

A closer look at *ə in South Halmahera-West New Guinea

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A closer look at *ə in South Halmahera-West New Guinea

1. The status of South Halmahera-West New Guinea
2. The Raja Ampat-South Halmahera languages
3. Reflexes of *ə in Raja Ampat-South Halmahera
4. Changes affecting historic *ə in Raja Ampat
5. Implications for subgrouping

Status of SHWNG

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RASH languages

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*ə in RASH

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*ə in Raja Ampat

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Subgrouping

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The status of South Halmahera-West New Guinea

The evidence for SHWNG

Blust (1978)

and

Ross (1995)

The evidence for SHWNG

			Blust (1978)	Ross (1995)
	pMP			
	pSHWNG			
1.	*p	> *f		✓
2.	penultimate *ə	> *o	✓	✓
3.	*a-	> *ya-		✓
4a.	*t	> *s / _____ *i		✓
4b.	*s, *j, *c	> *s	✓	✓
5a.	*q, *h	> Ø	✓	✓
5b.	*-k-	> Ø	✓	✓
5c.	*k-, *-k	> Ø		✓
6.	*d, *D, *l, *r, *z	> merge	✓(*l/*r)	✓(*l)
7.	*n, *ñ	> merge		✓(*n)
8.	final *ə, *a	> merge	✓(*a)	✓(*ə)
9.	Lexically conditioned syncope		✓	

The evidence for SHWNG

			Blust (1978)	Ross (1995)
	pMP			
	pSHWNG			
1.	*p	>	*f	✓
2.	penultimate *ə	>	*o	✓
3.	*a-	>	*ya-	✓
4a.	*t	>	*s / _____ *i	✓
4b.	*s, *j, *c	>	*s	✓
5a.	*q, *h	>	∅	✓
5b.	*-k-	>	∅	✓
5c.	*k-, *-k	>	∅	✓
6.	*d, *D, *l, *r, *z	>	merge	✓(*l/*r)
7.	*n, *ñ	>	merge	✓(*n)
8.	final *ə, *a	>	merge	✓(*a)
9.	Lexically conditioned syncope		✓	

The evidence for SHWNG

► Lexically conditioned syncope (Kamholz 2014: 84):

PMP * <i>banua</i> ‘inhabited land’ > ‘village’	Biga <i>pnu</i> , Kawe <i>nu</i> , Lag. <i>nu</i> , Mat. <i>nu</i> ³ , Ma’ya ‘ <i>pnu</i> ³
PMP * <i>bulu</i> ‘feather, body hair’	Buli <i>plu</i> , Sawai <i>plu</i>
PCEMP * <i>malip</i> ‘laugh’	Buli <i>-mlif</i> , Gane <i>mlif</i> , Sawai <i>-mlif</i> , Taba <i>-(ha)mlih</i> As <i>-meli/s</i> , Biga <i>-mlef</i> , Gebe <i>-mnif</i>
PMP * <i>mata</i> ‘eye’	Buli <i>mta</i> , Gane <i>mta</i> , Sawai <i>mta</i> , Taba <i>mta</i> Gebe <i>nta</i>
PMP * <i>məñak</i> ‘fat, grease’	Buli <i>mna</i> Biga <i>ma’na(o)</i> , Fia. <i>mena</i> , Kawe <i>ma’na</i> , Lag. <i>ma’na</i> , Mat. <i>mna</i> ¹² , Ma’ya (S.) <i>ma’na</i> ³ , Wau. <i>ma’na</i>
PEMP * <i>natu</i> ‘child’	Buli <i>ntu</i> , Gane <i>tu</i> , Taba <i>mtu</i> Gebe <i>ñat</i> ‘person’
PMP * <i>paniki</i> ‘fruit bat’	Buli <i>fni</i> , Gane <i>fnik</i> , Sawai <i>fni</i>
PMP * <i>t-ama</i> ‘father’	Buli <i>hmā</i>
PMP * <i>t-ina</i> ‘mother’	Buli <i>hñē</i>
PMP * <i>t-inaqi</i> ‘intestines’ > ‘belly’	Buli <i>hñao</i> , Sawai <i>sno</i> Ambel <i>nyay</i> , Biga <i>nyao</i> , Fia. <i>na</i> , Gebe <i>hñao</i> , <i>hñainora</i> , Kawe <i>a-nyay(o)</i> , Lag. <i>a-nyay(o)</i> , Ma’ya ‘ <i>na(o)</i> , Wau. <i>ka-nyay(o)</i>

Table 4.71: Syncope in South Halmahera and Raja Ampat.

The evidence for SHWNG

► Lexically conditioned syncope (Kamholz 2014: 84):

PMP * <i>banua</i> ‘inhabited land’ > ‘village’	Ansus <i>nu</i> ‘world’, Biak <i>mənu</i> , Dus. <i>munu/ai</i> , Moor <i>manù</i> ‘forest’, SL <i>nu</i> ‘world’, Umar <i>nu/ae</i> , Wrp. <i>nu</i> , Yaur <i>nùù-ré</i> , Yer. <i>nú</i> Wmb. <i>bunu/pune</i> (?)
PCEMP * <i>malip</i> ‘laugh’	Ambai <i>mìri</i> , Ansus <i>mari</i> , Biak <i>mbrif</i> , Moor <i>mari/-a</i> , SL <i>mari</i> , Umar <i>mari</i> , Wan. <i>mari</i>
PMP * <i>mata</i> ‘eye’	Biak <i>mga</i> , Moor <i>masina’ú</i> (?), Umar <i>mta</i>
PMP * <i>məñak</i> ‘fat, grease’	Ambai <i>ne-main</i> , Moor <i>mananá</i> , Umar <i>mnai</i> , Wan. <i>mai[n]</i> , Wrp. <i>mana</i> , Yaur <i>mnáa-rè</i> , Yer. <i>mì/mná</i>
PEMP * <i>natu</i> ‘child’	Ambai <i>antu/n</i> , Dus. <i>mtu</i> , Moor <i>na’ú</i> ‘person’, Wan. <i>a[n]tu</i> , Wrp. <i>ku</i>
PMP * <i>t-ama</i> ‘father’	Ambai <i>tama-</i> , Biak <i>kəma</i> , Dus. <i>tma</i> , Moor <i>kamá</i> ‘grandparent’, Wan. <i>tama</i>
PMP * <i>t-ina</i> ‘mother’	Biak <i>sna-</i> , Wan. <i>sinia</i>
PMP * <i>tin-aqi</i> ‘intestines’ > ‘belly’	Ambai <i>ene-</i> , Ansus <i>ane/u</i> , Biak <i>sne-</i> , Moor <i>siné</i> , SL <i>ane</i> , Umar <i>hna</i> , Wan. <i>sane</i> , Yaur <i>hnáa-rè</i> , Yer. <i>hìná</i>

Table 4.72: Syncope in Cenderawasih Bay and Mamberamo.

The evidence for SHWNG

			Blust (1978)	Ross (1995)
	pMP			
		pSHWNG		
1.	*p	> *f		✓
2.	penultimate *ə	> *o	✓	✓
3.	*a-	> *ya-		✓
4a.	*t	> *s / _____ *i		✓
4b.	*s, *j, *c	> *s	✓	✓
5a.	*q, *h	> Ø	✓	✓
5b.	*-k-	> Ø	✓	✓
5c.	*k-, *-k	> Ø		✓
6.	*d, *D, *l, *r, *z	> merge	✓(*l/*r)	✓(*l)
7.	*n, *ñ	> merge		✓(*n)
8.	final *ə, *a	> merge	✓(*a)	✓(*ə)
9.	Lexically conditioned syncope		✓	

The evidence for SHWNG

“The development of *e [= *ə] alone (as penultimate o, final a) sets these languages off from all other members of the AN family, and could be taken by itself as subgrouping evidence to be reckoned with.”

Blust (1978: 208)

“[The merger of *d, *D, *l, *r, *z and the changes affecting *ə] are quite striking and their occurrence in combination proves the integrity of Proto-SHWNG as a language.”

Ross (1995: 85)

Reassessing pSHWNG sound changes: Kamholz (2014)

			Blust (1978)	Ross (1995)
	pMP			
	pSHWNG			
1.	*p	>	*f	✓
2.	penultimate *ə	>	*o	✓
3.	*a-	>	*ya-	✓
4a.	*t	>	*s / _____ *i	✓
4b.	*s, *j, *c	>	*s	✓
5a.	*q, *h	>	∅	✓
5b.	*-k-	>	∅	✓
5c.	*k-, *-k	>	∅	✓
6.	*d, *D, *l, *r, *z	>	merge	✓(*l/*r)
7.	*n, *ñ	>	merge	✓(*n)
8.	final *ə, *a	>	merge	✓(*a)
9.	Lexically conditioned syncope		✓	✓(*ə)

Reassessing pSHWNG sound changes: Kamholz (2014)

“Changes 2 (merger of *ə with *o in penultimate syllables) and [8] (merger of *ə with *a in final syllables) are posited by Blust and Ross as highly distinctive SHWNG innovations. **I showed in §4.2.28 that they are problematic in Raja Ampat languages.**”

Kamholz (2014: 92)

Status of SHWNG

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RASH languages

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*ə in RASH

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*ə in Raja Ampat

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Subgrouping

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The Raja Ampat-South Halmahera languages

Status of SHWNG

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RASH languages

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*ə in RASH

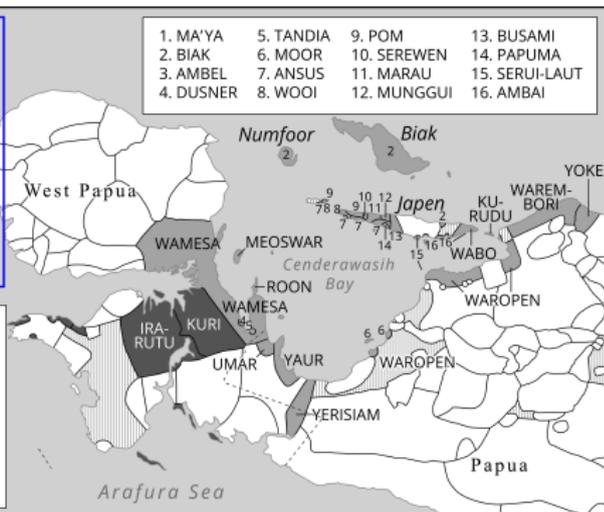
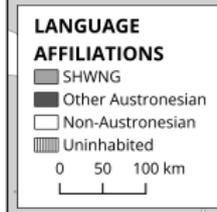
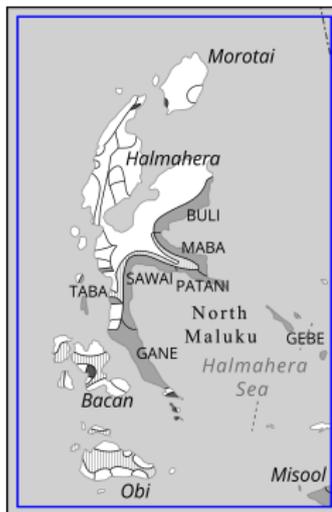
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*ə in Raja Ampat

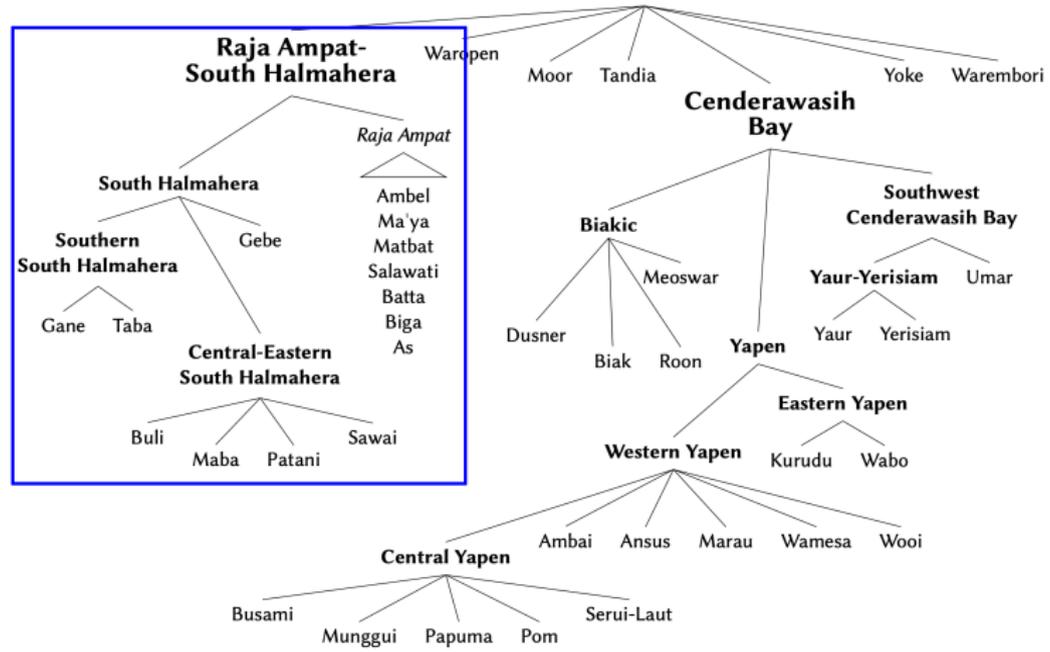
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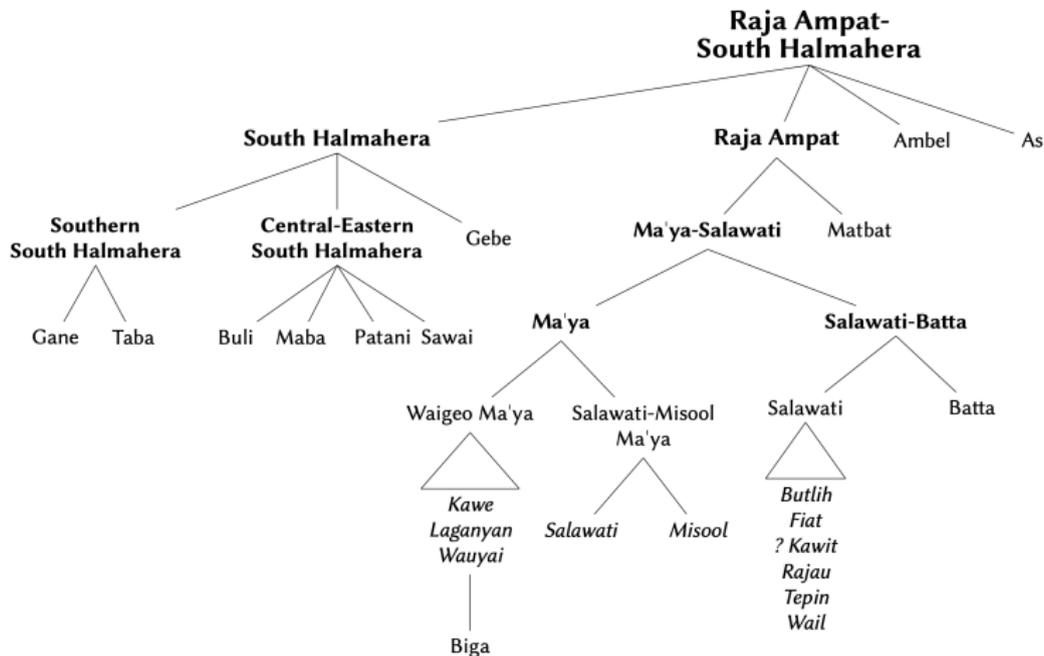
Subgrouping

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South Halmahera- West New Guinea





Kamholz (2014), Arnold (forthcoming)

RASH subgrouping

▶ Proto-RASH:

1. *R > Ø
2. *<y> ‘1|2SC’ (verb)

▶ Proto-South Halmahera:

1. *f- ‘2PL’ (verb)
2. *-d ‘1PL.INCL’ (poss)

▶ Proto-Ma'ya-Salawati:

1. *<y> ‘1|2SC’ > ‘SG’ (verb)

Blust (1978), Remijsen (2001), Kamholz (2014), Arnold (forthcoming)

*Reflexes of *ə in Raja Ampat-South
Halmahera*

Data sources

- ▶ Cognacy judgements and data from Blust et al. (2023), Kamholz (n.d.), own fieldwork/judgements
- ▶ Reconstructions from Blust et al. (2023)
- ▶ 207 reconstructions with RASH reflexes
 - ▶ 56 with *ə
 - ▶ 69 schwas

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Reminder:

2. pMP penultimate *ə, *o > pSHWNG *o
8. pMP final syllable *ə, *a > pSHWNG *a/*ə

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Penultimate *ə > /o/ (n=43/66):

			Gane	Taba	Buli	Sawai	Gebe
pAN	*təlu	‘three’	p-tol	p-tol	tol	tel	pi-tol
pMP	*baqəRu	‘new’	pou	powo	po	—	—
pMP	*qatəluR	‘egg’	toli	tolo	tolo	—	—
pMP	*dəŋəR	‘to hear’	loŋa	-malongo	loŋa	m-loŋɛ	loŋo
pMP	*Rəbək	‘to fly’	opa	-opa	opan	-opɛ	-opo
pAN	*ənəm	‘six’	—	p-wonam	wonam	pɛ-wonɛm	—

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Exceptions to penultimate *ə > /o/ (n=9/66):

► Onomatopoeia and/or reduplicated forms:

pMP *təktək ‘gecko’ > Buli *tektek*, expected ***toktak*

► Possible non-reflexes:

pMP *təbək ‘pierce, stab’ > Gebe *tɛ*, expected ***top(a)*;

Gane *tapa*, expected ***topa*, Buli ***tepa* ‘tusks of a boar or elephant’, expected ***topa*; Sawai *n-εtεpεs*, expected

***n-εtopεs*

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Exceptions to penultimate *ə > /o/ (n=9/66):

► Possible conditioning by loss of final *u

pMP *təlu ‘three’ > Sawai *tel*, expected ***tol*

pMP *təbuh ‘sugarcane’ > Sawai *tep*, expected ***top*

pMP *pəñu ‘sea turtle’ > Taba *hen*, expected ***hon*; Sawai
fɛn, expected ***fon*

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Final *ə > /a/ (n=39/59):

			Gane	Taba	Buli	Sawai	Gebe
pMP	*waRəj	‘vine’	–	wola	wala	wələ	wala
pMP	*qatəp	‘roof’	yotaf	–	yataf	yotef ‘thatch’	yataf
pMP	*tanəmə	‘to plant’	tonam	–	–	tənəm	fatanam
pMP	*Rəbək	‘to fly’	opa	-opa	opan	-opə	-opo
pMP	*dəŋəR	‘to hear’	loŋa	-malongo	loŋa	m-loŋə	loŋo

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

- ▶ Exceptions to final *ə > /a/ (n=12/59):
 - ▶ Onomatopœia and/or reduplicated forms:
 - pMP *tək ‘thump’ > Buli *tok*, expected ***tak*
 - pMP *təktək ‘gecko’ > Buli *tektek*, expected ***toktak*
 - pMP *gəkgək ‘animal sound’ > Buli *gokgok* ‘crow’, expected ***gokgak*; Sawai *gokʔgok* ‘crow’, expected ***gokʔgɛk*

Reflexes of *ə in South Halmahera

► Exceptions to final *ə > /a/ (n=12/59):

► Unknown:

pMP *alutəŋ ‘burning brand’ > Sawai *luten* ‘fire’, expected
***lutɛŋ*

pCEMP *qenəp ‘lie down to sleep’ > Gebe *yenɛf*, expected
***yenaf*

pMP *qatəp ‘roof’ > Sawai *yotɛf* ‘thatch’, expected ***yotɛf*

pMP *dəŋəR ‘hear’ > Gebe *loŋo*, expected ***loŋa*; Taba
-malongo, expected ***-malonga*

Reflexes of *ə in Raja Ampat

► Penultimate *ə (expected /o/) :

			pMS	Matbat	pAmbel	As
pAN	*pəNuq	‘full’	*fo ³ n	fɔ ³ n	*fo ³ n	–
pMP	*qatəluR	‘egg’	*'tolo ³	to ² l	*ta ³ lo	talo ³
pMP	*Rəbək	‘to fly’	*-'apo ³	–	*-a ³ po	–
pMP	*dəŋəR	‘to hear’	*-'dono ³	nɔ ⁴ ŋ	*-tano ³	?
pAN	*ənəm	‘six’	*'wono ³ m	-nɔ ¹² m	*wano ³ m	wano ¹ m

Reflexes of *ə in Raja Ampat

► Final *ə (expected /a/) :

			pMS	Matbat	pAmbel	As
pMP	*waRəj	‘vine’	*'wali ³	wa ⁴¹ l	*wa ³ li	–
pMP	*ma-qitəṃ	‘black’	*'mete ³ m	–	*mate ³ m	mate ¹ m
pCEMP	*qenəp	‘to lie down’	*-'ene ³ f	-ɛ ⁴¹ n	*-ane ³	–
pMP	*Rəbək	‘to fly’	*-'apo ³	–	*-a ³ po	–
pAN	*ənəṃ	‘six’	*'wono ³ m	-nɔ ¹² m	*wano ³ m	wano ¹ m
pMP	*dəŋəR	‘to hear’	*-'dono ³	nɔ ⁴¹ ŋ	*-tano ³	?

The problem

- ▶ If the Raja Ampat languages subgroup with South Halmahera...
 - ▶ pRASH * <y> ‘1|2sg’, *R > Ø
- ▶ ...but do not regularly reflect pMP *ə...
- ▶ ...then are the RASH languages SHWNG?

Status of SHWNG

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RASH languages

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*ə in RASH

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*ə in Raja Ampat

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Subgrouping

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*Changes affecting historic *ə in Raja Ampat*

Change 1: All Raja Ampat languages

- ▶ Final, unstressed *a assimilates to preceding vowel:

- ▶ pMP *ə > *a:

pMP *dəŋəR ‘to hear’ > *'dona > pMS *-'dono³

pMP *ləməR ‘soaking wet’ > *ma'loma > pMS *ma'lomo³

pMP *ənəm ‘six’ > pEMP *onəm > *'wonam > pMS
*'wono³m

pCEMP *qenəp ‘to lie down to sleep’ > *'enaf > pMS
*'ene³f

pMP *ma-qitəm ‘black’ > *'metam > pMS *'mete³m

Change 1: All Raja Ampat languages

► Final, unstressed *a assimilates to preceding vowel:

► pMP *a > *a

pMP *qalu-hipan ‘centipede’ > *ga'lifan > pA *gali³fin

pMP *tu(n)daŋ ‘to sit’ > *'tolan > pM *-¹tolo³n

Change 2: Ambel and As

► Penultimate *e, *o > *a:

► pMP *ə > *o

pMP *dəŋəR ‘to hear’ > *-’dona > *-’dono > pA *-tano³

pMP *Rəbək ‘to fly’ > *’opa > *’opo > pA *-a³po

pMP *qatəluR ‘egg’ > *’toloR > *’tolo³ > pA *ta³lo, As *talo*³

Change 2: Ambel and As

► Penultimate *e, *o > *a:

► *o > *o

pAN *ənəṃ ‘six’ > pEMP *onəṃ > *¹wonam > *¹wonom >
pA *wano³m, As *wano¹m*

► *e?

pMP *ma-qitəṃ ‘black’ > *¹metam > *¹metem > pA
*mate³m, As *mate¹m*

A note on apocope

- The change *e, *o > *a must have occurred after apocope of final open syllables:

pMP *təka ‘to arrive’ > *doka > pA *do³k (**da³k)

pAN *bəRək ‘pig’ > *boa > As *bo* (***ba*)

pAN *pəNuq ‘full’ > *ponu > pA *fo³n (**fa³n)

pAN *təlu ‘three’ > *tolu > pA *tʊ³l (**ta³l)

pAN *təbuh ‘sugarcane’ > *topu > pA *tʊ³p (**ta³p)

A note on apocope

- ▶ (In fact, apocope likely applied in pRASH:)

pAN *təlu ‘three’

> RA: pMS *tʊ³l, pA *tʊ³l

> SH: Gebe *pi-tol*, Gane *p-tol*, Taba *p-tol*, Buli *tol*, Sawai *tel*

> CB: Ambai *bo-toru*, Ansus *toru*, Dusner *tori*, Moor *óró*, Serui-Laut *botoru*, Umar *etro*, Wandamen *toru* ‘three’, Waropen *oro*, Yerisiam *kóoríhé*

A note on apocope

- ▶ (In fact, apocope likely applied in pRASH:)

pAN *təbuh ‘sugarcane’

> RA: pMS *tʊ³p, Matbat *to³p*, pA *tʊ³p, As *tu³p*

> SH: Buli *top*, Sawai *tep*

> CB: Ambai *tovu*, Ansus *towu*, Biak *kòb*, Moor *kóha*, Serui-Laut *tovu*, Umar *to*, Waropen *kowu*, Yaur *òojé*, Yerisiam *kóou*

A note on apocope

- ▶ (In fact, apocope likely applied in pRASH:)

pAN *panaq ‘to shoot with bow and arrow’

> RA: pMS *-fa³n, Matbat -a¹n, pA *-fa³n, As -fa¹²n

> CB: Ambai *i-ana*, Ansus *ana*, Moor *hinà* ‘shoot’, Wandamen *ana*, Waropen *ana*

pMP *batu ‘stone’

> RA: pMS *ka¹pa³t, Matbat pa¹²t, As pa¹

> SH: Gebe *kapat*, Buli *pāt*

> CB: Moor *vá’a*, Umar *atu*, Yerisiam *áakú*

Status of SHWNG

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RASH languages

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*ə in Raja Ampat

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Subgrouping

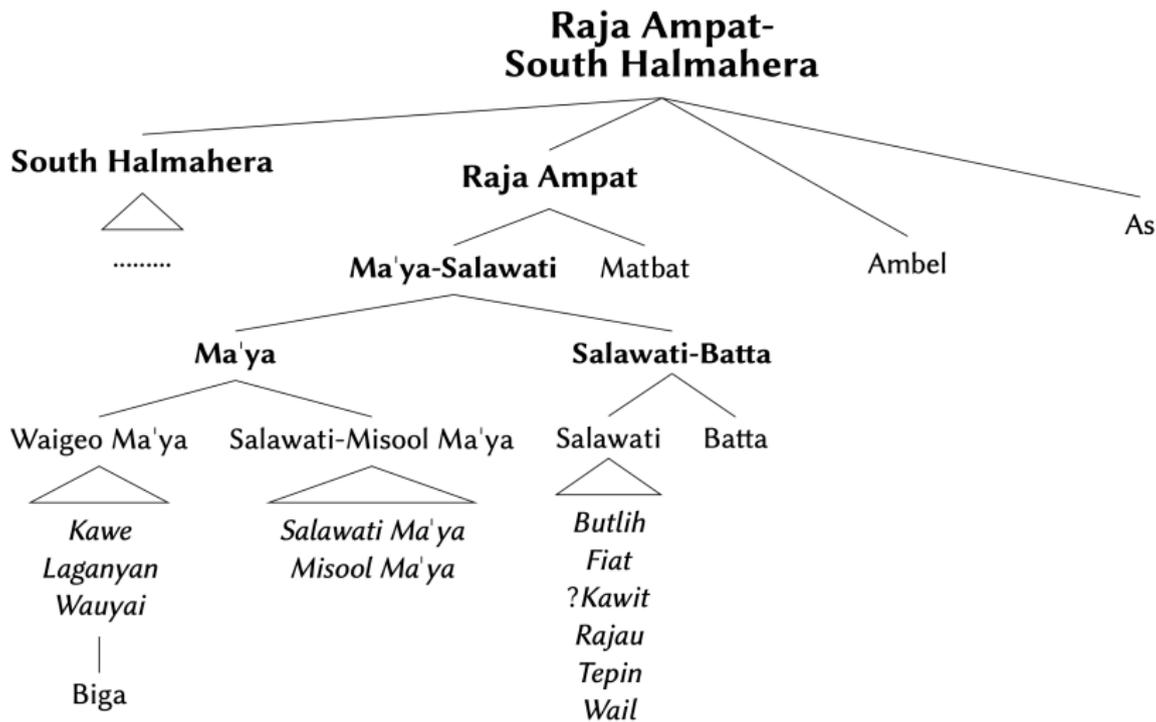
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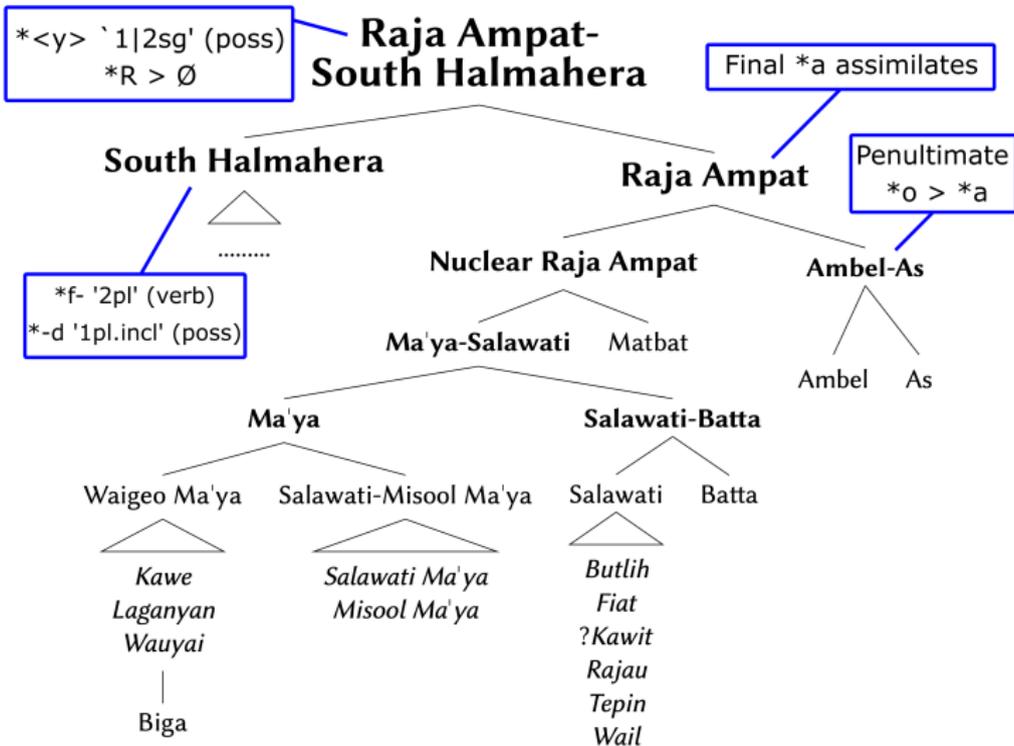
Implications for subgrouping

The problem

- ▶ If the Raja Ampat languages subgroup with South Halmahera...
 - ▶ pRASH * <y> ‘1|2sg’, *R > Ø
- ▶ ...but do not regularly reflect pMP *ə...
- ▶ ...then are the RASH languages SHWNG?

- ▶ Yes!! 🎉 😘





Status of SHWNG
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RASH languages
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*ə in RASH
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*ə in Raja Ampat
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Subgrouping
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