

REPORT ON THE SERUYAN RIVER SURVEYS IN CENTRAL KALIMANTAN
(Kohin, Keninjal and Sebaun (Dohoi) Languages)

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Contents

ABSTRACT

- 1 PREVIOUS WORK
 - 2 SURVEY AREA
 - 2.1 MAP OF SURVEY AREA
 - 2.2 TABLE OF VILLAGES (INFORMATION FROM OBSERVATIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRES)
 - 3 OBSERVATIONS
 - 3.1 BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
 - 3.2 COMMUNICATION AND ELECTRICITY
 - 3.3 TRANSPORTATION
 - 3.3.1 Land Transportation
 - 3.3.2 Water Transportation
 - 3.4 HEALTH AND MEDICAL
 - 3.5 LIVELIHOOD, ECONOMY, AND INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDERS
 - 3.6 RELIGIOUS SITUATION
 - 3.7 EDUCATION
 - 3.7.1 Class Attendance
 - 3.7.2 Language Use in School
 - 4 QUESTIONNAIRES and INFORMAL INTERVIEWS
 - 4.1 GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE
 - 4.1.1 Procedure
 - 4.1.2 Results
 - 4.2 INFORMAL INTERVIEWS
 - 5 WORD LISTS
 - 6 HTT
 - 6.1 PROCEDURE
 - 6.1.1 Collecting the text
 - 6.1.2 Making questions about the text
 - 6.1.3 Testing
 - 6.2 RESULTS
 - 6.3 PROBLEMS
 - 7 RA-RTT
 - 7.1 PROCEDURE
 - 7.2 RESULTS
 - 7.3 PROBLEMS
 - 8 TEXT COMPREHENSION
 - 8.1 PROCEDURE
 - 8.2 RESULTS
 - 8.3 PROBLEMS
 - 9 CONCLUSION
- APPENDIX A: Recorded Texts Used for RA-RTT
- REFERENCES

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Area Surveyed: The northern counties of the western-most river system in the Kotawaringin Timur Regency.

Languages Surveyed: Primary focus on isolects of Kohin, some information gathered on Keninjal and Sebaun (Dohoi).

Data obtained: Word lists, Sociolinguistic Information, Text Comprehension Testing.

ABSTRACT

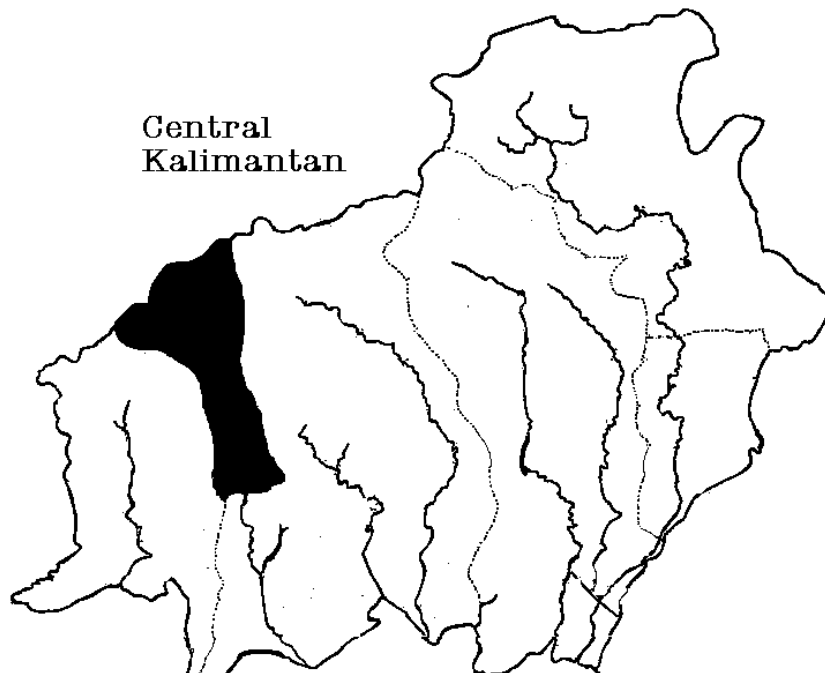
This report summarizes the findings of two surveys carried out in the middle and upper villages along the Seruyan River. The first survey, done by Jim and Heather Meyers, Ben and Susan Rice, and Pak Penyang, covered both the middle and upper Seruyan counties. Word lists, sociolinguistic questionnaires, and one recorded text (from Rantau Pulut) were obtained. The second survey, done by Jim Meyers and Pak Penyang, also covered the middle and upper Seruyan counties. The major focus of the second survey was to do comprehension testing among speakers of the isolects of the Kohin language.

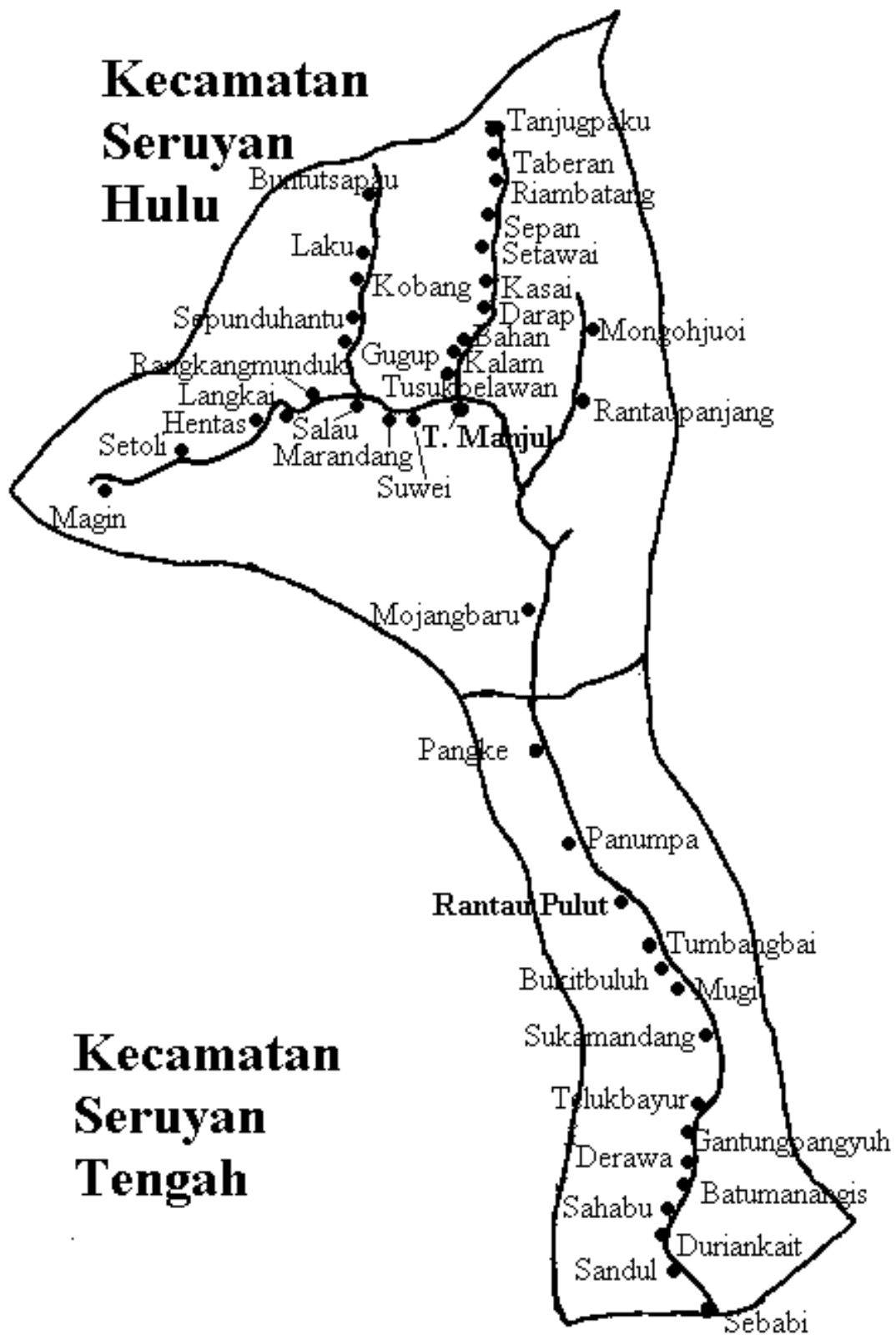
1 PREVIOUS WORK

To our knowledge, no intensive linguistic surveys had been done previously in the upper Seruyan county. However, Petrus Poerwadi researched the central county of the Seruyan River. He mentions at least three dialects of Kohin in his book, *Sintaksis Bahasa Seruyan*, published in 1998. This book also contained a word list that we typed into *Wordsurv* for lexical comparison with other word lists that we have obtained. Alfred Hudson published word lists from neighboring languages (Keninjal, Dohoi, and Katingan) in 1967 in “The Barito Isolects of Central Kalimantan”.

2 SURVEY AREA

2.1 MAP OF SURVEY AREA





2.2 TABLE OF VILLAGES (INFORMATION FROM OBSERVATIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRES)

Village	Language(s)	Population	GPS co-ordinates	
			South	East
Seruyan Tengah				
Pembuang Hulu	Pembuang			
Tanjungrangas	Pembuang			
Sebabi	Pembuang			
Sandul	Pembuang			
Durian Kait	Sambi			
Sahabu	Pembuang, Kohin			
Batumanangis	Sambi			
Derawa	Kohin			
Gantung Pengayuh	Pembuang			
Teluk Bayur	Kohin			
Sukamandang	Keninjal			
Mugi	Kohin			
Bukitbuluh	Pembuang			
T. Bai	Pembuang			
Rantau Pulut	Kohin		01° 55.764'	112° 07.234'
Panumpa	Kohin			
Pangke	Kohin	406	01° 39.878'	111° 59.062'
Seruyan Hulu				
Mojangbaru	Kohin	298	01° 30.044'	111° 59.764'
R. Panjang	Sebaun	489		
Mongohjuoi	Sebaun	254		
T. Manjul	Kahayan	2373	01° 17.936'	111° 55.584'
T. Suei	Kohin	101	01° 19.060'	111° 51.450'
Marandang	Kohin	152	01° 18.704'	111° 50.560'
T. Salau	Kohin	271	01° 17.819'	111° 48.840'
Rangkangmuduk	Kohin	118		
T. Langkai	Kohin	536	01° 18.461'	111° 44.548'
T. Hentas	Kohin	41		
T. Setoli	Kohin	354		
T. Magin	Tomun, Kohin	122		
T. Gugup	Kohin	481		
Sepunduhantu	Kohin	266		
T. Kobang	Keninjal	175		
T. Laku	Melahoi, Pinu	389		
Buntutsapau	Keninjal	276		
Tusuk Belawan	Dohoi	153	01° 13.198'	111° 55.463'
T. Kalam	Dohoi, Sebaun	175	01° 11.700'	111° 57.675'
T. Bahan	Dohoi	461		
T. Darap	Melahoi	1317		
T. Kasai	Melahoi, Dohoi	212		
T. Setawai	Melahoi	157		
T. Sepan	Melahoi	87		
Riam Batang	Melahoi	208		
T. Taberan	Melahoi	89		
T. Paku	Pangin	1018		

3 OBSERVATIONS

3.1 BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The Seruyan River is one of the major river basins in Central Kalimantan, the western-most river in the Kotawaringin Timur Regency. This is a general overview of the demographic information and non-linguistic observations our team made during survey trips. This information will be useful in the future for SIL teams and others who wish to travel to this region to visit, work, or live. Possible community development needs within this area may also be inferred from these observations.

The survey team collected information through observations, talking with and inquiring of local people in the villages visited, and a short questionnaire made specifically for county or village leaders. The latter questionnaire was utilized with one county leader and seven village leaders in the following villages:

Central Seruyan County

Rantau Pulut (county capital); Pangke (north of Rantau Pulut)

Upper Seruyan County

Mojang Baru (north of Rantau Pulut, Seruyan River)

Tumbang Suei; Marandang; Tumbang Salau (west of Tumbang Manjul, Salau River tributary)

Tumbang Kalam; Tumbang Bahan (north of Tumbang Manjul, Seruyan tributary)

Population

Seruyan Tengah County 24,306 people

Seruyan Hulu County 10,692 people (1996 census)

[28 villages; approximately 2200 families; 22 out of 28 villages have from 100–550 people]

3.2 COMMUNICATION AND ELECTRICITY

- The closest telephones for people living in the two counties we investigated are in Asambaru, 150 km south of Rantau Pulut, and in Pinuh (3-5 hours drive into West Kalimantan to the north).
- There are SSBs (single side-band radios) only in Rantau Pulut and Tumbang Manjul, the county capitals.
- Rantau Pulut is serviced by PLN Electric Company and also has many generators, all privately owned (including those owned by logging companies).
- The other villages had generators, almost always privately owned, which were turned on during the evening hours. We commonly heard there was a generator in the village, but that it had been broken for some time.

3.3 TRANSPORTATION

3.3.1 Land Transportation

There is a major, mostly-paved provincial road which passes through Asambaru on the lower third of the Seruyan River. Running north from Asambaru to Rantau Pulut there is a logging road, which is reported to be passable in dry weather with a 4-wheel drive vehicle. There are also the remnants of an old logging road connecting Rantau Pulut and Tumbang Manjul, which is rarely, if ever, used now as it is virtually impassable. (The company which made the road left the area in 1995 or 1996 and the road deteriorated due to lack of

maintenance.) Logging roads connect many of the tributaries in northern Central Kalimantan, as well, and connect the villages in the upper Seruyan River with West Kalimantan and other logging villages to the east within Central Kalimantan.

3.3.2 Water Transportation

Speed boats frequently travel the Seruyan River south of Rantau Pulut. It is possible to charter a speedboat or take one of the daily “taxis”. There are a few speed boat drivers willing to go north of Rantau Pulut, but the large and numerous rapids deter most from making the trip. This trip can take days, depending on weather and availability of drivers, and is relatively expensive.

The often-dangerous rapids also prevent regular and frequent motorized canoe travel between Rantau Pulut and Tumbang Manjul, though it is possible. Travel further upriver from Tumbang Manjul is almost exclusively via motorized canoe, apart from the few vehicles used to travel logging roads. This section of river forms a major geographic barrier, especially for the people who live north of the rapids. The isolation, lack of reliable and safe transportation, and lack of available imported products caused by this barrier was noted by people in more than one village as a serious felt need among villagers.

3.4 HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Most likely, the greatest health problems in the Seruyan River stem from the lack of clean water sources and the people’s use (over ninety-five percent) of the river water for washing, bathing, and drinking, though contaminated with human and other waste. A small handful of villages do have usable wells, but even then, the large majority of the people will use the river out of habit or not recognizing the benefits of using well water.

Nutrition is poor in many villages, evidenced by many children with lighter hair, a sign of deficient nutrients in one’s diet. Many people said that often, depending on the success of the harvest from season to season, that they cannot survive on the food produced within the village. At those times they must buy from outside sources, or live without their basic needs being met.

There were no local health workers in the interior villages where we traveled. In the two counties we surveyed there were three doctors and many other health workers who were most often stationed in the county capitals. They would travel out periodically into the interior villages. Some drugs were also available in the capitals. Each village did have at least one or two traditional doctors, who were regularly sought out by nearly all village people for their services as birthing doctors or for help in healing afflictions derived from spiritual forces. One health clinic in Tumbang Manjul told us that the medical doctor currently serving all of Upper Seruyan County (over ten thousand people) is only the third doctor to work in this area since Indonesia gained its independence fifty-four years ago.

The main diseases or health problems reported in these villages were malaria, vomiting and diarrhea, dysentery, and typhoid.

3.5 LIVELIHOOD, ECONOMY, AND INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDERS

The main employers of people living along the Seruyan River are logging companies. The logging industry is also the source of most of the area’s wealth or income. Most nonloggers are farmers who

grow rice and other produce in the fields. The planting season generally begins around September and lasts for a few months, while harvest time arrives around February and lasts until April. Some people work in the rattan and rubber trades as well.

The presence of the logging companies has raised the standard of living in this regency as compared with the mainly agricultural areas in neighboring West Kotawaringin. There is a great deal of wood available at relatively cheap prices for the building of more durable homes and furniture though there are still some houses made of bark in the interior villages. Along with jobs, loggers have introduced more generators, roads, vehicles, and supplies to the area causing outside products to be increasingly available, especially in the county capitals.

These capitals had canned and other specialty foods, bottled water, household items, drinks, school supplies, and some medicines available. Even in the interior villages, some village leaders would have a few pieces of furniture in their homes and possibly a satellite dish, which often did not work. However, there were no stores or markets in any of the villages (barring capitals) visited. The villagers would have to travel hours, usually, to shop at a major market or shop. With many jobs available, many migrants or outsiders have been attracted to this area from other parts of Kalimantan as well as other islands of Indonesia.

3.6 RELIGIOUS SITUATION

The predominant religions practiced in this region are Kaharingin (traditional animism) and Protestant Christianity, although in Central Seruyan County there are 15 mosques, 15 churches, and one Kaharingin Balai (place of worship). Islam is more prevalent as one travels south of Rantau Pulut toward the coast, and is also the strong majority religion in Tumbang Manjul.

There are generally not any places of worship in most interior villages, and religious leaders are usually itinerant, traveling from village to village, not living in any one village full time.

3.7 EDUCATION

We obtained specific information about education from teacher questionnaires. In six villages, Rantau Pulut, Tumbang Suwei, Tumbang Salau, Marandang, Tumbang Bahan, and Tumbang Kalam, a total of eight teachers were interviewed. Every village has an elementary school and typically all children of school age enter school and frequently complete six years. Many villagers expressed concern that the elementary school is often closed, either because the majority of children are working in the fields or because there is no permanent teacher present. There are junior high schools in Rantau Pulut and Tumbang Manjul, which only a small minority (~30%) of students are able to attend, usually for financial reasons. The nearest high schools are located in Sampit, the provincial capital, and across the border to the north in West Kalimantan. Only 20–30% of the students that finish high school continue their education in college or university. Of those that begin college or university, only 20–30% are able to finish, it was reported.

3.7.1 Class Attendance

The following chart summarizes the number of students that attended each class.

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Total
Rantau Pulut	50	33	30	28	53	33	227
Suei	14	12	9	9	8	8	60
Tumbang Salau	3	3	3	4	5	3	21
Marandang	11	4	5	2	5	4	31
Tumbang Bahan	29	20	15	10	4	5	83
Tbang Kalam	-	-	3	2	4	4	13
Total	107	72	65	55	79	57	

3.7.2 Language Use in School

The following charts shows the answers teachers gave to various questions regarding language use in school:

VILLAGE	<i>Language of instruction</i>	<i>Language children use during play at school</i>	<i>Length of time to understand Indonesian</i>	<i>Length of time to become fluent in Indonesian</i>
Rantau Pulut (junior high)	Only Indonesian			1 year
Rantau Pulut (elementary)	Indonesian, often Kohin	Kohin	2 months	1 year
T. Suwei (elementary)	Indonesian, Banjar, Kohin, Kahayan	Kohin, Kahayan, Banjar		3 months
T. Salau (elementary)	Indonesian	Kohin	9 months	2 years
Marandang (elementary)	Indonesian	Kohin	unable to understand everything in class 1	at least 1 year
Langkai (elementary)	Indonesian	Kohin		3 years
T. Bahan (elementary)	Indonesian, Kahayan, Dohoi	Dohoi, some Kahayan	unable to understand everything in class 1	6 months
T. Kalam (elementary)	Indonesian, for class 1-2 Kahayan & Sebaun	Sebaun	1 year	3 years

Although this chart shows that the primary language of instruction is Indonesian, six out of seven elementary teachers said they sometimes use the local language with children in school.

The results of the questions about the length of time it takes a student to comprehend and speak Indonesian are ambiguous. Each teacher had a different answer and probably has varying standards of what it means to comprehend or speak Indonesian.

4 QUESTIONNAIRES AND INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

4.1 GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1.1 Procedure

Two group questionnaires were administered. In Rantau Pulut, we conducted the questionnaire with five men mostly over the age of 50, who were native Kohin speakers and willing to answer some questions about their language. We all sat on the floor. One linguist asked the questions and the other recorded the answers. The interviewer tried to encourage each of the men to answer, but the conversation was dominated by two of the men. The questionnaire took about one and a half hours to complete.

In Marandang, we used the questionnaire on five women of a variety of ages, four of whom were native Kohin speakers. The interview with the women was more balanced. Each of the women answered some of the questions and often came to a consensus on the answer. The questionnaire took about one hour.

4.1.2 Results

- The men from Rantau Pulut said the Kohin spoken in Upper Seruyan County was the same as they spoke. However, the women in Marandang said that the people in Rantau Pulut have a somewhat different accent, tone, and pronunciation.
- The women in Marandang said that a six-year-old child from Rantau Pulut would not be able to understand the language spoken in Marandang.
- The men in Rantau Pulut considered their village as the best place to learn Kohin, but the women in Marandang said Langkai was the best place to learn their language.
- The men in Rantau Pulut said that they could speak Kahayan, Sambu (Arut River), Dohoi, and Katingan.
- Both groups said they could not understand the languages from West Kalimantan including Pangin, Keninjal, Paku, and Melahoi.
- Both groups were interested in learning to read and write in the Kohin language. The men in Rantau Pulut said there were many speakers of Kohin who didn't understand Indonesian, especially older people. They said if they learned to read and write in Kohin, it would be easier to understand than Indonesian.

4.2 INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

Much of the information gathered on the survey was done through informal interviews. We had two methods of conducting informal interviews. The first method involved a list of twenty-four

questions which could be used as a starting place for the interviewer. A response sheet was provided so that the interviewer could jot down notes quickly. We conducted ten informal interviews in eight villages. The second method was simply asking questions during casual conversations and writing the answers down later.

The following is a summary of responses to specific questions:

- **What language is the same or almost the same as your language?**

- (1) Kohin

Interviews were administered in three villages in the central Seruyan area: Rantau Pulut, Pangke, Mojang Baru. All those interviewed agreed that the local language of the Seruyan River was Kohin. Of these three villages the people (three groups of about three to five people each) agreed that they spoke exactly the same variety of Kohin as is spoken in the other villages located in the central Seruyan area, but that there were some differences in vocabulary and accent in the Kohin spoken in the villages on the northern part of the river. This information was confirmed when we interviewed people from three villages in the northern Seruyan area. Kohin speakers from the northern part of the river said that they spoke exactly the same variety as other Kohin speakers in the northern area, but a bit differently than Kohin speakers in the central Seruyan area.

- (2) Dohoi/Sebaun

Interviews were also conducted in two villages where Dohoi or Sebaun were spoken: Tumbang Kalam and Tumbang Bahan. Those interviewed in Tumbang Kalam considered Dohoi and Sebaun to be two names for exactly the same language, but those interviewed in Tumbang Bahan considered Sebaun to be slightly different than Dohoi.

- **Where do they speak very differently than you do?**

All those interviewed said that the migrants in their villages from West Kalimantan (whose languages were Pangin, Keninjal, and Pinu) spoke very differently than they. On the upper Seruyan River, there are a few branches that extend off the main river, and down each of those branches are intermingled villages with different languages and people groups. Some languages are spoken in a cluster of villages, like Kohin and Dohoi/Sebaun, but languages from West Kalimantan are often only spoken in one or two villages along the northern tributaries of the Seruyan River.

- **Where do they speak your language the best or most purely?**

All of those interviewed in each of the villages except one said that their own village was where their local language was spoken the best. The one exception was Mojang Baru, where the central Seruyan variety of Kohin is reportedly used. The people in Mojang Baru said that Kohin is spoken the best in Tumbang Langkai. Tumbang Langkai is included in the northern Seruyan area.

- **Domains**

In all of the villages where Kohin was the predominant language, the only domains where Kohin was not spoken were in church, during prayer, and in the health clinic. All interviewees said that they speak Kohin with their parents, siblings, husband/wife, friends, village leader, children, and in the fields. The only exceptions to this were if the individuals were married to someone from a different language group, then they would often use Kahayan or Indonesian.

6 HTT

6.1 PROCEDURE

In Rantau Pulut we collected and recorded a home town text (HTT) to be used for intelligibility testing on later surveys. We tried to collect a text in the morning, but our language informant wanted to write out his story first. We thought this might save time if he wrote the text in both languages (Kohin and Indonesian), so we asked him to come back in the afternoon with his story. He came back with a typed text, which regrettably was not usable because it was procedural (about how to plant a rice field) and not narrative. The surveyors were the ones at fault for not communicating clearly what type of text was needed. Since it was already late in the afternoon, we had to dismiss him politely and find a new story teller.

Thankfully, a native speaker of Kohin and otherwise good language helper was brought to us just as she was coming home from the rice field. She was willing to help us, and her story was more appropriate for an HTT. However, when she tried to translate it into Indonesian for us, sometimes she added details that were not in the original story, and other times she left out important details that were in the original story. Unfortunately, we did not catch these flaws until after we made up the questions and did the testing. Later, we did get more clarification from a different person that spoke both Indonesian and Kohin well.

6.1.1 Collecting the text

The speaker was a 51 year old woman who was brought up in the Kohin area. Her parents were from the area and she used Kohin every day in her home. We explained what kind of story we needed (from personal experience, with many details, spoken slowly). We recorded her first telling of the story, which was very good. She spoke slowly and clearly and was not uncomfortable with the recording procedure. We then listened to the recording while transcribing just enough to know where sentence breaks were. Then we asked her to translate each sentence in Indonesian.

6.1.2 Making questions about the text

While looking over the text we came up with fourteen questions about the content, trying to cover a variety of semantic categories (participant as actor, participant as goal, object as goal, description of condition, etc.) We translated these questions into Indonesian and then asked another speaker (male) to translate them into Kohin. During the process of recording the questions, we allowed the speaker to listen to the text so that the questions would be appropriate for the text. We then inserted the questions into the text and made two copies for testing.

6.1.3 Testing

We had difficulty finding many people to test the text and sometimes settled for any participants who spoke Kohin even if they did not meet the other criteria (originally from the area, speak Kohin at home, spouse speaks Kohin, parents from the area, seldom travel outside the area). We eventually tested eight people.

6.2 RESULTS

The following chart summarizes the results of the HTT:

Male/Female Participant	M	F	F	M	M	F	M	M	Number Correct
Question 1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Question 2	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5
Question 3	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	7
Question 4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Question 5	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	7
Question 6	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	4
Question 7	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
Question 8	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	5
Question 9	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Question 10	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	7
Question 11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Question 12	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	6
Question 13	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	7
Question 14	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
Percent Correct	93%	71%	79%	86%	50%	50%	79%	79%	

Although question numbers 6,7,9, and 14 were the most often missed, we felt that question numbers 6,8,9, and 12 were the most vague because of the answers we received. Therefore, if we were to use this text for a full RTT, more discussion would be needed to determine which questions should be used.

6.3 PROBLEMS

Obviously, the scores for this home town test are very low. After testing, we found out that the Indonesian translation from which we had made the questions was partially inaccurate. Therefore, some of the questions were unclear and not appropriate for the portion of text they were asking about. Furthermore, it was difficult to find Kohin speakers in Rantau Pulut who were born and grew up in the area speaking Kohin every day.

We were able to get a more accurate translation after the testing was done. Also, we decided that Pangke would be a better test site for comprehension testing since there are more Kohin speakers who were born and raised in the area.

7 RA-RTT

7.1 PROCEDURE

The rapid appraisal—recorded text test (RA-RTT) is used as a preliminary tool to gain insight concerning intelligibility in order to prioritize further surveys. This tool is less discerning in intelligibility measurement than the full-blown RTT, yet it can be done in a much quicker manner. The RA-RTT was used to give an initial look at the comprehension of several isolects along the Seruyan and Manjul Rivers in Kotawaringin Timur. The isolects that were investigated were

Indonesian, Ngaju, and two isolects from Delang County and Northern Arut County in neighboring Kotawaringin Barat Regency.

The procedure followed by the survey team was patterned after the method in Stalder (1996a) and Stalder (1996b). The four texts, recorded and prepared on earlier occasions, were played in two villages, namely Rantau Pulut and Tumbang Salau. Each text tape was divided into six or seven segments of 20–40 seconds each. After each segment was played, the group was given opportunity to retell events and details that they understood. A linguist recorded notes of correct details, incorrect details, and additions to the text. The tapes were played for groups of six men in Rantau Pulut and a group of five women in Tumbang Salau. Due to previous experiences in similar areas, mixed gender groups were avoided to encourage freedom of speech for each member of the group. In addition, care was taken by the linguist to eliminate the domination of speaking and answering by any one member. After completion of the testing, each group was given a score of Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 according to the perceived comprehension of the test takers. A score of Level 1 indicated no comprehension and no ability to retell details heard in the text. A score of Level 2 showed some comprehension and some ability to retell details with some additions and deletions to the text. A score of Level 3 indicated good comprehension with correct details given with ease.

7.2 RESULTS

The following chart summarizes the results of the RA-RTT done in Tumbang Salau and Rantau Pulut.

Text Village	Arut Utara	Delang	Ngaju	Indonesian
Tumbang Salau	1	1	2+	2
Rantau Pulut	2+	2-	3	3

The quick assessment resulting from the RA-RTT showed that comprehension of isolects varied among villages located in the upper and middle portions of the Seruyan River. The test subjects in Tumbang Salau had no comprehension of the texts recorded in Northern Arut County or in Delang County. These tests were even stopped prior to completion since the lack of intelligibility was obvious after the first two segments were played.

On the contrary, for these same two texts, the group in Rantau Pulut scored 2+ and 2-, respectively. Apart from the differences in each village, there was higher comprehension for both Ngaju and Indonesian than there was for the isolects from Kotawaringin Barat Regency. However, the scores from Rantau Pulut were much higher.

7.3 PROBLEMS

Despite our intentions and preparations, we faced minor difficulties during the testing process. For instance, all interactions and facets of the testing were done in Indonesian. We intended to test their comprehension in Indonesian, but unfortunately, as a result of our testing methods, we forced them to use this as their language of communication with the survey team. Thus, any perceived difficulties in intelligibility might possibly have been due to a difficulty in expressing themselves in Indonesian rather than a problem in understanding the language of a given text.

Next, domination of the question answering by one individual was problematic. In the presence of a test taker with a strong personality, others would often defer to this person or refuse to answer altogether. Measures were taken to avoid cross-gender mixing within groups in order to avoid this problem, however, it still occurred within the groups composed of participants of the same gender.

Another obstacle was the location of the testing. Most often the RA-RTT was conducted in private homes, but with other activities going on simultaneously. Thus, the small recorders without high volume speakers were sometimes difficult to hear in the testing environment.

Finally, as we attempted to test the differences in language caused by geography, the types of groups chosen as testers introduced variables which may have affected the results. For example, the group in Rantau Pulut was made up of five well-traveled men, while the candidates in Tumbang Salau were four less-traveled women. Thus, the differences in comprehension might be due to acquired language knowledge by the men in the south as opposed to an inherent intelligibility of those languages tested. We recognize that this invalidates conclusions on intelligibility and the results are presented with this caveat.

8 TEXT COMPREHENSION

8.1 PROCEDURE

We recorded another Kohin text in Tumbang Langkai from an older man (about 80 years old) who was born and raised in the area. His parents and wife were all from the area as well. Then we listed twenty details from the text in chronological order. We also listed twenty details from the Kohin text that we obtained in Rantau Pulut. To test comprehension, individuals in Tumbang Langkai listened to the Kohin text from Rantau Pulut and individuals in Pangke listened to the text from Tumbang Langkai. One or two sentences were played at a time and then the individual told us as much of the content as they could understand. If they could not do this in Indonesian, we had them do it in Ngaju, the language of wider communication, and had Pak Penyang translate for us in Indonesian exactly what they said without adding or subtracting details. They received full credit for each detail they reported, half credit if they only reported part of the detail or needed to have the text portion played twice, and no credit if they missed the detail or could not understand the portion of the text that contained that detail.

8.2 RESULTS

The following chart summarizes the results of the comprehension test done in Tumbang Langkai and Pangke:

TUMBANG LANGKAI test of Rantau Pulut text			PANGKE test of Tumbang Langkai text	
MEN	WOMEN		MEN	WOMEN
90%	95%		85%	92.5%
87.5%	75%		95%	90%
85%	85%		97.5%	97.5%
92.5%	72.5%		95%	82.5%
87.5%	77.5%		95%	85%
88.5%	81%	AVERAGE PERCENT	93.5%	89.5%

8.3 PROBLEMS

There were a few problems with the test and procedures that need to be mentioned. One is the difficulty in knowing if the two texts were of equal difficulty. If one text was more difficult than the other, the results would not be accurate. Also, some individuals seem to have missed details because of not paying attention rather than poor comprehension. Furthermore, the details may not represent equal amounts of comprehension. One detail may have been more difficult to comprehend than another, but they were given the same point value. Finally, most of the participants had been exposed to the other Kohin isolect through travel, either they traveled themselves or had been visited by people from the other area. So, we were not able to tell if the comprehension was acquired or inherent.

Some people in Pangke said that the children probably would not understand the text from Tumbang Langkai, but when we tried to test children they were too embarrassed to say anything. We do not know if this embarrassment was because of a lack of comprehension or because of the intimidating situation of being tested by a foreigner.

9 CONCLUSION

Since this was an initial survey, we do not want to make any definite conclusions at this time. We have reported our findings as accurately as possible without making inferences that are beyond the scope of this paper.

APPENDIX A: Recorded Texts Used for RA-RTT

Arut: elicited in Riam, July 1999, Length=2:40, 6 sections.

Delang: elicited in Landau Kantu, July 1999, Length=2:30, 6 sections.

Indonesian: elicited in Palangka Raya, July 1999, Length=3:00, 7 sections.

Ngaju: elicited in Palangka Raya, March 2000, Length=3:30, 7 sections.

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