

**TRAINING FOR DOCUMENTING MINORITY LANGUAGES OF INDONESIA: PRACTICE,  
BENEFIT AND CHALLENGES**

Asako Shiohara  
ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  
ibashio@gmail.com

Yanti  
Universitas Katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya  
reginayanti@atmajaya.ac.id

**ABSTRACT**

*Indonesia is well-known for linguistic and cultural diversity. The country is home for more than 700 languages, that is nearly 10% of the world's languages. Most of these languages are found in the eastern part of Indonesia, especially in the provinces of Papua and West Papua in the island of New Guinea and province of Eastern Nusa Tenggara. Languages spoken in these three provinces, which belong to two separate language families, namely Austronesian and non-Austronesian, as a whole, show interesting linguistic features presumably as a result of contacts between the two language families. Unfortunately, most of these languages remain under-described and are seeing drastic reduction in speaker numbers as communities shift to the national languages Bahasa Indonesia or to more vigorous regional languages.*

*As a small-scale response to this situation, between 2013 and 2017 a series of nine 2–3 day training workshops on the theory and methods of language documentation were held in Indonesia and Malaysia, with the intention of increasing awareness and skills needed for documenting minority languages. Workshops were held in Denpasar (Bali), Samarinda (Kalimantan), Jambi (Sumatra), Kupang (Nusa Tenggara Timur), Manado (Sulawesi). The trainers were Indonesian and foreign researchers active in the field of language documentation, while the trainees were a mix of students and established scholars. This talk reports on the workshops, discussing what was successful and how they changed over time.*