

I was sitting with the Chief and Tuahs, who were conversing with me in Malay and talking with each other in their own dialect, when some strange Dyaks came in. Our friends addressed the strangers in Malay, and spoke to each other in something I could not understand. Upon questioning them about it afterwards, they said they spoke in their war language, as they did not trust these strange Dyaks, and did not wish them to understand what they said. It seemed to me that they used a kind of slang or patter they had invented, calling things by wrong names; and it is possible that, in a long-continued state of warfare with a succession of surrounding tribes, these war-tongues may have become their every-day language, and have quite changed their original dialects. They had many words in use for which we had no equivalents; for example, for 'to-morrow,' 'the day after,' and so on, they had special words for each, of a sequence of 'ten' or 'fourteen days'. In the same way they had words for 'rice', according as it was cooked in one way or another.