

Creole genesis and extreme analyticity in Flores languages

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Abstract

The languages of central Flores such as Rongga, Ngadha and Keo are typically at the extreme end of the isolating scale. However, other languages of western and eastern Flores such as Manggarai and Lamaholot, while showing certain bound forms (mainly clitics) are still classifiable as highly analytic. Based on my current research on Flores languages, particularly Rongga, I will examine characteristics of extreme analyticity in these languages and explore the question of Creole genesis in the formation of such extreme analyticity. I will discuss the role of contact situations, the disappearance, absence, and simplification of certain coding resources and the related emergence or presence of complexification (or grammaticalisation) of structures within grammars of these languages. I argue that, while there were undoubtedly widespread contacts in the region (Flores and neighbouring islands), there is evidence that Rongga does not seem to be historically a mixed or creole-type of language.