

Noor Azam Haji-Othman
James McLellan
David Deterding *Editors*

The Use and Status of Language in Brunei Darussalam

A Kingdom of Unexpected Linguistic
Diversity

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Preface

Brunei Darussalam is a small country, but it exhibits substantial linguistic diversity: Brunei Malay is generally the lingua franca, Standard Malay is taught in schools, different groups speak a range of other indigenous languages such as Kedayan, Dusun, Tutong and Iban as well as various dialects of Chinese, and English is also widely spoken especially by the well-educated. Description of the ways that these languages are used in Brunei therefore provides a fascinating snapshot of the kind of multilingual diversity that tends to occur in Southeast Asia.

This book offers insights into various facets of the linguistic diversity of Brunei, including the status of minority languages in the country, the language of shop-signs, the pronunciation of Brunei English and Brunei Mandarin, the acquisition of Malay, attitudes of university students towards non-native teachers, language choice among foreign workers, code-switching in the courtroom, the adoption of Malay compliment strategies by young people, the lexical choices and discourse of online texts, the English and the Malay of newspaper articles, literature in Brunei, and language in education in both secular and religious schools. All of these represent new studies, most of them based on the substantial analysis of fresh data.

The book should be of crucial importance to students and scholars in Brunei, but it will also be of considerable relevance to everyone interested in language usage and linguistic diversity throughout the world, as it provides a diverse collation and in-depth analysis of material occurring in a country with some fascinating patterns of language usage. We hope that a wide range of students, scholars and researchers as well as general readers will appreciate this rich collection of fresh material.

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Noor Azam Haji-Othman
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Contributors

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