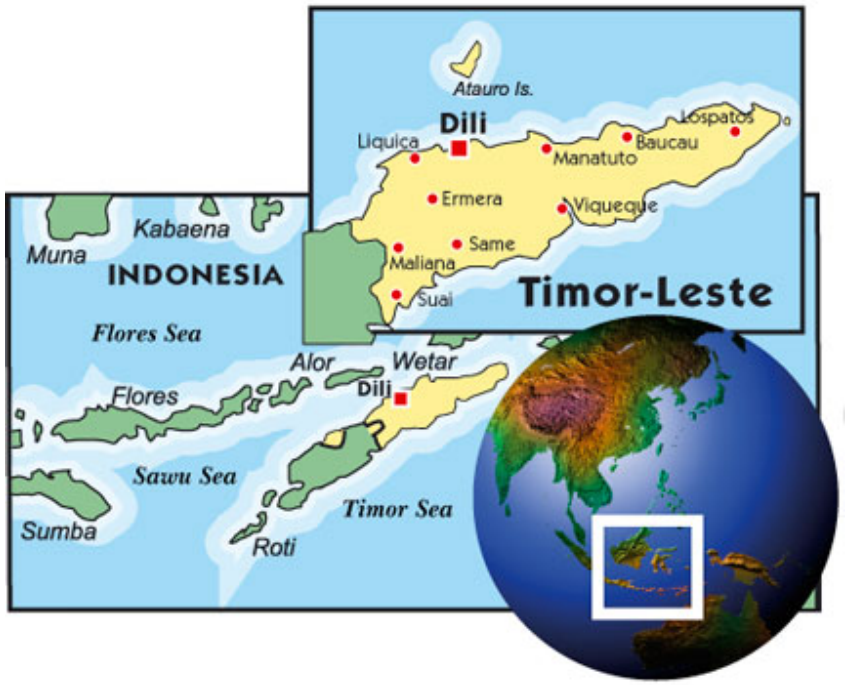

Attitudes Toward Tetun Dili

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Background: Tetun Dili

- Tetun Terik > Tetun Dili > Tetun 'Ofisial'
- Little formal linguistic documentation
  - Some early grammars of TD, dictionaries for TD and TO
- Mostly training materials for volunteers
  - Informal, self-taught
- No dedicated sociolinguistic work
- Varied descriptions in literature

Research Questions

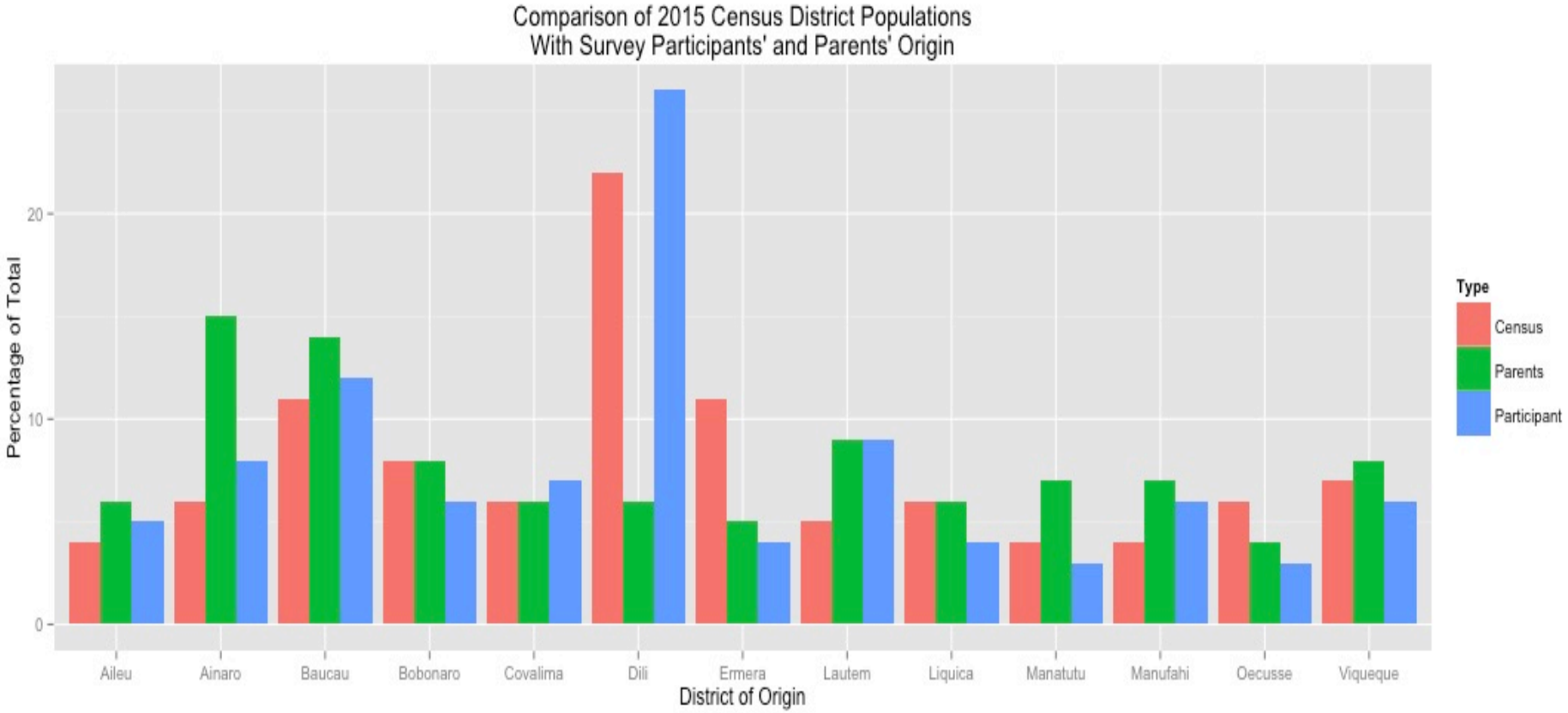
- 1. What are the most common attitudes about Tetun Dili among various groups?
- 2. Where do these attitudes come from and how do they differ?
- 3. How can these attitudes be described?
- 4. How can these attitudes be situatied within the larger context of language ideologies?

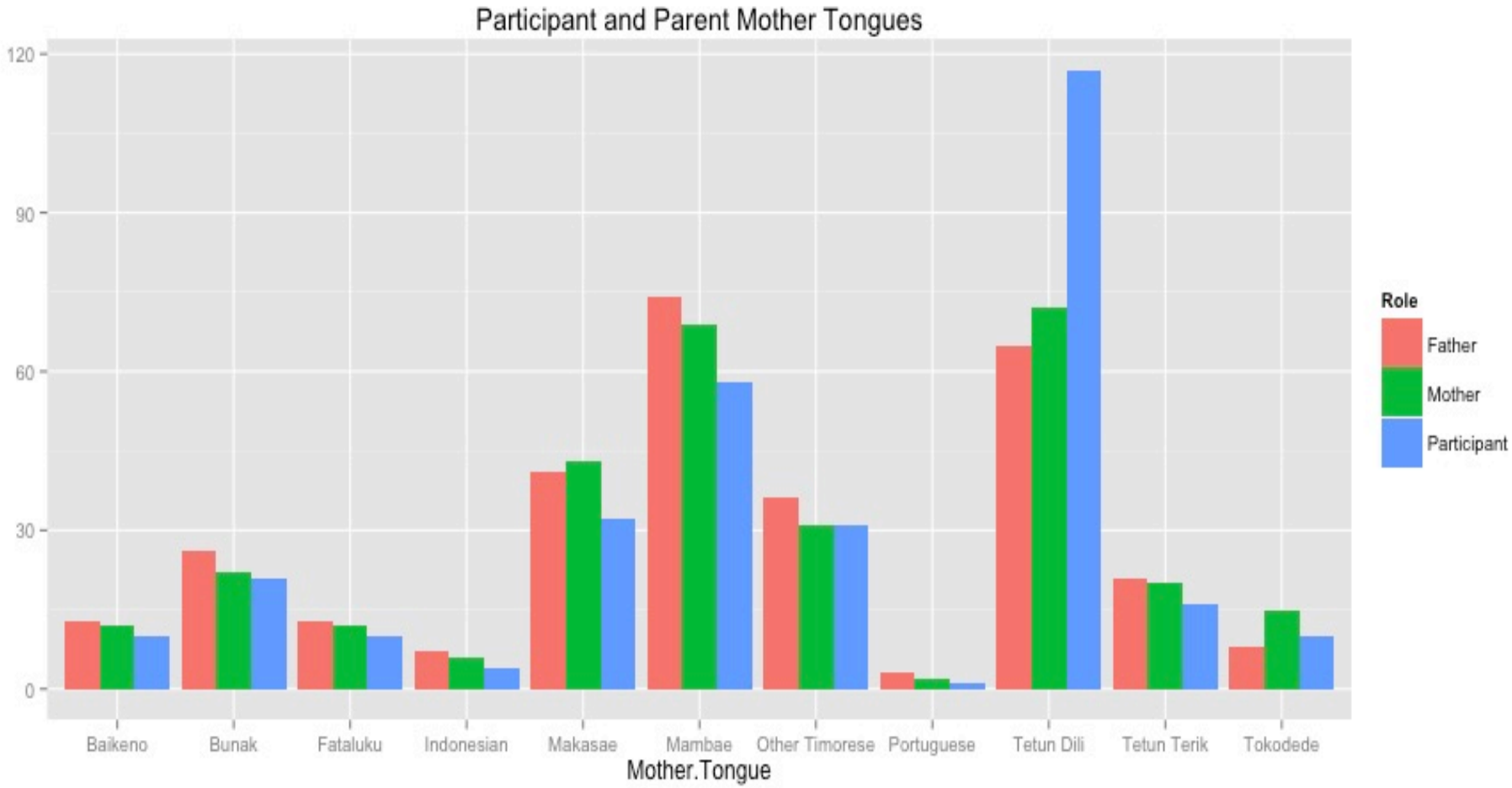
Ideologies, Attitudes, Interaction (Stance)

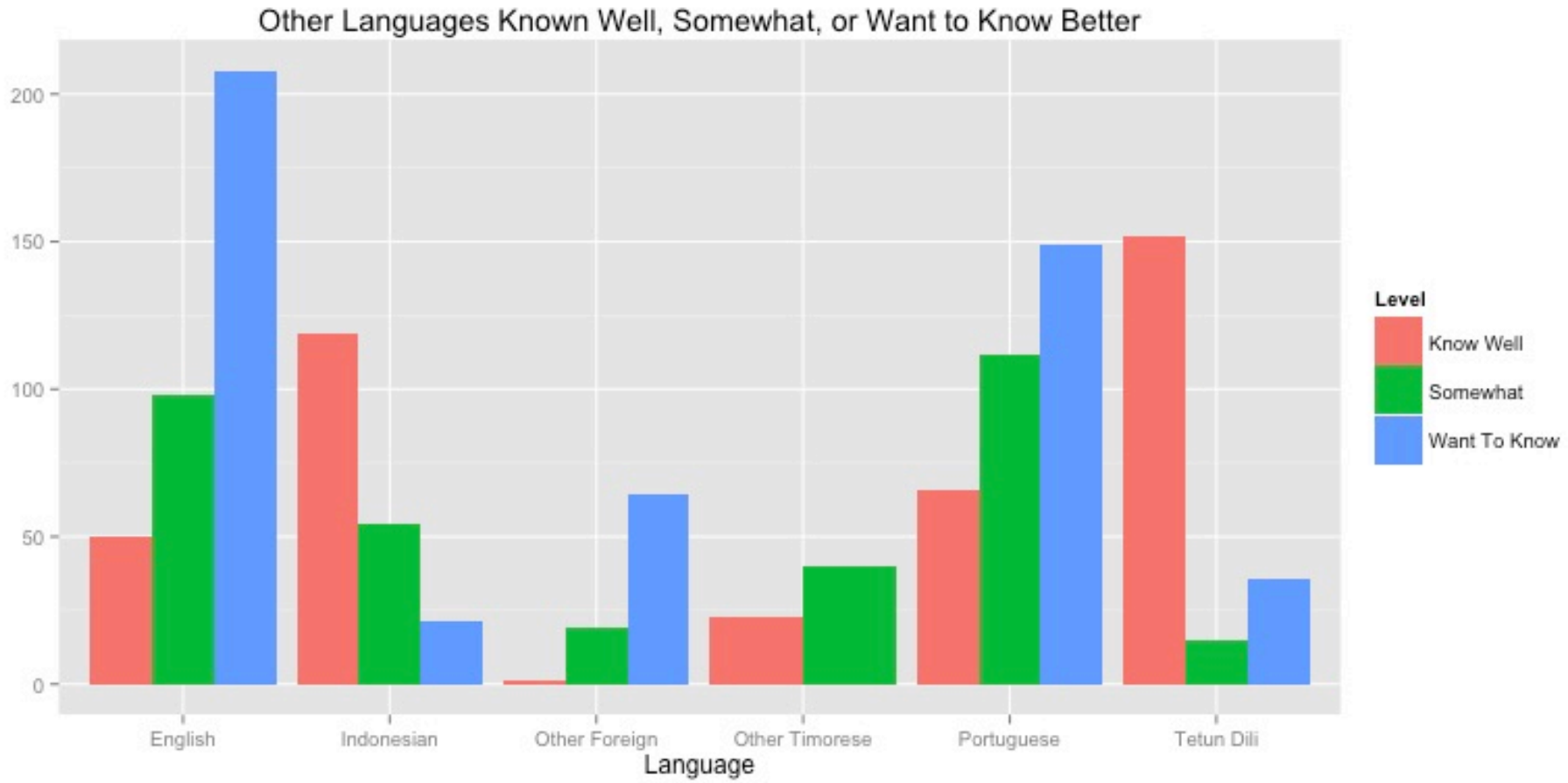
- Language ideologies
  - Macro-level 'common sense', reside in the social consciousness, the environment for attitudes
- Language attitudes
  - Individual negotations within language ideologies (either aligned or opposed), strength negotiated in interaction, necessarily involve a degree of conflict
- Stance
  - "orientation toward an object", mediated in several ways
  - Focuses the researcher on the micro-actions that create attitudes in interaction, adding detail and nuance to the whole image

Study 1: Surveys

- 301 collected
- Translated by committee
- RA training
- 100 questions
  - Demographics, Language Use (Actual), Language Use (Ideal), Language Attitudes, Tetun Speakers, Language Ranking, Language Description
- In general, positive evaluations of Tetun
- Generational shifts (1) toward settling in Dili, (2) away from speaking traditional local languages
- SES, age, gender, self-reported multilingualism, self-reported Portuguese fluency significance in linear models


Comparison of 2015 Census District Populations
With Survey Participants' and Parents' Origin
Percentage of Total
0
10
20
Aileu
Ainaro
Baucau
Bobonaro
Covalima
Dili
Ermera
Lautem
Liquica
Manatutu
Manufahi
Oecusse
Viqueque
District of Origin
Type
Census
Parents
Participant


Participant and Parent Mother Tongues
120
90
60
30
0
Baikeno
Bunak
Fataluku
Indonesian
Makasae
Mambae
Other Timorese
Portuguese
Tetun Dili
Tetun Terik
Tokodede
Mother.Tongue
Role
Father
Mother
Participant


Other Languages Known Well, Somewhat, or Want to Know Better
200
150
100
50
0
English
Indonesian
Other Foreign
Other Timorese
Portuguese
Tetun Dili
Language
Level
Know Well
Somewhat
Want To Know

Study 1: Surveys: 5 Emergent Trends

- 1. Tetun as social necessity
  - Highly preferred in every social situation
- 2. Tetun as marker of East Timorese identity
  - Component of Timorese-ness, emotional attachment
- 3. Tetun as target of critique
  - Inappropriate in some domains, negative stereotyes
- 4. Tetun as "developing"
  - Descriptions, views on utility
- 5. Tetun as locus of insecurity
  - Descriptions, contradictory attitudes

Study 2: Interviews

Participants

Vana	25yo F
Alicia	28yo F
Melita	37yo F
Kika	39yo F
Flora	39yo F
Maris	39yo F
Neto	26yo M
Joaquim	26yo M
Kane	28yo M
Solomon	28yo M
Lito	33yo M
Jorge	43yo M
Silvio	45yo M

Methodology

- Word-of-mouth
- Always started in English; sometimes include some Tetun later into interview
- Conversational
- Around an hour each
- Private or semi-private settings
- Metadata, notes, archived
- Content and stance analysis

Study 2: Interviews

- Theme 1: Tetun as social necessity
  - Ubiquity, the background norm, the invisible air
  - In multilingual interaction, between Timorese and *malae*
  - Participation/engagement in politics and governance
  - Index of Dili localness, urban identity

Study 2: Interviews

- Theme 2: Tetun as marker of East Timorese identity
  - "Ours" – Tetun belongs to Timorese, Timorese belong to Tetun
  - Relationship to *malae*; equivalence between learning Tetun and respecting Timorese identity, culture
  - Connection, Placement, Situating

Study 2: Interviews

- Theme 3: Tetun as target of critique
  - Criticism of the language itself; suitability, complexity, simplicity
  - Criticism of the use of the language; style choices, vocabulary choices, accents
  - Criticisms of the relationship between the language and authoritative bodies; not doing enough, not doing it right

Study 2: Interviews

- Theme 4: Tetun as “developing”
  - In relation to Portuguese; comparisons and frustrations
  - In relation to authoritative figures; responsibility, intervention, ‘official’-ness
  - Consequences; lack of development, over-development

Study 2: Interviews

- Theme 5: Tetun as locus of insecurity
  - Insecurity related to the general position of Tetun; adequacy, future, propriety, registers
  - Insecurity related to personal use; 'wrong' words, regional accents

Vana7 “Not constitutionalized … or whatever” (1)

1	VANA;	um, (0.4)
2		we have this- Tetun- dictionary now and, (0.4)
3		I don't have any: knowledge of it I mean I ju:st read it through but (1.0)
4		um [clears throat] interestingly one of my friends, (0.3)
5		of course you know Victor? (0.6)
6		he argues that that- (0.5) Tetun that is being used in that dictionary is, (0.9)
7		u:m (0.3) he said that wo:rd- I forgot. (1.0)
8		is not constitutionalized?
9		or it's not officialized or baptised or whatever, (0.5)
10		so, (0.4) um, (0.3) he, (0.5)
11		he actually disagree with- (0.5) the Tetun words that's being written in that dictionary. (0.5)
12		but [clears throat] (1.0)
13		u:h because I'm not really: you know expo:sed to you know, (0.4)
14		deve:loped underdevelop kind of- you know- version of Tetun?
15		so I'm- I'm actually very comfortable of- (0.3) you know the Tetun that I'm u:sing (0.5)
16		but um, (1.1)
17		um, (1.3)
18		I- (0.5)
19		if, (0.9)
20		if you know if (0.4)
21		if I could request I would- hope . that you know we (0.4)
22		um there's um, (1.3)
23		you know that we are provided a dictiona:ry: that- you know- a more, (0.5)
24		simple version of dictionary that can- help us you know to- (0.5)
25		be able to: you know, (1.0)

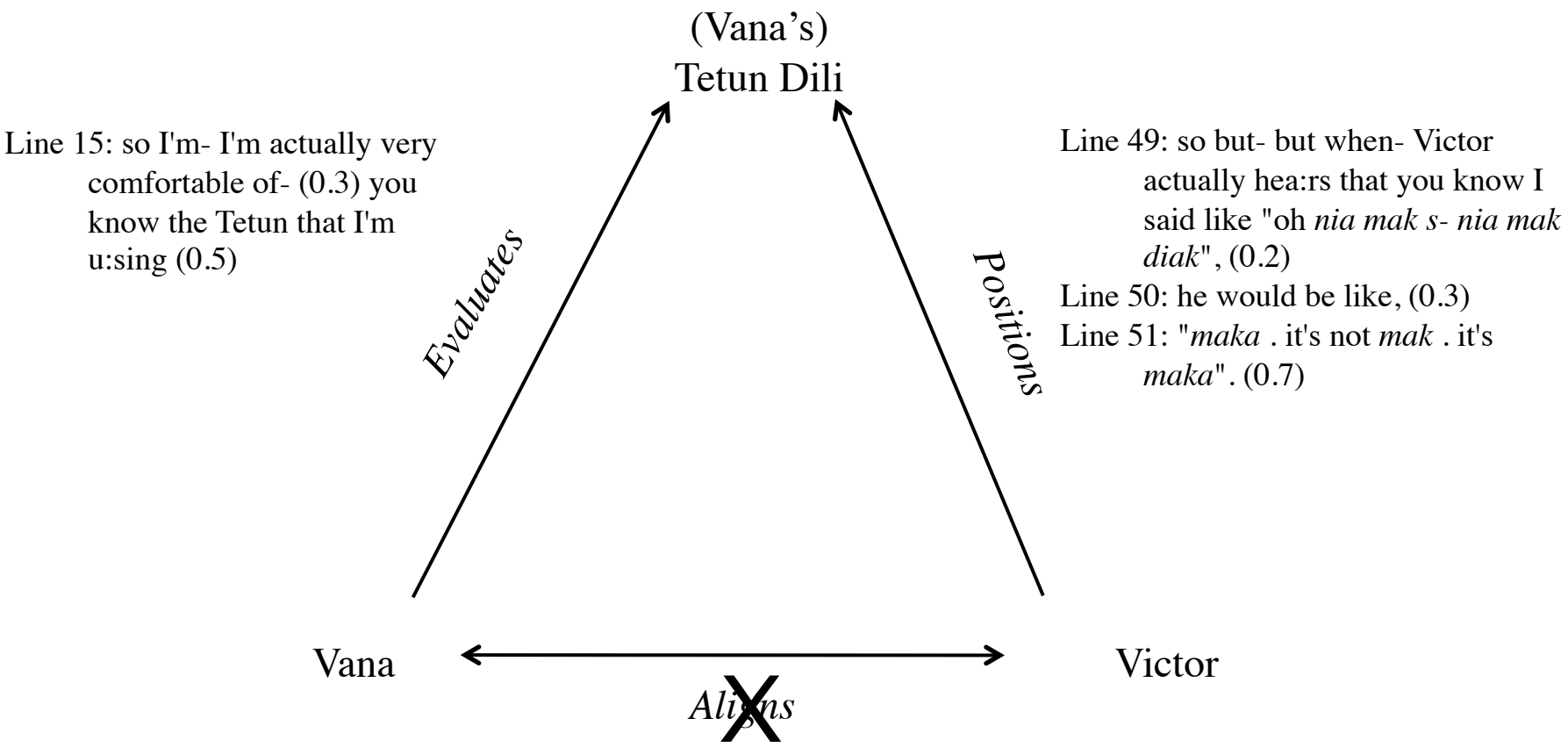
Vana7 “Not constitutionalized … or whatever” (2)

26		write or- speak- the- words that we've been borrowing from Portuguese? (0.5)
27		yeah.
28	MELODY;	yeah.
29	VANA;	[I don't know if that-]
30	MELODY;	[do you feel like there's] a right or a wrong way to speak Tetun?
31		so- so Victor clearly has a- a [very strong] opinion about it
	VANA;	[mm]
32		yeah (0.2)
33	MELODY;	was he objecting to the use or just like the writing [or?]
	VANA;	[ah]
34	MELODY;	the words themselves [or?]
35	VANA;	[I think] just just the words.
36		it just just the some of the words that's being- you know sayed in that dictionary but. (0.4)
37		I think that sentence-wi:se u:m, (0.8)
38		you know- mostly you would sa:y (0.5)
39		uh, (1.0)
40		I don't know how to explain it like- for example the- (0.4)
41		the use of words u:m *mak*, (0.5)
		((focus marker))
42		or [*maka*]?
		((focus marker))
43	MELODY;	[mm] yeah (0.7)
44	VANA;	so usually I would be- I- I would say um (1.2)

Vana7 “Not constitutionalized … or whatever” (3)

45		"o:h *nia mak hatete*". (0.5)
		((he’s the one who said that))
46		like "he's the one who said that". (0.7)
47		but you know if (0.9). if ah (1.)
48		((anonymizing silence 8.0 secs))
49		so but- but when- Victor actually hea:rs that you know I said like "oh *nia mak* s- *nia mak diak*", (0.2)
		((he’s the one that- he’s the one that’s nice))
50		he would be like, (0.3)
51		"*maka* . it's not *mak* . it's *maka*". (0.7)
		((focus marker))
52		so I'm like- "what's the different between *mak* and *maka* I feel like it's just the same".
		((focus marker))
53	MELODY;	huh. (0.5)
54	VANA;	and also when I say that "oh *hau ba karaik lai*". (0.9)
		((I’m just gonna go down quickly))
55		means "I'm just- I'm gonna go a:h a:h, (1.2)
56		to see my friends who live you know down the street". (1.0)
57		Victor would argue and say that- "it's not *karaik* . it's *kraik*".
		((down)) ((down))

Figure 6.3 Stance Triangle presented in Vana's discourse about '*mak*' in Vana7 "Not constitutionalized... or whatever"



Ideological Underpinnings

- Ideologies of Literacy, Orthography, Development
  - What is literacy? Whose literacy counts? Who decides?
- Ideologies of National Identity
  - What is the relationship between Tetun as government property and Tetun as identity?
- Standard language ideologies
- Ideologies of language-as-resource, language-as-problem, language-as-right

Contributions

- Reproduceable framework for situating language attitudes within language ideologies
- Contributions to Tetun Dili scholarship
  - Legitimacy of Tetun Dili as a field of study
  - Attitudinal work on East Timor
- Greater understanding of Timorese desires for their linguistic future
  - Positive attitudes, emotional attachment
  - Language shift, language insecurity
  - Development

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