story of Laihamek, or the Giant.” This narrative recounts the tale of a Giant, notorious for his oppression of the people, who is ultimately defeated by the very populace he tormented. The story features two prevalent motifs: the Giant’s wife aiding the slayer, and the enduring imprint of the Giant’s footprint on the landscape.

Keywords: Lole, Rote, eastern Indonesia, folktale

1. Introduction

2. Lole text: The story of Laihamek, or the Giant

1. Introduction

Lole is an Austronesian language spoken in the south-central region of Rote Island, Indonesia. It belongs to the Nuclear Rote subgroup, along with 12 other languages predominantly spoken in the eastern part of Rote Island (Edwards 2018). Fig. 1 shows the areas on Rote where Lole and the other languages are spoken. Lole remains a relatively understudied and under-documented language. One of the few studies conducted on this language includes Balukh et al. (2023), which outlines a sketch grammar and presents a Lole folktale.

Approximately 20,000 people speak Lole, primarily residing in eight official villages called *desa*, further subdivided into traditional villages, known as *nusak*. Some of these speakers are dispersed across Rote Island and Timor Island. In addition to Lole, most speakers are also proficient in Indonesian and Kupang Malay. There is a notable language shift from Lole to Kupang Malay, especially among the younger generations.

This article presents a popular Lole folktale, “The Story of Laihamek, or the Giant”. The narrator is the third author, a native speaker of Lole, who was born in 1970 in Noandale Village in the region. A synopsis of the story is as follows:

There once was a giant named Laihamek who was exceptionally tall, large, and powerful. His appetite was immense, and he had to step on stones to prevent his legs from sinking into the ground. Legend has it that he could reach the sky with his



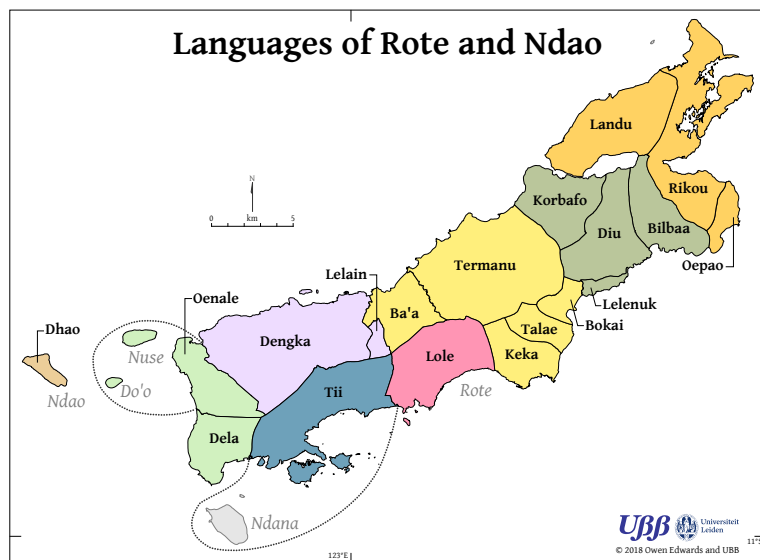


Fig. 1 Languages on Rote and Ndao Islands

hands. His immense strength incited fear among the people, and due to his frequent disregard for others, he often created chaos in the community. Laihamek possessed a magical power that came from a piece of reed leaf in his hair. One day, the villagers bribed his wife to help them vanquish him. As Laihamek slumbered deeply, the people removed the reed leaf from his hair. When he awoke, he was astonished to find his power gone. Even today, supposed imprints of his footsteps and his wooden stick can still be found on some stones in Rote.

This story is recognized widely among the Lole people. Serving as an example of Lole narrative, the text demonstrates language usage and cultural nuances. Given that Lole is a relatively understudied and under-documented language, the text will serve as important data, delivering linguistic and cultural insights into the Lole language and its speakers.

“Giant” is a prevalent character in folktales and legends across diverse cultures and languages. In the Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson (AT) classification for folktales, this type of story falls under the category titled either ‘the Ogre (Giant, Dragon, Devil, Kobold, etc.) is defeated’ or ‘Tales of the stupid Ogre’; the former is listed under the type numbers of AT 300–359, and the latter, AT 1000–1110 (Aarne and Thompson 1961: 88–128, 346–359).

While the plot of the Laihamek story largely fits into the ‘Defeated Ogre’ category above, it deviates from many motifs in this type by focusing on the giant, rather than the slayer. The populate, initially suffering from Laihamek’s arrogance and ultimately contributing to his downfall, is not individualized, instead consistently referred to as *hatoli* ‘people’, the reduced form of *hataholi* ‘people’, throughout the story. In this regard, the tale shares a common characteristic with the ‘Stupid Ogre’ type stories.

Another set of recurrent motifs identified in the story includes the Giant’s wife serving as a helper and the lasting imprint of the Giant’s footprint on the landscape. The former

is evident in tales like ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ (AT 328, Aarne and Thompson 1961: 119), wherein the Giant’s wife aids the protagonist. The latter motif, which is most heavily emphasized in the Lole story in this article, is also found in Japanese folklore. For instance, in the ‘Daidarabotchi’ tale, the Giant’s footprints are said to have created large lakes and ponds. A similar motif is also present in the story of Seediq, a Formosan language, where the footprint of the Giant persists as a plain in the mountains (Naomi Tsukida, p.c.).

2. Lole text: The story of Laihamek, or the Giant

This text is based on a recording made on March 29, 2017, at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Each sentence is formatted in five lines: (a) transcribed texts in Lole orthography; (b) the same texts transcribed with IPA symbols with morpheme boundaries delineated — If the surface form differs from the base form, the base form is shown in this line; (c) morpheme-by-morpheme glosses; (d) English translations; and (e) Indonesian translations. Any constituents produced by false starts are enclosed in angle brackets (< >) in (a) and are not reflected in the subsequent lines.

- (1) *au na'de¹ Elsijon Tine*
au naʔde Elsijon Thine
 1sg to.name Elsijon Thine
Eng: ‘My name is Elsijon Thine.’
Ind: ‘Nama saya Elsijon Thine.’
- (2) *au <n>eme nusa² Lote mai*
au ɸ-eme nusak Lote mai
 1sg 1sg.from island Rote to.come
Eng: ‘I am (lit. come) from Rote Island,’
Ind: ‘Saya berasal dari Pulau Rote,’
- (3) *Propensi entete Nusa Tenggara Timur*
propensi NTT Nusa Tenggara Timur
 province NTT island southeast east
Eng: ‘East Nusa Tenggara Province,’
Ind: ‘Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur.’

¹ As shown in Balukh et al. (2023: 129), the voiced stops /b/ and /d/ are normally preglottalized as [ʔb] and [ʔd] intervocalically, and the presence of the glottal stop does not constitute a phonemic distinction. However, the transcriptions employed in this article follow the orthography regulated by UBB GMIT (Unit Bahasa dan Budaya Gereja Masehi Injili Timor), an institute located in Kupang that promotes local languages and cultures. Accordingly, /b/ and /d/ are transcribed as 'b and 'd. This transcription convention represents a change from that employed in the text included in Balukh et al. (2023).

² In Lole, word final *k* drops when it precedes a modifier within a noun phrase, except when the modifier is a demonstrative or numeral.

- (4) *negara Indonesia mai*
 negara Indonesia mai
 country Indonesia to.come
Eng: 'Indonesia.'
Ind: 'Indonesia.'
- (5) *au du'a tui legenda Laihamek*
 au du?a tui legenda Laihamek
 1SG to.think to.tell legend PN
Eng: 'I am going to talk about the story of Laihamek.'
Ind: 'Saya ingin bercerita tentang legenda Laihamek.'
- (6) *neme tutui manai Lole*
 neme tu~tui mana-nai Lole
 3SG.from DUP~to.tell REL-3SG.LOC Lole
Eng: 'According to the story in Lole,'
Ind: 'Menurut cerita di Lole,'
- (7) *lasikala tui lae makahulun na*
 lasik=ala tui l-ae makahulun na
 old=PL to.tell 3PL-to.say earlier PART
Eng: 'the elders told that in the past,'
Ind: 'para tetua menceritakan bahwa dahulu kala,'
- (8) *touk esa na'de Laihamek*
 touk esa na?de Laihamek
 man one to.name PN
Eng: '(there was) a man named Laihamek.'
Ind: '(ada) seorang laki-laki bernama Laihamek.'
- (9) *hatoli ndia noo saon*
 hataholi ⁿdia n-oo sao=n
 person MED.SG 3SG-with spouse=3SG.GEN
Eng: 'The man (was) with his wife.'
Ind: 'Orang itu bersama istrinya.'
- (10) *esa ala leo leme Lote*
 esa ala leo l-eme Lote
 one 3PL to.stay 3PL-from Rote
Eng: 'They lived in Rote.'
Ind: 'Mereka tinggal di Rote.'

- (11) *boma neme Lote ndia na hatoli no'uk a faa so*
 boema neme Lote ⁿdia na hataholi noʔuk a faak so
 then 3SG.from Rote MED.SG PART person many PART little PART
Eng: 'At the time in Rote, quite many people already lived there.'
Ind: 'Di Rote waktu itu sudah ada banyak orang tinggal di sana.'
- (12) *na Laihamek ia hatoli ia aon fe'ek no basa*
 na Laihamek ia hataholi ia aok=n feʔek noo basa
 PART PN PROX person PROX body=3SG.GEN different 3SG.with all
hatoli manai Lotekala
hataholi mana-nai Lote-k=ala³
 person REL-3SG.LOC Rote-FC=PL
Eng: 'The man, Laihamek, had a different physique from all the people in Rote.'
Ind: 'Laihamek memiliki postur tubuh yang berbeda dengan semua orang di Rote.'
- (13) *hatoli ia ba'un seli, deman an seli*
 hataholi ia baʔuk=n seli demak=n ana seli
 person PROX size=3SG.GEN extraordinary height=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB extraordinary
Eng: 'The man was very big and tall.'
Ind: 'Orang ini sangat besar dan sangat tinggi.'
- (14) *ma hatoli selukala so na*
 ma hataholi seluk=ala so na
 and person other=PL PART PART
Eng: 'But (as for) other people,'
Ind: 'Sedangkan orang lain,'
- (15) *aon kadi'ik leo ita hatoli hatematak ia*
 aok=n kadiʔik leo ita hataholi hatematak ia
 body=3SG.GEN small be.like 1PL.INCL person now PROX
Eng: 'Their physique was small like us, the people living now.'
Ind: 'Tubuh mereka kecil seperti kita, manusia sekarang.'
- (16) *de Laihamek ia ana heka ka'da ndia balakain*
 de Laihamek ia ana heka kaʔda ⁿdia balakaik=n
 PART PN PROX 3SG.SUB to.depend.on only MED.SG strength=3SG.GEN
na
na
 PART

³ As partially mentioned in Balukh et al. (2023: 134), the morpheme *-k* appearing in word-final position exhibits various morpho-syntactic functions that cannot be fully investigated at this stage of our study. For that reason, we simply use the label 'final consonant (FC),' which only indicates its position in the word.

Eng: 'Since Laihamek relied heavily on his own strength,'

Ind: 'Karena Laihamek mengandalkan kekuatannya,'

- (17) *de nesik bee na na'a na nau ka'da no'uk a*
de n-esik bee na n-aʔa na nau kaʔda noʔuk a
 PART 3SG-PERL where PART 3SG-to.eat PART to.want only many PART

Eng: 'Wherever he was, he wanted to eat much.'

Ind: 'Sehingga di mana saja dia ingin makan yang banyak'

- (18) *nafo ka'da aon malasik de leo ndiak*
nafo kaʔda aok=n malasik de leo ⁿdia-k
 maybe only body=3SG.GEN big PART be.like MED.SG-FC

Eng: 'Perhaps because of his big physique, he was like that.'

Ind: 'Mungkin karena tubuhnya besar sehingga demikian.'

- (19) *boema hatoli ndia*
boema hataholi ⁿdia
 then person MED.SG

Eng: 'Then the man,'

Ind: 'Kemudian orang itu,'

- (20) *heka ka'da balkain de nisik bee na taa nau*
heka kaʔda balakaik=n de n-isik bee na taa nau
 to.depend.on only strength=3SG.GEN PART 3SG-PERL where PART NEG to.want
niminene hatoli
ni-mi-nene hataholi
 3SG-VD-to.hear person

Eng: 'due to his strength, wherever he was, he never respected people.'

Ind: 'karena mengandalkan kekuatannya sehingga di manapun dia tidak menghargai orang lain.'

- (21) *an tao ka'da nggilo-nggaok ma tao ka'da kaco*
ana tao kaʔda ŋgilo-ŋgaok ma tao kaʔda kaco
 3SG.SUB to.make only chaos and to.make only chaos

Eng: 'He just made incessant chaos.'

Ind: 'Dia biasanya membuat kekacauan.'

- (22) *de hatolila biin*
de hataholi=la bii=n
 PART person=PL be.afraid=3SG.OBJ

Eng: 'So people were afraid of him.'

Ind: 'Sehingga orang takut kepadanya.'

- (23) *te hatoli aon malasik a de*
 te hataholi aok=n malasik a de
 but person body=3SG.GEN big PART PART
Eng: ‘Because the man has a big physique,’
Ind: ‘Karena orang itu badannya besar,’
- (24) *nesik be so na su'di an tao hiihin*
 n-esik be so na su?dik ana tao hi~hii=n
 3SG-PERL where PART PART whatever 3SG.SUB to.make DUP~to.like=3SG.GEN
o ndia dudu'an
 o ⁿdia du~du?a=n
 PART MED.SG DUP~to.think=3SG.GEN
Eng: ‘wherever he went, he did as he liked (lit. what he wished).’
Ind: ‘di manapun dia berlaku sesuka hati.’
- (25) *de ndia dede'ak ndia nakandoo basa faik*
 de ⁿdia dede?ak ⁿdia na-ka-ndoo basa faik
 PART MED.SG issue MED.SG 3SG-VD-to.continue all day
Eng: ‘So the issue continued every day.’
Ind: ‘Sehingga hal itu berlangsung terus setiap hari.’
- (26) *de hatoli manai Lotela ia*
 de hataholi mana-nai Lote=la ia
 PART person REL-3SG.LOC Rote=PL PROX
Eng: ‘So people on Rote’
Ind: ‘Sehingga orang di Rote’
- (27) *luma ala lulin*
 lumak ala luli=n
 a.few to.get be.mad=3SG.OBJ
Eng: ‘Some people got irritated with him.’
Ind: ‘Ada yang marah kepadanya.’
- (28) *ma ta la hiisana*
 ma taa ala hii=sana
 and NEG 3PL like=3SG.OBJ.NEG
Eng: ‘And they did not like him.’
Ind: ‘Lalu tidak menyukainya.’
- (29) *de faik esa boema ala du'a ke'din*
 de faik esa boema ala du?a ke?di=n
 PART day one then 3PL to.think to.trick=3SG.OBJ
Eng: ‘So one day they planned to trick him.’
Ind: ‘Sehingga suatu hari mereka ingin menipunya.’

- (30) *al ke'di Laihamek ia fo suek e al du'a*
 ala ke?di Laihamek ia fo suek e ala du?a
 3PL.SUB to.trick PN PROX so.that so.that EXCLA 3PL.SUB to.think
tao lisan
 tao l-isa=n
 to.make 3PL-to.kill=3SG.OBJ

Eng: 'They wanted to trick him in order to kill him.'

Ind: 'Mereka ingin menipunya supaya bisa membunuhnya.'

- (31) *al taon tungga dalak sudik⁴ bek boeo*
 ala tao=n tungga dalak sudik bek boeo
 3PL.SUB make=3SG.OBJ to.follow road whatever what also

Eng: 'Whatever way they did,'

Ind: 'Apapun cara yang mereka lakukan,'

- (32) *al tao doakana*
 ala tao doak=ana
 3PL.SUB to.make unable=3SG.OBJ

Eng: 'they never succeeded.'

Ind: 'mereka tidak berhasil.'

- (33) *de al dudu'a doak hatoli ia*
 de ala du~du?a doak hataholi ia
 PART 3PL.SUB DUP~to.think unable person PROX

Eng: 'So they did not understand the man.'

Ind: 'Sehingga mereka tidak tahu bagaimana orang ini.'

- (34) *ndia balkain nai be?*
ⁿdia balakaik=n nai be
 MED.SG strength=3SG.GEN 3SG.LOC where

Eng: 'Where does his strength exist?'

Ind: 'Kekuatannya di mana?'

- (35) *na hatoli ia ka'da be'in seli*
 na hataholi ia ka?da be?ik=n seli
 PART person PROX only strength=3SG.GEN extraordinary

Eng: 'As the man was so strong,'

Ind: 'Orang ini, karena kekuatannya,'

⁴ *sudik* is an allomorph of the term *sudi*, which also translates as 'whatever', as demonstrated in Sentence (24). The variants *sudi* and *sudik* can be used interchangeably.

- (36) *ma ba'un an seli de*
 ma baʔuk=n ana seli de
 and size=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB extraordinary PART
Eng: 'and he was so big,'
Ind: 'dan badannya besar,'
- (37) *ana la'ok boeo musi an sangga batu*
 ana laʔok boeo musi ana sangga batu
 3SG.SUB to.walk also must 3SG.SUB to.search stone
Eng: 'whenever he walked he should find stones,'
Ind: 'Dia berjalanpun dia harus mencari batu,'
- (38) *fo ana heta te ta na bisa heta neu dae*
 fo ana heta te taa ana bisa heta ne-u dae
 so.that 3SG.SUB to.step.on but NEG 3SG.SUB can to.step.on 3SG-to.go ground
Eng: 'because, in order to step on (walk), he could not step on the ground.'
Ind: 'karena, untuk dia menginjakkan kakinya, tidak bisa menginjak di tanah.'
- (39) *apalagi oe do lee dale na*
 apalagi oe do lee dalek na
 moreover water or river inside PART
Eng: 'Moreover water or in the river,'
Ind: 'Apalagi di air atau di sungai,'
- (40) *taa an bisa heta nai ndia*
 taa ana bisa heta nai ⁿdia
 NEG 3SG.SUB can to.step.on 3SG.LOC MED.SG
Eng: 'he could not step on that.'
Ind: 'dia tidak bisa menginjakkan kakinya di situ.'
- (41) *te an hetan neu dae*
 te ana heta=n ne-u dae
 but 3SG.SUB to.step.on=3SG.OBJ 3SG-to.go beneath
Eng: 'Because when he stepped on the riverbed,'
Ind: 'Jika dia menginjakkan kaki di tanah,'
- (42) *berati an fofo basa aon an tena*
 berarti ana fofo basa aok=n ana tena
 to.mean 3SG.SUB to.step.into all body=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB to.sink
Eng: '(That means) he might be drowned.'
Ind: 'Maka dia bisa tenggelam.'

- (43) *de an sangga batu fo musi an heta*
de ana sangga batu fo musi ana heta
 PART 3SG.SUB to.search stone so.that must 3SG.SUB to.step.on

Eng: 'So he should find stones to step on.'

Ind: 'Sehingga dia mencari batu supaya menginjakkan kakinya.'

- (44) *de hatoli a ka'da balkain ma belan an*
de hataholi a ka?da balakaik=n ma belak=n ana
 PART person PART only strength=3SG.GEN and weight=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB

seli

seli

extraordinary

Eng: 'Since the man was so strong and too heavy,'

Ind: 'Karena orang ini punya kekuatan dan badannya berat.'

- (45) *boma ba'un an seli*
boema ba?uk=n ana seli
 then size=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB extraordinary

Eng: 'and he was so big,'

Ind: 'dan badannya besar,'

- (46) *de makahulun na lae lalai ia kaba'ok*
de makahulun na la-e lalai ia kaba?ok
 PART earlier PART 3PL-to.say sky PROX low

Eng: 'in the past, it was said that the sky was still low,'

Ind: 'dahulu kala, katanya langit masih rendah,'

- (47) *tehuu an bisa*
tehuu ana bisa
 but 3SG.SUB can

Eng: 'but he could.'

Ind: 'tapi dia bisa.'

- (48) *a... tumbu liman an lain neu de lalai*
a tu^mbu limak=n ana lain ne-u de lalai
 EXCLA to.push hand=3SG.GEN 3SG.SUB above 3SG-to.go PART sky

nimdema

ni-mi-dema

3SG-VD-height

Eng: '(Laihamek) pushed the sky with his hands so the sky became higher.'

Ind: 'Dia menopang tangannya ke atas sehingga langit bertambah tinggi.'

- (49) *tehuu ndia aon so na mabela nahele de*
 tehuu ⁿdia aok=n so na mabela na-hele de
 but 3SG body=3SG.GEN PART PART heavy 3SG-to.keep PART

Eng: ‘But his body was still too heavy.’

Ind: ‘Tapi badannya tetap berat.’

- (50) *an la’ok nesik be na an hetan neu*
 ana laʔok n-esik be na ana heta=n ne-u
 3SG.SUB to.walk 3SG-PERL where PART 3SG.SUB to.step.on=3SG.OBJ 3SG-to.go
batu dei
 batu dei
 stone EXCLA

Eng: ‘Whenever he went, he should step on stones.’

Ind: ‘Ke manapun dia pergi dia harus menginjakkan kaki pada batu.’

- (51) *boema ka’da nggilo-nggaun ia de*
 boema kaʔda nggilo-nggauk=n⁵ ia de
 then only chaos=3SG.GEN PROX PART

Eng: ‘And because of his doing chaos.’

Ind: ‘Lalu karena ulahnya yang membuat kekacauan.’

- (52) *<a> hatoli daebafok al du’a ke’din fo al*
 hataholi daebafok ala duʔa keʔdi=n fo ala
 person earth 3PL.SUB to.think to.trick=3SG.OBJ so.that 3PL.SUB
tao lisan
 tao l-isa=n
 to.make 3PL-to.kill=3SG.OBJ

Eng: ‘People on the earth would like to trick him in order to kill him.’

Ind: ‘Orang di bumi ingin menipunya supaya bisa membunuhnya.’

- (53) *de uni faik esa boema*
 de uni faik esa boema
 PART it.is.said day one then

Eng: ‘So it was said that one day,’

Ind: ‘Jadi katanya suatu hari,’

- (54) *hatolila melu-makale’en de latane saon*
 hatoli=la melu-makaleʔe=n de l-atane sao=n
 person=PL to.hate=3SG.OBJ PART 3PL-to.ask spouse=3SG.GEN

Eng: ‘People were irritated, so they went to ask his wife.’

Ind: ‘Orang sangat jengkel sehingga mereka bertanya pada istrinya.’

⁵ This form is an allomorph of *nggilo-nggaok* in Sentence (21). The two forms are interchangeable. Here, a word-final *k* is elided in the presence of following pronominal clitics.

- (55) *nana o saon ia*
 nana o sao=n ia
 as 2SG spouse=3SG.GEN PROX
Eng: '(They asked her), "Your husband,"'
Ind: '"Karena suamimu ini,"'
- (56) *balkain seli ndia de neuko*
 balakain seli ndia de neuko
 strong extraordinary MED.SG PART must.be
Eng: '(Laihamek) is very strong, so perhaps,'
Ind: 'Sangat kuat, jadi mungkin,'
- (57) *hatoli ia kaakidok do an pake hata?*
 hataholi ia ka-akidook do ana pake hata
 person PROX PROP-medicine or 3SG.SUB to.use what
Eng: 'he used some magic things or what?'"'
Ind: 'Orang ini menggunakan tenaga magis atau apa?'"'
- (58) *boma saon makasososan na ta nau nifa'da*
 boema sao=n maka-sososan na taa nau ni-fa?da
 then spouse=3SG.GEN STAT-first PART NEG to.want 3SG-to.say
Eng: 'At first, his wife did not want to tell anything.'
Ind: 'Awalnya istrinya tidak mau memberitahu.'
- (59) *de lae taa, o mafa'da leo fo*
 de 1-ae taa o m-afa?da leo fo
 PART 3PL-to.say NEG 2SG 2SG-to.tell please so.that
Eng: 'But people said, "no, just tell us,"'
Ind: 'Tapi mereka bilang, "tidak, tolong beritahu,"'
- (60) *ai du'a fee o doik*
 ai du?a fee o doik
 1PL.EXCL to.think to.give PART money
Eng: 'We want to give you some money.'"
Ind: 'Kami akan memberikan kamu uang.'"
- (61) *de al se'ba baen fen doik*
 de ala se?ba bae=n fee=n doik
 PART 3PL.SUB to.hire to.pay=3SG.OBJ to.give=3SG.OBJ money
Eng: 'So they paid her some money.'
Ind: 'Sehingga mereka membayarnya sejumlah uang.'

- (62) *taa bubuluk desi bee*
 taa bubuluk desi bee
 NEG to.know how.many where
Eng: ‘No one knows how much.’
Ind: ‘Tidak tahu berapa banyak uang.’
- (63) *de faik esa boema al fe inak ia doik*
 de faik esa boema ala fe inak ia doik
 PART day one then 3PL.SUB to.give woman PROX money
Eng: ‘So one day they gave the woman (Laihamek’s wife) some money.’
Ind: ‘Jadi suatu hari mereka memberikan perempuan ini (istri Laihamek) uang.’
- (64) *de inak e nifa’da*
 de inak e ni-fa?da
 PART woman EXCLA 3SG-to.say
Eng: ‘So the woman told,’
Ind: ‘Sehingga perempuan ini memberitahukan’
- (65) <lai> *Laihamek e balkain*
 Laihamek e balakaik=n
 PN EXCLA strength=3SG.GEN
Eng: ‘“Laihamek’s power,’
Ind: ‘“Kekuatan dari Laihamek,’
- (66) *de balkain nai langga doon*
 de balakaik=n nai langga dook=n
 PART strength=3SG.GEN 3SG.LOC head leaf=3SG.GEN
Eng: ‘his power was in his hair.’
Ind: ‘kekuatannya terletak pada rambutnya.’
- (67) *fo langga doon nai ndia mu meten te*
 fo langga dook=n nai ndia m-u mete=n te
 so.that head leaf=3SG.GEN 3SG.LOC MED.SG 2SG-to.go to.see=3SG.OBJ PART
hambu fii esa nai ndia
hambu fii esa nai ndia
 to.exist reed one 3SG.LOC MED.SG
Eng: ‘In his hair, you would see that there is a piece of reed there.’’
Ind: ‘Di rambutnya, jika dilihat, maka ada alang-alang di situ.’’
- (68) *boema faik esa boema*
 boema faik esa boema
 then day one then
Eng: ‘Then one day’
Ind: ‘Jadi suatu hari’

- (69) <al te> *al* *ke'di* *Laihamek* *an* *sunggu* *boema*
 ala *ke?di* *Laihamek* *ana* *sunggu* *boema*
 3PL.SUB to.trick PN 3SG.SUB to.sleep then

Eng: 'They waited until Laihamek slept.'

Ind: 'Mereka menunggu Laihamek tertidur.'

- (70) *hatoli* *manadu'a* *kedik,* *Laihamek* *ia*
hataholi *mana-du?a* *kedi-k* *Laihamek* *ia*
 person REL-to.think to.trick-FC PN PROX

Eng: 'The people who wanted to trick Laihamek.'

Ind: 'Orang yang ingin menipu Laihamek ini.'

- (71) *ala* *fee* *doik* *neu* *saon* *boema*
ala *fee* *doik* *ne-u* *sao=n* *boema*
 to.get to.give money 3SG-to.go spouse=3SG.GEN then

Eng: 'who gave the money to his wife.'

Ind: 'yang memberikan uang pada istrinya.'

- (72) *leu* *meten* *te* *an* *sunggu*
l-eu *mete=n* *te* *ana* *sunggu*
 3PL-to.go to.see=3SG.OBJ but 3SG.SUB to.sleep

Eng: 'when they looked at him, he was sleeping.'

Ind: 'mereka melihat dia tertidur.'

- (73) *an* *sunggu* *boema*
ana *sunggu* *boema*
 3SG.SUB to.sleep then

Eng: 'When he was sleeping.'

Ind: 'Dia tidur lalu.'

- (74) *ala* *sangga* *langga* *doon* *fo* *lae* *fii* *fo*
ala *sangga* *langga* *dook=n* *fo* *l-ae* *fii* *fo*
 to.get to.search head leaf=3SG.GEN so.that 3PL-to.say reed so.that

Eng: 'they looked for the piece of reed in his hair.'

Ind: 'mereka mencari rambutnya yang katanya ada alang-alang.'

- (75) *an* *tao* *Laihamek* *balkain* *a*
ana *tao* *Laihamek* *balakaik=n* *a*
 3SG.SUB to.make PN strength=3SG.GEN PART

Eng: 'which made Laihamek so strong.'

Ind: 'yang membuat Laihamek kuat.'

- (76) *de al fe'a heni fi boema*
de ala fe?a heni fii boema
 PART 3PL.SUB to.pull.out away reed then

Eng: 'So they pull out the piece of reed,'

Ind: 'Lalu mereka mencabut alang-alang,'

- (77) *Laihamek e nggenggek an fo'a*
Laihamek e ggenge-k ana fo?a
 PN EXCLA surprised-FC 3SG.SUB to.get.up

Eng: 'then Laihamek suddenly was awake.'

Ind: 'lalu, tiba-tiba Laihamek terbangun.'

- (78) *te an fo'a tehuu balkain taa leo laan so*
te ana fo?a tehuu balakaik=n taa leo laak=n so
 but 3SG.SUB to.get.up but strength=3SG.GEN NEG be.like old=3SG.GEN PART

Eng: 'When he got up, his power was not the same anymore.'

Ind: 'Saat dia bangun, kekuatannya tidak seperti dulu lagi.'

- (79) *de neme ndia mai boema nimhe'di losak maten*
de neme ndia mai boema ni-mi-he?di losa-k mate=n
 PART 3SG.from MED.SG to.come then 3SG-VD-sick to.arrive-FC to.die=3SG.OBJ

Eng: 'From that point on, he fell ill and eventually died,'

Ind: 'Sejak itu, dia sakit hingga mati,'

- (80) *te balkain taa so*
te balakaik=n taa so
 but strength=3SG.GEN NEG PART

Eng: 'because he lost his power.'

Ind: 'karena kekuatannya tidak ada lagi.'

- (81) *boma Laihamek ia na*
boema Laihamek ia na
 then PN PROX PART

Eng: 'Then Laihamek,'

Ind: 'Lalu Laihamek ini,'

- (82) *fo hatoli lae an heta neu be na*
fo hataholi l-ae ana heta n-eu be na
 so.that person 3PL-to.say 3SG.SUB to.step.on 3SG-to.go where PART

Eng: 'as people said whenever he stepped on,'

Ind: 'kata orang, di manapun dia menginjak,'

- (83) *bolok bolok mesan ia*
 bolok bolok mesan ia
 hole hole all.around PROX

Eng: ‘many holes created.’

Ind: ‘pasti berlubang.’

- (84) *fo ndia batu hehetan losa hatematak ia*
 fo ndia batu he~heta=n losa hatematak ia
 so.that MED.SG stone DUP~to.step.on=3SG.OBJ until now PROX

Eng: ‘Until now the stones where he stepped on,’

Ind: ‘Batu-batu tempat dia menginjakkan kaki, hingga sekarang,’

- (85) *bei nanitak nai nusa Lote*
 bei nana-nita-k nai nusak Lote
 still PASS⁶-to.see-FC 3SG.LOC island Rote

Eng: ‘(the stones) still exists in Rote,’

Ind: ‘masih terlihat di Pulau Rote,’

- (86) *fo lae Laihamek ein*
 fo l-ae Laihamek eik=n
 so.that 3PL-to.say PN foot=3SG.GEN

Eng: ‘and it is said, Laihamek’s footstep.’

Ind: ‘katanya itu adalah bekas kaki Laihamek.’

- (87) *boma katete’e aik⁷*
 boema ka-te~te?e ai-k
 then PROP-DUP~to.bow.down wood-FC

Eng: ‘And he had a stick.’

Ind: ‘Lalu dia memiliki tongkat.’

- (88) *fo ndia bekas tete’e ain boeo*
 fo ndia bekas te~te?e ai=n boeo
 so.that MED.SG mark DUP~to.bow.down wood=3SG.GEN also

Eng: ‘So also the traces of his stick,’

Ind: ‘Jadi bekas tongkatnya pun,’

⁶ In Balukh et al. (2023: 132), the prefix *nana-* is described as ‘anti-causative.’ However, this form also functions to derive a passive verb when it is affixed to a transitive verb. Describing a unified function underlying these two usages is our future task.

⁷ The compound *tete’e aik*, which translates literally to ‘bowing down wood,’ denotes a ‘walking cane.’ The term presumably derives from the tendency of elderly people, who are the typical users of walking canes, to have a stooped posture due to their age.

- (89) *nananitak de bei nai Lote bobolon bei nahele*
 nana-nita-k de bei nai Lote bo~bolok=n bei na-hele
 PASS-to.see-FC PART still 3SG.LOC Rote DUP~hole=3SG.GEN still 3SG-to.keep

Eng: 'the holes of it (stick) still exist.'

Ind: 'masih terlihat bekas lubang di sana.'

- (90) *ma kabusak*
 ma ka-busa-k
 and PROP-dog-FC

Eng: 'And (Laihamek) had dogs.'

Ind: 'Dan dia memiliki anjing.'

- (91) *fo busala ei lelen boeo*
 fo busa=la eik lelek=n boeo
 so.that dog=PL foot line=3SG.GEN also

Eng: 'So the footstep of the dog also,'

Ind: 'Bekas kaki anjing pun,'

- (92) *bei nai batula lain nai nusak Lote*
 bei nai batu=la lain nai nusak Lote
 still 3SG.LOC stone=PL above 3SG.LOC island Rote

Eng: 'still exist on the stones in Rote.'

Ind: 'masih ada pada batu di Pulau Rote.'

- (93) *nai hamper tiap nusak na Laihamek ei lelen*
 nai hamper tiap nusak na Laihamek eik lelek=n
 3SG.LOC almost every island PART PN foot line=3SG.GEN

Eng: 'Almost in every region in Rote Laihamek's footstep is there.'

Ind: 'Hampir di setiap wilayah terdapat bekas kaki Laihamek.'

- (94) *tete'e ai bolon bei nai ndia*
 te~te?e ai bolok=n bei nai ndia
 DUP~to.bow.down wood hole=3SG.GEN still 3SG.LOC MED.SG

Eng: 'The mark of his stick is still there.'

Ind: 'Bekas tongkat masih di sana.'

- (95) *makasi no'uk au tui ka'da ndia*
 makasi no?uk au tui ka?da ndia
 thanks many 1SG to.tell only MED.SG

Eng: 'Thank you very much, that is all the story from me.'

Ind: 'Terima kasih banyak, itulah cerita dari saya.'

- (96) *legenda Laihamek nai nusa Lote*
legenda Laihamek nai nusak Lote
legend PN 3SG.LOC island Rote
Eng: 'The story of Laihamek in Rote Island.'
Ind: 'Legenda tentang Laihamek di Pulau Rote.'

- (97) *makasi no'uk*
makasi no?uk
thanks many
Eng: 'Thank you very much.'
Ind: 'Terima kasih banyak.'

Symbols and Abbreviations

-	affix / root boundary	OBJ	objective
=	clitic boundary	PART	particle
1	first person	PASS	passive
2	second person	PERL	perlative
3	third person	PL	plural
DUP	duplication	PN	person name
EXCL	exclusive	PROP	propriative
EXCLA	exclamation	PROX	proximal
FC	final consonants	REL	relative
GEN	genitive	SG	singular
INCL	inclusive	STAT	stative
LOC	locative	SUB	subjective
MED	medial	VD	verb-deriving prefix
NEG	negative		

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