

Book review

Mohamad Subakir Mohd Yasin: *Language Allegiance and Language Shift*. UKM: Faculty of Language Studies, 1998.

This work is a doctoral dissertation that has been adapted into a book. Mohamad Subakir's study is on the Javanese (originally from Java, Indonesia) descendants living in the area called Sungai Lang in Selangor, Malaysia. Some work has been done on the minority languages in Malaysia (David 1996; David and Naji 2000; David and Noor 1999; David and Nambiar 2002; David et al., this issue). Subakir researches as an insider, being a native of the village and a Javanese. His account is clear and concise and this makes the book readable. The book is only 92 pages (excluding bibliography) and contains four chapters. This study looks at language use and attitudes using data from questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation. The analysis is quantitative and tables are used for easy reference.

One of the main objectives of the investigation is to trace the socio-historical factors of the Javanese community in Malaysia. This is described in chapter one. The writer starts with a brief history of the people of Java, their migration to the Malay Peninsula, and their settlement in Sungai Lang. This initial overview is useful in guiding the reader to understand the attitudes and ideological makeup of the community. Chapter one also details the basic infrastructure of the village. One can't help but feel that the writer is taking the reader through his childhood as he describes "places where most villages go to do their daily shopping. On the grounds of one of the primary schools, right across from these shops, there is a soccer field, a netball field, and a volleyball court for the villagers, especially the youngsters, to use in the afternoons" (p. 10). A detailed analysis of the demography of the community is provided, and this is useful as the researcher uses age and gender as variables in his analysis.

Chapter two provides a brief summary of the relevant literature as well as the theoretical framework used. Although brief, the literature review