Kalimantan languages: An overview of current research and documentation

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1. Overview
This presentation provides an overview of the language situation in Kalimantan, a report on studies of the languages in the region and the available bibliography of the area. We will list language/dialect names in Kalimantan and show maps of the languages in four geographical areas, namely, Northwest (Land Dayak and Tamanic), Northeast (Kayanic & Punan, Kelabitic, Kenyahic, Murut-Tidong, and Rejang- Sajau), Southern inland (Barito), and the surrounding area (Malayic), and will give detailed information on language documentation projects mainly in the Kenyah and Punan languages of East Kalimantan and in the Barito languages of Central Kalimantan.

2. Language maps

- Abbreviation for authors
  A. = Adelaar (2005b)
  G. = Grimes et al. (1995)
  h. = Hudson (1967)
  H. = Hudson (1978)
  K. = Kroeger
  L. = Sellato
  R. = Ray (1913)
  S. = Soriente
  T. = Tadmor
  U. = Guerreiro
  V. = Greenhill et al. (2008)

- Maps
  our own fieldworks
  Wurm and Hattori (1983)
  Mahsun et al. (2008)
  Lewis (2009)
2.1 Northwest

2.1.1 Land Dayak

- Language: 10
  Bekati’/Lala’ (H/G.), Lara’(R/G.), or Sara/Riok (V.)
  Benyadu (H/G.), Nyadu(G.), or Pandu (H., a dialect?)
  Biatah (G/A.), Lundu(R/H.), or Quop/Sentah (R/K.)
  Bukar Sadong (R/H/G.)
  Jongkang (H/G.)
  Kembayan (G.)
  Ribun (H/G.)
  Sanggau (R/H.)
  Semandang (H/G/T.)
  Sungkung (A.)
- Population: 200,000 (10,000–50,000 for each language)
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: South of Kapuas Hilir mountains (Sarawak border), the northwestern part of West Kalimantan Province, in relatively higher altitudes; over the whole area of Sanggau regency, the eastern part of Sambas regency, and the northern parts of Bengkayang, Landak and Sintang regencies.
  From 109°E to 111°E longitude and from 1°N to 1°S latitude.

2.1.2 Tamanic

- Language: 3
  Embaloh (G/A.) or Maloh (R.)
  Taman (G/A.)
  Kalis (R/A.)
- Population: 40,000
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: South of Kapuas Hilir mountains (Sarawak border), upper reaches of Kapuas river and its tributaries, the northeastern part of West Kalimantan
Province, in higher altitudes; the northeastern part of Kapuas Hulu regency. From 112°E to 113°E longitude and around 1°N latitude.

2.2 Northeast

If we exclude the Stokhof wordlists (1986) whose material dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century, the work done by Huson (1978) and overlook the language studies carried out in the rest of Borneo, mainly in Sarawak and Sabah, no serious documentation work has been undertaken on the Kalimantan languages till the early 2000 when a project of documentation of Kenyah and Punan languages has been started and a Lundayeh reference dictionary has been published. These languages are very different but their study is relevant because this can shed light on the high language diversity of the area with making more data available and on the unresolved problem of the classification of Punan languages in particular (see Sellato 1993 and forthcoming).

In the northeast part of Kalimantan are recorded many language groups, including the Kenyah that have a high level of differentiation and the Punan, a loose category that groups languages that are unintelligible with each other, the Murut Tidong and the Rejang Sajau whose knowledge is scattered and inaccurate. Unfortunately many of the languages of the area lack descriptions and availability of data.

2.2.1 Kayanic and Punan

- Language: 21
  Kayan (A/S.)
  Kayan Mahakam (G/S.)
  Kayan River Kayan (G/S.)
  Wahau Kayan (G/U.)
  Mendalam Kayan (G/S.)

Long Hubung / Lepak Aru (H/S.) or Bahau (R/H/G.)
Pua’
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2.2.1 Punanic

Busang (H/G/S/U.)
(Long Bentuk) Modang (A/R/H/G/S/U/V.)
Wehea (S/U.)
Segai/Menga’ay (H/G/S/U.)

Punan Kelai (U/V.)
Punan Malinau, Punan Segah, or Ma’ Pnaan (S.)

Aoheng/Penidoing (G/H/L.)
Bukat (G/L.)
Bukitan (G/L.) or Ukit/Bakatan (R.)
Hovongan/Penyabung (G/H/L.)
Kereho/Seputan/Uheng (H/G/L.)
Punan Aput (G.)
Punan Merah (G.)
Punan Tubu (G/S.)

- Population: 52,000 (median: around 1,000)
- Endangered: most languages, Punan Merah (140), Punan Aput (370), Kereho (500), Wahau Kayan (500), Bukitan (570), Hovongan (1000), Ma’ Pnaan (600), Pua (500).
- Distribution: East and west of Müller mountains (which runs north and south in central Borneo), in higher altitudes, the central and southwestern part of East Kalimantan Province, the northeastern part of West Kalimantan Province. From 113°E to 117°E longitude and from 2°N to 0° latitude.

2.2.2 Kenyahic

- Language: 9
  Bahau River Kenyah (G/S.)
  Bakung Kenyah (G/S.)
  Kayan River Kenyah (G/S.)
  Kelinyau Kenyah (G/S.)
  Lebu’ Kulit (S.), Uma’ Timai (H.), or Wahau Kenyah (G.)
  Mahakam Kenyah (G/S.)
  Ôma Lóngh (S.)
  Upper Baram Kenyah (G/S.)
  (Lepo Tuking (H.), Uma Bem (H.), Tau (R/H.), Tukung (H.))

Penan Benalui (S.)

- Population: 25,000 (average: 2,800)
- Endangered: most languages: Ôma Lóngh Kenyah (2500), Penan Benalui (450)
- Distribution: Upper reaches of Mentarang, Malinau and Kayan rivers, the west-central part of East Kalimantan Province, in higher altitudes; over the whole area of Malinau regency (but Lebu’ Kulit or Kenyah Wahau in Kutai Kartanegara regency). From 115°E to 117°E longitude and from 3°N to 1°N latitude.

2.2.3 Kelabitic
- Language: 5
  Kelabit (R/H/G.)
  Lengilu (G.)
  Lun Bawang (H./Clayre)
  Lun Dayeh (H/G./Clayre, Ganang et al)
  Saban (G./Clayre)
- Population: 30,000
- Endangered: Lengilu (4?), Kelabit (640), Saban (850)
- Distribution: The northwestern part of East Kalimantan Province, in higher altitudes; the western part of Nunukan regency and the northern part of Malinau regency; west of Malinau.
  From 115ºE to 117ºE longitude and from 4ºN to 3Nº latitude.

2.2.4 Murut-Tidong

- Language: 7
  Bolongan (R/G.)
  Burusu (G.)
  Okolod (G.)
  Selungai Murut (G.)
  Sembakung Murut (R/G.)
  Tagal Murut (R/G.)
  Tidong (R/G.) or Nonukan/Sesayap/Sibuku/Tarakan (R.)
- Population: 70,000
- Endangered: Selungai Murut (640)
- Distribution: The northeastern part of East Kalimantan Province, in relatively lower altitudes; the northern part of Nunukan regency, the whole area of Tana Tidung regency, and the eastern (coastal) part of Bulungan regency.
  From 116ºE to 118ºE longitude and from 4ºN to 2Nº latitude.

2.2.5 Rejang-Sajau

- Language: 3
  Basap / Ulun Lebbo’ / Ulun Darat (G.) or Karangan (H.),
  Punan Merap (G.)
  Sajau Basap (G.)
- Population: 21,000
- Endangered: Punan Merap (200)
- Distribution: The northeastern part of East Kalimantan (south of Murut-Tidong), in relatively higher altitudes; the northwestern and southeastern (inland) parts of Bulungan regency, the southeastern (inland) part of Berau regency, and the eastern (inland) part of Kutai Timur regency.
  From 117ºE to 118ºE longitude and from 3ºN to 2Nº latitude.
  Around 118ºE longitude and around 1ºN latitude.
2.3 Southern inland

2.3.1 East Barito

- Language: 8
  Dusun Deyah (h/G.)
  Dusun Malang (h/H/G.)
  Dusun Witu (h/H/G.)
  Lawangan/Bawu/Pasir/Benua/Bentian (R/h/H/G.)
  Ma’anyan (R/h/H/G.)
  Paku (h/H/G.)
  Samihim/Simihim (h/H/G.)
  Taboyan (h/H.)
- Population: 300,000
- Endangered: Paku (less than 3,500)
- Distribution: East of and along the mid- and up-stream of Barito river, in relatively lower altitudes; the eastern part of Central Kalimantan Province, the southern part of East Kalimantan Province, and the northern part of South Kalimantan Province.
  From 115°E to 116°E longitude and from 0° to 2S° latitude.

2.3.2 Barito-Mahakam

- Language: 2
  Ampanang (H/G.)
  Tunjung (h/H/G.)
- Population: 80,000
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: South of and along the midstream (around Melintang/Semayang lakes) of Mahakam river, in relatively lower altitudes; the southwestern part of East Kalimantan Province; the southwestern part of Kutai Barat regency, and the west-central part of Kutai Kartanegara regency.
  From 115°E to 117°E longitude and from 0° to 1S° latitude.
2.3.3 West Barito

- Language: 5
  Bakumpai (G/h.) or Mengkatip (h.)
  Dohoi / Ot Danum / Kadorih (h/H/G./Inagaki)
  ‘Murung’ (h/H)
  Ngaju (R/G.), Ba’amang, Kapuas (h/H.), Kahayan/Katingan (R/h/H/G.), or Sampit (R.)
  Siang (R/h/H/G.)
- Population: 1,100,000
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: South of Schwaner mountains, mid- and up-stream of Seruyan, Sampit, Katingan, Kahayan and Kapuas rivers; over the central and northern side of Central Kalimantan Province, the eastern part of West Kalimantan Province.
  From 112°E to 115°E longitude and from 0° to 2S° latitude.
2.4 Surrounding area

2.4.1 Ibanic

- Language: 3
  Iban (H/G.), Kentu’/Air Tabun (H.)
  Mualang (H/G.)
  Seberuang (H)
- Population: 90,000
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: South of Kapuas Hilir mountains (Sarawak border), north of and along Kapuas river, in relatively higher altitudes; the north-central part of West Kalimantan Province; the northern parts of Sekadau and Sintang regencies, and the western part of Kapuas Hulu regency.
  From 111ºE to 113ºE longitude and from 1ºS to 0º latitude.

2.4.2 Other Malayic languages

- Language: 8
  Banjar (h/G.)
  Kendayan (G/A.)
  Keninjal (G.)
  Malay (G.)
  Berau Malay (G.)
  Bukit Malay (G.)
  Kutai Malay (G.)
  Malayic Dayak (G.) or Delang/Tamuan (h.)
- Population: 4,700,000
- Endangered: uncertain
- Distribution: Over the coastal area of Kalimantan (except for the northeast part), and inland area between Kapuas Hilir mountains and Schwaner mountains, in relatively lower altitudes.
  From 109ºE to 119ºE longitude and from 2ºN to 4ºS latitude.
3. Studies on northwest languages

Current documentation project at MPI Jakarta: Kualan and Samandang (Land Dayak) (Uri Tadmor-Ardi)

- Kualan and Samandang are two closely related members of the Land Dayak (Bidayuhic) language group whose exact subgrouping has yet to be determined. Until the 20th century, the Kualan and Samandang Dayaks were serfs of a small Malay kingdom based in Balai Berkuak. This master-client relationship, which apparently lasted for many centuries, has deeply affected the speech of both communities. In the case of the Dayak communities, strong interference from Malay has lead to massive lexical replacement, including basic vocabulary items, function words, and even affixes. However, many distinctly non-Malay structural features have been maintained, such as an object focus infix and obligatory classifiers. (Uri Tadmor-MPI)

Data
- Baram Land Dayak
  21 files (21,656 transcribed records)
- Kualan Land Dayak (Onya Darat)
  27 files (27,238 transcribed records)
- Samandang
  46 files (40,123 transcribed records)
- Spontaneous conversations, with some folk stories and oral histories as well.
- There are also a few songs and chants.

Papers on different topics by Uri Tadmor.


4. Studies on northeast languages

Hudson (1978) proposed a classification of the northeast languages into Apo Duat, Baram Rejang and Kayan-Kenyah though based on limited material. Soriente started a comparative description of the Kenyah languages (Soriente 2004 and 2008) and a documentation project on two Kenyah languages, mainly Lebu’ Kulit and Óma Lóngh. This resulted in a book containing a collection of stories in the two languages followed by a glossary (Soriente 2006) and several descriptions of different aspects of the languages (Soriente 2011, a,b,c, and to appear, b). Based on Soriente 2006’s book, Blust (2007) published an historical phonology of the Óma Lóngh language. While the project on Kenyah has been carried out, a new interest on Punan and Penan languages has developed and this has led to a new project that aims at documenting a Western Penan language spoken in Kalimantan, Penan Benalui (Soriente to appear, a), Punan Tubu’ (Soriente to appear, b and c), and Punan Malinau. Punan Tubu’ folktales have become the object of another documentation project that will produce a book of stories and a dictionary (Soriente et al. to appear, c) while the Punan Malinau/Ma’ Pnaan is being studied due to its peculiar phonological structure.

As far as Kayan and Kayanic languages are concerned, if very little has been produced after the Holle list (Stokhof 1986) and an epic of high relevance in the Kayan world, Takna Lawe’, not much is available on Kayan languages spoken in Kalimantan. Guerreiro (1986, 2009 and to appear) has been involved in the study of Kayanic Busang, Modang and Wehea and is at the moment concentrating on the study of Basap and other languages of the Sajau group.

In the Kelabitic group, Clayre (2005) has been involved in the study of Lundayeh and Saban and recently Ganang et al. (2008) have produced a dictionary of Lundayeh, whereas not much is available on the Murut Tidong group.
Some lexical material regarding Punan, Kayan, Kantuk, Iban and Kapuas Hulu has been published by *Pusat penelitian kebudayaan Melayu Universitas Tranjungpura* but unfortunately the information is confusing. The Indonesian *Pusat Bahasa* has published since 1980 a number of publications concerning the description, the collection of basic vocabulary in different languages of Kalimantan, *Kosakata Swadesh*, and other kind of basic dictionaries, but the information provided is of preliminary nature and sometimes misleading (see also Adelaar 2010).

Appell (1986)
Appell-Warren (1986)
Ganang *et al.* (2008)
Clayre (2005)
Adul *et al.* (1985)
*Kamus Bahasa Bulungan*
Puri (2001)
Soriente (2006, and to appear)
Guerreiro (to appear)

Ongoing projects:

- Disappearing languages of Hunter-Gatherers in East Kalimantan
  Dr. N. Cesard, Drs. Dollop Mamung, Dr. A. Guerreiro and Dr. A. Soriente
  The project is focused on documenting the oral traditions and compiling bilingual vocabularies of some former hunters-gatherers’ languages in the Province of East Kalimantan. Until now these languages, mainly the Punan Tubu’ and the Ulun Lebbo’ and Ulun Darat are poorly known and scattered in different Regencies. The topics addressed in this documentation project are:
  - oral traditions (songs, epics, stories, myths, proverbs);
  - linguistic interactions and borrowings, phenomenon of diglossia with the National language (Bahasa Indonesia), and other, regional, languages;
  - lexicology and dialectal variations.
  Very little information on the oral traditions of these people is available.
  The main kind of narrative genre is *mbui*. 15 *mbui* have been collected and 8 have been transcribed and translated. A dictionary is being prepared and will be published together with the stories and their translations in Indonesian.

- Current projects in Northeast Kalimantan
  Lebu’ Kulit 32 files 5,692 (transcribed records of elicited and naturalistic material)
  Oma Longh 25 files 5,393 (transcribed records of elicited and naturalistic material)
  Penan Benalui 13 files 1471 (transcribed records of elicited and naturalistic material)
  Punan Tubu 10 files (8 transcribed folk stories and elicited material)
  Punan Segah/Ma Pnaan (elicited and recorded material being transcribed).
  These studies have a twofold objective, from one side to provide a preliminary description of phonological, morphological and syntactic features of these languages to better understand their position within the Austronesian language family and to document them. The Punan have always lived in simbiosis with a group of Kenyah or Kayanic agriculturalist people—Kenyah and the Manga’ ay (or also called Segai)—and
at first glance, these languages seem to have many common features (see Soriente in press and Guerreiro 1996).

In particular, phonologically Ma’ Pnaan has a very peculiar system with unusual reflexes for PMP voiced labial obstruents and of the semivowel w in g: e.g. PMP buaq > gu ‘fruit’ PMP duah > ago ‘two’, PMP qubi > gai tuber, PMP quay > goi ‘rattan’. There is also a strong tendency for historically disyllabic forms to be realized as a monosyllable with a complex cluster (e.g. PMP mata > mtañ; takut > tkut ‘fear’).

Digital capture of audio tapes made in 1991–1996 in Kalimantan
- 250 tapes of recordings of the Culture and Conservation project of WWF Indonesia (Bakung, Lepo’ Tau and Lepo’ Ke’ Kenyah stories tekena’ (Narrative texts, folktales, epics, myths, fables with animals), and songs and music Silun, Melalo’ and Suket.

- Future projects on Northwest languages
  Digitalization, transcription and translation of Bernard Sellato’s material:
  Around 100 tapes of languages of hunter gatherers in East Kalimantan
  Rajindra Puri: Penan Benalui
  Nicolas Cesard: Punan Tubu’
  Antonio Guerreiro: Wehea Busang, Merap, Basap

- Other materials on Kenyah languages
  Gini Gorlinski’s recordings on Kenyah, Penan and Murik from Kalimantan and Sarawak: 100 CDs material from mostly Kenyah Lepo’ Tau, Uma’ Jalan, and Badeng. Genres include much sampé’ music, but also xylophone, box zither (lutung kayu), mouth flute, nose flute, jew’s harp, mouth organ, and mixed ensembles.
  Kenyah epic tales, some told as partially rhymed, partially sung, partially narrated – in East Kalimantan style; others completely sung as kerintuk in Baram Kenyah style.
  a few shorter narrative songs from the Uma’ Jalan (type of kendra sabai). Many long- dance songs (belian dadu’).

5. Studies on southern inland (Barito) languages

5.1 Previous studies

1. Hudson (1967)
   a. Comparative wordlists of 14 languages (except for Ampanang and Bakumpai)
   b. Sound correspondences, proto-phonemes, and sound changes
   c. Classification of the languages

2. Problems of Hudson (1967)
   a. The wordlists were collected from only a few speakers.
   b. There were no phonemic analyses available.
   c. The classification was conducted on the basis of phonetic or semi-phonological data

3. Hudson (1978) has similar problems.

5.2 Post-Hudson’s studies
(4) Descriptive studies outside Indonesia
   a. Gudai (1985)

(5) Gudai (1985) supports sound changes assumed by Hudson, for example:
   a. Proto-Central East-South East Barito. palatal semivowel *y
      > Maanyan (Southeast Barito). glottal stop /ʔ/ or __VT (T= voiceless stop)
      midi ‘buy’ vs. midiʔ ‘choose’
      mais ‘thin’ vs. maʔis ‘cook in banana leaf’ (Gudai 1985: 13)
   b. Proto-East Barito. alveolar fricative *s (and alveolar stop *t)
      > Maanyan (Southeast Barito). glottal fricative h (and alveolar fricative s)
      sameh ‘same’ vs. hamen ‘want’
      kasay ‘powder’ vs. kahay ‘stir’
      sulas ‘dishonest’ vs. sulah ‘bold’ (Gudai 1985: 15)

(6) Inagaki (2007) supports a sound change assumed by Hudson:
    Proto-Dohoi-Murung1. voiceless stop *T
    > Dohoi (Kadorih). glottal fricative + voiceless stop hT / V__V
    a. apang ‘seed, pip’ vs. ahpang ‘sacred decapitating knife of Kalimantan’
    b. pitu ‘door sill’ vs. pihit ‘seven (archaic)’, puti ‘banana’ vs. puhiti ‘white’
    c. kacang ‘straight’ vs. kahcang ‘plaited mat’, ‘peanut’
    d. bakai ‘not yet finished’ vs. bahkai ‘monkey’ (Inagaki 2007: 116)

(7) Descriptive studies in Indonesia
    (They can be regarded as ‘raw description[s]’, Gudai 1985: 11)
   a. East Barito: Andianto et al. (1989), Asnan (1997); Ngabut et al. (1988, 1989, 1992); Kawi et al. (1983); Iper et al. (1999a, 2002b); Iper et al. (2002a), Kawi et al. (1984).
   b. Barito-Mahakam: —

5.3 Future research

Sander Adelaar of University of Melbourne will start a new project for historical/descriptive study on Barito languages this year. This project will be the first attempt to describe Barito languages on a large scale.

6. Studies on Malayic languages

- Recent projects on Malayic:
  Balai Berkua Malay: 34 file (10,497 transcribed records) (MPI Jakarta)
  Middle Indonesia Pontianak: 99 files (120,000 transcribed records) (Joseph Errington –Yale University-MPI Jakarta)
  Collins: Malay varieties
Adelaar (2005a, c)
Tjia (2007)

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, considering the high language diversity, very few documentation projects are being carried out in Kalimantan. In particular, in the Kelabitic area, the Lengilu language should be studied because it is considered more endangered than others, in the Murut-Tidong group, never a documentation project has ever been done in Bulusu, Tidung, and Bulungan. The same holds for small Kayanic and Punan languages of which very little is known. Taking into account that the problem of the classification of the Punan languages is still unresolved, that the hypothesis of a common substratum in Borneo and some Asian languages has pointed to an Austroasiatic connection which has never been proven and that this area is home of so called ‘hot spots’ for linguistic change (Blust 2007), much more study is required in many undocumented areas of Kalimantan and a better management and archiving of available data is required.

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