

# PERCEPTIONS OF BIDAYUH ON IMPORTANCE OF THE BIDAYUH LANGUAGE



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# Languages in Malaysia

- 134 established languages, 112 indigenous languages (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2020)



**Sarawak** (East Malaysia, island of Borneo) has:

- at least **25 different ethnic groups** (Kheung & Aduce, 2018)

## Bidayuh

- previously known as **Land Dayak**
- **second largest indigenous group** in Sarawak,
- **217,800 speakers** (Sarawak Government Portal, 2017), after the Iban

# Purpose of Study

To examine **perceptions of Bidayuh community in Sarawak, Malaysia** on the **importance of the Bidayuh language**

Specific aspects:

1. **reasons for the importance of the Bidayuh language**
2. **connotative associations of the language**

## Method of Study

Descriptive study involving **61 participants** (Bidayuh family, friends and contacts)

Instrument: **Online questionnaire** with 5 sections:

- A. demographic information
- B. **proficiency** in Bidayuh
- C. **frequency** of Bidayuh **usage**
- D. **language use** in nine domains
- E. **importance** of the Bidayuh language and **connotative associations** of the Bidayuh language on a five-point Likert scale

# Method of Study

## Demographic background

- good spread of age groups but **mostly in their 30s and 40s**
- **Gender balance:** 52.46% female, 47.54% male
- **72.13% had degree** or higher
- About **60% had BM medium primary and secondary education**, about 35% had English medium education, and 7% had Chinese primary education
- **95.08% were Christians**
- Most of the participants spoke Bau (44.26%) and Biatah (40.98%) varieties. Serian (9.84%) and others (4.92%)