

International Symposium on the languages of Java

Title of Paper: Language change in Sundanese after Soeharto

Mikihiro Moriyama

Abstract

Socio-political changes in Indonesia since Soeharto left office in 1998 and the following period of *reformasi* (reformation) seem to have caused changes in the configuration of language in Indonesia. The language policy of the state has become less coercive than in former times when *Bahasa Indonesia* became a symbol of nationalism and of uniting diverse ethnic groups. In other words, the long-held one language policy of the state has experienced change and the monolingual practice in the public space is also changing. For instance, Indonesian is not only language using for broadcasting news; regional languages such as Javanese and Sundanese are also starting to be used on TV.

Another important change is that Indonesian society has been more directly exposed to the global flow of information. On the other hand, since the enactment of regional autonomy legislation in 1999, regional voices have been heard more loudly than before. This legislation has had impacts on various aspects of the social and cultural sphere and has encouraged expressions of regional aspiration.

In this paper, I will explore aspects of change in the regional languages of Indonesia. In particular, I will use the Sundanese case as an example to examine an increasing presence of regional languages in the public space and to illustrate influence of increasing regional autonomy. Then, I will discuss the efforts made to revive regional languages.

Biodata: Dr Mikihiro Moriyama is teaching Indonesian language and literature at Nanzan University, Japan. His recent published books in both English and Indonesian were a result of his research undertaken last 15 years and the revised version of his dissertation submitted to Leiden University in 2003. He has written several articles on Sundanese language and literature, essays on contemporary Indonesian literature, and Japanese translations of Indonesian literary works.

Dr Mikihiro MORIYAMA
e-mail: moriyama@nanzan-u.ac.jp

Nanzan University
Faculty of Foreign Studies
Department of Asian Studies
18, Yamazato-cho, Showa-ku, Nagoya 466-8673 Japan
tel.+81-(0)52-832-3110 +509(direct) or 832-3111(operator)
fax.+81-(0)52-832-5330