

## **Contact-Induced Phonological Change in the Sumatran Languages**

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The Sumatran languages are a subgroup of the Malayo-Polynesian branch of Austronesian languages spoken on the island of Sumatra and on the barrier islands off its west coast (Nothofer 1986; Smith 2017). Totalling around twenty languages highly diverse in both phonology and grammar, this subgroup, until recent (Edwards 2015; Zobel 2021; Billings & McDonnell 2022), has not seen significant developments in the description of its historical phonology and reconstruction. For many of the Sumatran languages, heavy contact with neighboring Malayo-Chamic or Lampungic languages has made the identification of regular sound correspondences and the sound rules describing their derivation from Proto-Sumatran a difficult task (as described in, for example, Shorto 1976 for Gayo). Apart from this difficulty in cognate detection, however, the contact between languages in the region has led to the diffusion of phonological changes across subgroup boundaries and the subsequent alteration of languages' original phonotactic constraints.

This presentation discusses a handful of the sound changes that have operated in this way, focusing particularly on how it can be ascertained that these are indeed loan distributions (as opposed to either parallel or shared innovations) as well as on furthering our understanding of the historical phonologies of the languages in this region. Some of the sound changes discussed are: the diffusion of the Acehnese (Chamic < Malayo-Chamic) phonological change of final /l/ elision into neighboring Kluet (Batak < Sumatran); the dissolution of an earlier language-internal constraint against coda consonants in Sigulai (Central Barrier Islands < Sumatran) on the pattern of neighboring Simeulue (Northern Barrier Islands < Sumatran); and numerous vowel-related changes across a number of Batak (< Sumatran) languages that are most reasonably attributable to subgroup-internal loan distribution.

This discussion serves to further our understanding of contact-induced phonological change as well as of how loan distributions may be teased apart from independent developments. These discussions contribute insights into the historical development of the Sumatran languages and the nature of their contact relationships with each other and surrounding languages. Furthermore, in identifying such contact-induced changes, it is demonstrated that more accurate phonological reconstructions can be made for a proto-language's phonology and lexicon.