

Contested Wisdom in Indonesian and Japanese Proverbs — A Linguistic-Cultural Mapping^{※)} —

(インドネシア語と日本語の諺に見られる知恵の競い合い)
—— 言語的・文化的写像 ——

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要 旨

近年「諺」という言葉は、伝統的な性格を切り捨てて都市文化のイメージで暮らす人々にとっては、あまり省みるものではないと見られている。本論文は、諺に見られる伝統的な知恵が、人々の知識という宝庫の中で、今でも参照される部分となっているか否かについての考察を試みるものである。調査は、インドネシアのジョグジャカルタ市と大阪の152名の回答者に対して行った。その内容分析に基づき、本調査が言語学的に示したことは、諺は日本・インドネシア双方の言語社会において知恵の宝庫となっているが、日本では人口に膾炙した諺には、社会、規律、信条、信仰の面で人生の最良の結果を達成するように人を導き励ますことが求められている。これに対して、インドネシアで認知度の高い諺は、その国の社会（態度や振る舞い）や経済（管理）を決定したり批判したりする場合に有用とされる。知名度という意味で、どの言語にも広く深く根ざした存在である諺は、それが使用される社会で影響力を確立するために、他の諺と競い合うということが文化的に明らかになっている。その結果、多くの諺が優位にある諺に破れて使われなくなり、単なる言い換えに過ぎなくなっている。両国における分析によって、諺の中の知恵が人々の求めるものに近いほど、複数の諺が競い合うことになるということが示された。

(要旨：山崎雅人 訳)

キーワード：人口に膾炙した諺，知恵の競い合い，言語的・文化的写像

1. Introduction

All or almost all cultures provide their users with sufficient values, norms or rules in the content of language for establishing an identity of a society, revealing life continuity, and passing collective thoughts or lessons of life to the following generations. A set of such values and so forth has been used as a remedy to prescribe people to strategically cope with the complexities of the

sociocultural problems. One of indispensable artifacts of language is the proverbs in which they contain so-called deep-rooted wisdom. Traditionally, a proverb has been long understood as a piece of language which attached to any given culture universally as a pithy, memorable, and metaphoric entity in particular.

Due to its traditionality, the term 'proverb' has been assumed unpopular according to people's commentaries. The presumption

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of unpopularity of proverbs, as observed in some Japanese and Indonesian communities, was attributed to ancestry, being felt like an old, wise, sacrosanct man, or just a time-consuming nature owing to cliché. Departing from this presumption, this paper attempts to observe the contemporary use of proverbs (apart from abuse or misuse) as respectively cited in Japanese “kotowaza” and in Indonesian “peribahasa”, in two modern cities, Osaka and Yogyakarta, where both have been persistently developed in many ages and have grown to reserve a phenomenal urban culture. Due to the nature of urban modernity, city dwellers are supposed to no longer devote their loyalty to “something” traditional such as either old-fashioned life-styles or thought-styles. The question is, are proverbs which inherently have a feature of traditionality also released off from urban phenomenon?

This major question leads to a set of interrelated research questions as follows: (a) is it really true that proverbs are not popular with their people, (b) do people lose their concepts on defining proverbs, (c) if not, the people should certainly give examples of their mostly-remembered stock of proverbs consequently, or if so why, then (d) what scheme can we draw from the collection of proverbs or the so-called “paremiological minimum”, and finally what is the conclusion from the scheme analysis as related to contemporary trends of life for both urban societies.

In essence, this paper maps accordingly the questions above to an attempt at researching of respectively popularity, contemporary definition, frequency analysis, content analysis, linguistic and cultural inference in modern paremiological studies. In short, this study examines two major problems, i.e contemporary proverbiality and its cognitive mapping to modern social life.

2. Methodological Notes and Research Settings

A comparative research between two international languages is not a piece of cake to conduct. Although several technical problems as well as substantial understanding of language would come to note as barriers, this does not mean an impossibility was undertaken. Despite natural to differences, any language and culture also appears in affinity that enables observers to reach agreement on research topics, design and instruments. (c.f Hantrais and Ager, 1985 via Hantrais and Mangen, 1996: 7). Wisdom as reflected in proverbs constitutes a research topic which is universal to Japanese and Indonesian languages and cultures that also belong to Asian linguistic subgroupings. Due to major studies in linguistics and culture, the quantitative research design is often rejected as final truth rather than a qualitative one. In line with this, the research used numeric accounts by virtue of a questionnaire (see appendix) only for basic understanding to further analysis on qualitatives as employed in in-depth interviewing¹⁾ and a minor field survey. Data, as a result, was collected from respondents, informants, and additional sources such as relevant websites²⁾, books, dictionaries, newsletters, and magazines. The use of later resources which many people refer to as secondary data was in fact beneficial to reaching the analysis of competitive wisdom in the societies.

Osaka in Japan, and Yogyakarta in Indonesia were determined as linguistic and cultural settings of the research. Osaka, which was historically known as Naniwa, and Yogyakarta as Djokjakarta were both old cities established many ages ago. Now they have been growing into modern cities, attributing to themselves their own urban

languages and cultures. Respondents who inhabited these cities came from two big public universities who were taking undergraduate and graduate programs. They were categorized into highly educated people but not experts, ranging from 17 to 35 years old. The amount of respondents, 142 Japanese students and 197 Indonesian students, was accumulated from two stages of investigation. First, respondents were asking to write their definition of a proverb (based on the question what is a proverb?) and their collection of proverbs (based on the question what proverbs do you remember most?) without any prior discussion of proverbs or something related to proverbs. There were 87 definitions and 109 proverbial examples collected from 87 respondents in Japan, and correspondingly they were 65 definitions and 42 proverbial examples accumulated from 65 Indonesian respondents. The first stage of inquiry was expected to depict the ontology of empiric studies of proverbs and their popularity in those two cultural areas.

Other than the respondents above, the second stage of experimental investigation aimed at taking original data to cross-check the frequency of proverb popularity in the societies. The researcher observed how familiar the respondents were with a set of selected proverbs given to them to fill in (based on identificational category: strongly unfamiliar, unfamiliar, neutral, familiar and strongly familiar). There were 55 respondents in Japan filling in a questionnaire of 25 selected Japanese proverbs, and similarly there were 132 respondents in Indonesia completing 42 selected Indonesian proverbs. The primary data from this observation was made use of in further analysis on the content analysis as being related to secondary data taken and analyzed from other printed paremiographies and web resources.

3. Japan and Indonesia in Proverbs

Proverbs in a certain culture do not ignore identifying their speech community where they are and who typically the people are. Geographically, Japan and Indonesia belong to the subgrouping of a single Asian continent, where Indonesia lies near the equator line and Japan is situated quite far away from it so that the location naturally is influenced by different climates. Proverbs such as *Yuki wa hoonen no kizashi* (Snow is the sign of a fruitful year; a snow year, a rich year) and “*Ame futte, ji katamaru*” (After a rain the ground gets hard ; after a storm comes a calm) characterize its winter and sporadic, rainy summer. It goes without saying that the country undergoes other two distinct seasons, i.e., spring, and autumn in most parts of its archipelago. Otherwise, proverbs dealing with only rain and hot weather, just as Indonesia is familiar with, such as *Panas setahun dihapuskan oleh hujan sehari* (Hot a year erased by rain in a day; much goodness is erased only by one little mistake); *Sehabis hujan akan panas juga* (After a rain the day will be warm too; after pain happiness will come) identify two characteristics of seasons, rainy and dry seasons. As a consequence, the proverbs have no original words for snow, ice, and the like. Two other examples are given such as *Disangka panas sampai petang kiranya hujan tengah hari* (Forecasting a fine day until noon but rain in midday; supposing to be happy all day long but a sudden sorrow comes by) and *Walaupun hujan emas di negeri orang, lebih baik hujan batu di negeri sendiri* (Although golden rains fall down in other countries, better rocky rains are in the home country; how happy people live in other countries, happier to live in home the country).

Japanese people, who amount to 127 millions,³⁾ ranking as the seventh most

populated country in the world, whether or not influenced by the cold climate, used to eat hot, nearly burning food as revealed in their popular proverb *Nodomoto sugireba atsusa wasureru* (After hot food has passed through the throat, one forgets that it was hot). Otherwise, Indonesia with around 206 millions,⁴ ranking the fourth in the world, has very common spicy food as reported in proverb *Belum tahu di pedas lada* (Not knowing how spicy the spice is; someone with no experience). Indonesian people only drink fresh water as observed in their proverbs *Air diminum rasa duri, nasi dimakan rasa sekam* (Drinking water tastes torn, eating rice tastes like paddy waste; someone who feels very sad), meanwhile Japanese proverbs point out that their people drink a kind of Japanese specific liquor namely sake, *Sake wa, honshin o arawasu* (Sake reveals one's true heart; the true man comes out in drink).

Besides season, food and beverage, proverbs also help people to identify their own history of social leadership, and system of belief. *Bushi wa kuwanedo taka-yoji* (Though a Bushi (samurai) may not eat, he holds his toothpick high), *Moto no mokuami* (Mokuami [a samurai] remained as he was) includes two proverbs which indicate that a samurai was a leader in the society. Including his role in leadership, Buddha falls into a category of belief among a number of Japanese people as proverbs say *Shiranu ga hotoke* (Ignorance is Buddha), *Hotoke no kao mo san do* (Even Buddha will be provoked if his face be touched three times); *Kooboo mo, fude no ayamari* (Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake). And the most indigenous belief in Japan includes the teaching of Shintoism as reflected in *Shinto mekkyakusureba hi mo mata suzushi* (If you have a calm mind even fire is not hot).

In an historical note on Indonesian leadership, the King and Sultanate were

more commonly to lead their people in the authority of a kingdom. Proverbs *Raja adil raja disembah, raja tak adil raja disanggah* (The king wise is the king beloved, the king unwise is the king hatred), *Siapapun menjadi raja tangan ke dahi juga* (Whoever is king, the hands even go to the cheek; Whoever becomes the king people must honour him), and *Beraja di mata bersultan di hati* (Have a king on the eyes, have a sultanate in the heart; People follow their respective desires) are among others to open up the Indonesian leadership. Even Yogyakarta, where this research was conducted, has up to now been led by a Sultan instead. A sultan tends to indicate an Islamic religious leader. The teaching of Islam is clearly indicated in the proverb *Adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi kitabullah* (Customs rest on syarak (Islamic Law), syarak rests on kitabullah (the Holy Qur'an); Any conducts should obey the rules of Customs and Religion).

Proverbs have shown particular characteristics of the people and its culture, but on the other side, they also reveal similarities among different societies. Similarity in how the people interact with each other, see and learn from the world, is quite popular among Japanese and Indonesian people. A strategy of social interaction as stated in *Gou ni itte wa, gou ni shitagae* (Entering the village, obey the village) and *Di mana bumi dipijak disitu langit di junjung* (Wherever you walk down the earth, there you hold up the sky) respectively give the equivalent meaning as found in English with "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". Likewise, a couple of popular proverbs relating to fire and smoke as in *Hi-no nai tokoro-ni kemuri-wa tatanu* (Where there is no fire no smoke will arise), and *Tidak ada asap tanpa api* (No smoke without fire) are similar to meaning of 'There is no effect without some cause or any cause has its consequences'. And proverbs *Rumput tetangga lebih hijau dari rumput*

di halaman sendiri (Neighbor’s grass is greener than the grass in the one’s own field) and Tonari no shibafu wa aoi (The neighbor’s lawn is green) point out the same social experience that another’s possession is always better than his/hers. These proverbs are also universal with the English form “The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence”. In this case, we have shown that proverbs cross national, geographical, and linguistic boundaries. They live in the languages of the world and come up again to people as a bank of ideas and wisdom.

4. Definition Survey of Proverbs

To answer the doubtful use of proverbs, field work collected 87 definitions from Japanese respondents and 65 from Indonesian respondents (available in the Appendix). Each word of the definitions might then be classified into five segments, i.e., form, meaning, function, evaluation, and construal. The form deals with a sentence, phrase and the like, while the meaning may include figurative, connotative, deep meanings etc. as according to the respondent’s knowledge, and the function serves as advice, irony, lesson, and so forth. These three segments are close to linguistic analysis as

respectively called formal, semantic, and functional categories, that are distinctive to evaluation and construal that two of which depend on more subjective perspectives than objective ones. The evaluation may refer to relative findings of respondents toward the use of proverbs such as artistic, easy (to remember), useful, etc., and the construals relate to the respondent’s understanding of whether they said that proverbs are to interpret a particular reality, to express a message, experience, come from old-time people, and so on. From Japanese respondents, there were collected 51 forms, 10 meanings, 38 functions, 41 evaluation, and 126 construals. From Indonesian respondents, there were obtained 104 forms, 44 meanings, 42 functions, 13 evaluations, and 38 construals. A comparative content analysis of such folk definitions can be presented in the charts below.

An intriguing inference may be drawn from the charts that a Japanese speech community tends to emphasize the definition of proverb as a **construal**, whereas Indonesian people much refer to a **form** of the proverbs. Other segments such as meaning, function, and evaluation are not significantly striking. A construal and a form are two different things from a (cognitive-) linguistic viewpoint; a construal is to interpret the use and meaning

Chart 1 Content Analysis on the Definitions of Japanese Proverbs

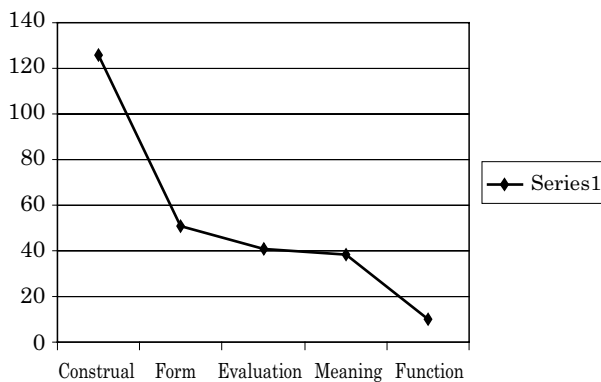
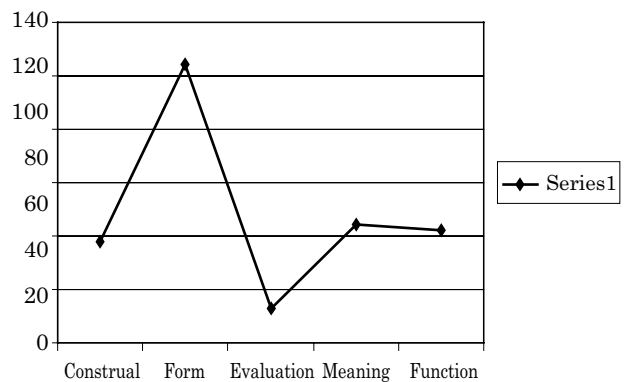


Chart 2: Content Analysis on the Definitions of Indonesian Proverb



of the proverbs, whereas a form is to arrange a structure of the proverb in terms of sentence, phrases, and so on. Based on this viewpoint, the first is inclined to stress an essence, a sort of invisible entity, and the other a figure, a kind of observable entity. The dichotomy is, clearly analyzed when each definition is drawn from those respective segments, analogous to common terms in generative grammar such as competence and performance. In a competence perspective as based on the data of construal segments, the Japanese respondents thought to interpret that a proverb comes from old-time people telling messages about life, experience, particular reality or only everyday things as based on Japanese culture from the past. And from a performance perspective by virtue of formal segments, the Indonesian respondents thought that a proverb is an expression, sentence, a sequence of words that contains metaphor, simile or analogy. In a Japanese context, a proverb is understood as a product of people from the past that builds a sense of its traditionality, and in another Indonesian context, a proverb is meant as a product of language that relates to a sense of words.

A five-segment analysis of the people is definitions comprehensively brings about an intriguing composite of what a general picture of a proverb might seem like. Tabulating the frequency of each segment, the details emerge as follows (the number in parentheses indicates times mentioned in the collected definitions). **The forms** vary from words or a sequence of words (16), something/ device (8), sentence (6), metaphor (4), expression (3), folktale/story (3), wordplay or language play (2), comparison, euphemism, rhyme, to similitude (1). **The meanings** include particular meaning (6), deep meaning (2), accurately meaningful, similar and contrastive meaning (1); meanwhile **the functions** comprise teaching/

lesson/instruction (28), morals (2), advice, sarcastic remark/slur, smear, signpost, hint, warning, communicative, guideline (1). **The evaluations** consist of short/briefly (11), useful/helpful (8), easy, interesting (3), <regarded as> intelligent, not frank, simple, convenience (2), decorative, alternative, gates for laugh, beneficial, sophisticated, important, unique, traditional (1); and **the construals** range from: old time people/ ancient people (19), about life (16), to convey or express message/things (13), experience (10), to interpret/describe a condition/ particular reality/cases, everyday/daily thing (8), Japanese culture and people (7), long time ago/ the past (6), knowledge (5), do something (4), example, make understanding, wisdom (3), give explanation, handed down/ inherited, truth (of life), scene/environment (2), come from life, compared to something, <based on> failure, learned, point out mistake, believed, a choice, from China, law, procedure, natures of human, to failures (1).

From this tabulation it becomes obvious that a proverb is commonly thought as “a sequence of words or something useful, short sentence, or metaphor of old time people about life based on Japanese culture which contains particular meanings, convey or express message/things, experience, knowledge of the past, interpret or describe a condition/particular reality/cases or everyday thing, or in such a way do something, and serve as teachings, lessons, and instructions”. The combination of this definition essentially includes all those terms that appear 4 times and above to 28. Using only the most high-frequency terms for the 87 definitions, one may also simply deduce a brief definition that “a proverb is a sequence of brief words of old-time people which contains a particular meaning and serves as a teaching, lesson, or instruction.”

On the same way, the 65 Indonesian

respondents provided the following accounts. **The form segments** stretch expression (29), sentence (25), metaphor (16), a sequence of words (15), simile (10), analogy (4), language style (3), language variety, conditional (1); meanwhile **the meanings** contain particular/deep meaning (32), indirect meaning (3), implied meaning (2), cannot be translated per word, unreal meaning, connotative meaning, different to written meaning, concealing the actual meaning, literal language, having the same intention (1), and **the functions** fall into advice, guidance (11), irony (5), life teaching, moral, compliment, message (2), slur, warning, comment, life philosophy, suggestion, recommendation, behavior (1). Other two segments are **the evaluations** covering artistic (5) esthetic, wise, shorter, easy (to remember), valuable, positive thing, cliché, traditional (1); and **the contruals** consisting of: to interpret a situation/particular reality (5), to convey message/one thing, condition (4), describe (3), understood by the speaker, Indonesian language, society (2), a part of literature, fixed structure, patterned, thought pattern, the past, Malay people, to make a statement more polite, to express the feeling, to interpret, desirable to guess, event/case, symbol of attitude/behavior, understanding, ancestor inheritance, from generation to generation, fact (1).

A term analysis of these definitions also results in a composite definition that is distinct to that of Japanese definitions. Similarly, taking the frequency from the

top list (4 times mentioned and above), a proverb is mostly remembered as “an artistic expression, a sequence of words, sentence, metaphor, simile, or analogy which contains a particular and deep meaning, interpret a situation/particular reality, convey a message/one thing or condition, and serves as advice, guidance, and irony.” Furthermore, drawing only the highest frequency of terms mentioned from 65 definitions, a short composite definition could be something like, “A proverb is an artistic expression which contains a particular and deep meaning, interprets a situation or particular reality and serves as advice.”

Comparing the two short composite definitions given above, there are three main emphasizes to note, i.e., (a) from a functional perspective, (b) subjective evaluation, and (c) construal of origin and the use of interpretation (see items in table 1). There are no discrete features in sense, from formal and semantic meaning. Firstly, in a Japanese setting, the functional perspective might be referred to as a didactic purpose, otherwise it might be referred to as a relationship one, in an Indonesian setting. Secondly, subjective evaluation indicates that Japanese people tend to measure relativity of words or sentence in length, but Indonesian people have a tendency to assess the sense of art of the proverbial sentence. And finally, the construal of origin that proverbs come from old-time people is popular to refer in the context of Japanese community. On the other hand, the construal of meaning that proverbs

Table 1 A Comparative Composite of Japanese-Indonesian Definition

Setting	FORM	MEANING	FUNCTION	EVALUATION	CONSTRUAL
Japanese	A Sequence of Words	Particular Meaning	Teaching, Lesson, or Instruction	Brief	Of Old-Time People
Indonesian	An Expression	Particular and Deep Meaning	Advice	Artistic	Interpret a Situation or Particular Reality

interpret a situation or particular reality is the most rated feature.

Based on the fieldwork results above, it is very difficult to draw a conclusion that proverbs are entirely forgotten, or extremely said as unpopular. Entirely all respondents either from Japan or Indonesia knew and were able to define a proverb according to their varied knowledge and interests in it. There were 6 out of 87 respondents (=6.9%) acknowledging that they rarely used the proverbs, did not often use or entirely did not use the proverbs, but the majority 93.1% positively indicated to make use of them⁵⁾. Nevertheless, 6.9% of Japanese people were also still able to explain what the proverb is and its examples. Meanwhile, no Indonesian respondents indicated not using proverbs in the opportunity of their life as followed by giving examples (details of example presented in sie. 5). This evidence proves that the ability to define and give examples constitutes a cognitive treasure of individual wisdom. To infer, in Japan, people regard a number of proverbs as a stock of wisdom that can be ready to use at a certain time. That is why they understood the proverb as a construal toward the use and meaning of a proverb as competence. Otherwise, in Indonesia, people consider a set of proverbs as a stock of wisdom that they also use in their daily life. They remember the typical form of proverbs as to make them easier to use in real performance.

By the fact and data analysis, the presumption saying that proverbs are unpopular is far from the truth. Both people from two societies are familiar with the definition of the proverbs. The truth of being identified as useful, helpful, artistic, easy, interesting, and so on might be clearly seen in whether the groups of a community could mention their proverbial stock or not.

5. The Most Popular Proverbs in Japan and Indonesia

The second question listed in the questionnaire after the definition is what proverbs the people remember most. In the questionnaire sheet, the respondents could write none or up to three proverbs at maximum as the column provided. As a result, this empirical study collected 109 different proverbs from 87 Japanese respondents and 41 from 65 Indonesian respondents (data supplied in appendix). This ratio indicates that Japanese respondents saved more stocks of wisdom than Indonesian respondents did. This is another evidence that proverbs, in context of Japanese society, are placed in the competency of mind. Furthermore, based on short-listed proverbs of the frequency of 4 times mentioned or more, the following table shows a number of popular proverbs in Japan and Indonesia.

There were 16 out of 109 proverbs that were the most popular in a Japanese setting, and there were only 9 out of 41 proverbs in Indonesia setting. Of these 109 were different proverbs, the most frequently cited proverb was “**Saru mo ki kara ochiru**” (Even a monkey falls off a tree) for 16.1%, and of these 41, the most frequently mentioned proverb was “**Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya**” (An empty barrel has a high sound) for 21.5%. Although this common proverbial collection has given a primary data of popular proverbs, neither the Japanese proverb percentage nor the Indonesian show a majority that is more than 50%. Another method to examine the popularity was therefore undertaken.

The researcher employed selected proverb samples in the questionnaire. A different group of respondents was asked to mark the proverbs they were familiar with by virtue of 5 point-scale ranging from (5)

strongly familiar, (4) familiar, (3) neutral, (2) unfamiliar, and (1) strongly unfamiliar⁶⁾. Although the method seemed artificial, the result might confirm or falsify the natural data obtained above and probably reach a major number of percentage. From a questionnaire of 25 selected Japanese

proverbs that was filled in by 55 Japanese respondents (the proverbs taken out from Pazcolay, 1997), and 42 selected Indonesian proverbs (taken out from Arimi, 2000)⁷⁾ being filled in by 132 Indonesian respondents, the researcher obtained a different list of popular proverbs. It is important to note that the

Tabel 2 Most Popular Proverbs in Japan and Indonesia

NO	JAPANESE PROVERBS	FRE	FRE	INDONESIAN PROVERBS	NO
1	Saru mo ki kara ochiru Even monkey falls off a tree	14	14	Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya. An empty barrel has a high sound	1
2	Isogaba maware In haste, go round	12	13	Berakit-rakit ke hulu berenang-renang ke tepian Use a canoe to hulu, swim to the shoreline	2
3	Toki wa kane nari Time is money	9	10	Air beriak tanda tak dalam Moving water runs shallow	3
4	Hikusui bon ni kaerazu Water running out from vessel doesn't return to it	8	10	Besar pasak daripada tiang A bar is bigger than the pillar	4
5	Inu mo arukeba, boo ni ataru A dog, if it walks round, will clash with a stick	7	9	Bagai air di daun talas As water drops on the taro leaf	5
6	Ishi-no ue nimo sannen Sit patiently for three years even on a stone	7	8	Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba Milk was rewarded by poison	6
7	Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru Fortune comes to a smiling house	6	7	Di mana bumi dipijak di situ langit dijunjung Wherever you step down the earth, there you hold up the sky	7
8	Nifo ou mono wa ifto womo ezu If you try to catch two birds you cannot get one	6	5	Bagaikan pungguk merindukan bulan As a little owl missed the moon	8
9	Zen wa isoge Be quick to do good	6	4	Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak No elephant tusk is not fractured	9
10	Tanakara botamochi Bothaa mochi from a shelf	5	80	TOTAL FREQUENCY n = 65	
11	Buta ni shinjyu Pearls for pig	5	FRE = Frequency or time mentioned n = Respondents		
12	Nido aru koto wa sando aru What happened two times will happen for the third time	4			
13	Isseki nichoo One stone and two birds	4			
14	Nanakorobi yaoki Seven times fall down, and eight times stand up	4			
15	Hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu Once seeing is better than 100-times listening	4			
16	Kooboo mo fude no ayamari Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake	4			
n = 87 TOTAL FREQUENCY		105			

Table 3 Japanese Most Popular Proverbs by ExperimentRANKING \geq 60%

No	Proverbs	Strongly Familiar- Familiar	Known by %
1.	Jigoo jitoku (One's own actions, one's own reward)	50- 4	90.9 %
2.	Juunin toiro (Ten men ten colors)	47- 7	85.5 %
3.	Saru mo ki kara ochiru (Even a monkey falls from a tree)	47- 5	85.5 %
4.	Zen wa isoge (Be quick to do good)	40-13	72.7 %
5.	Ichinan satte, mata ichinan (One misfortune goes, another comes)	38-14	69.1 %
6.	San nin yoreba Monju no chie (Three persons together equal the wisdom of Monju)	38-13	69.1 %
7.	Omoitatta ga kichi-nichi/kitsujitsu (The day in which you resolve to do it is your lucky day)	36-18	65.5 %
8.	Hino nai tokoro ni kemuri wa tatanu (where there is no fire no smoke will arise)	36-17	65.5 %
9.	Ishano fuyoojoo (The doctor neglects his own health)	34-16	61.8 %

experiment was conducted separately in time and to different respondents, furthermore the selected proverbs in the experiment data were not related to the source of empiric data.

The top of the list of empirically popular proverb *Saru mo ki kara ochiru* (Even a monkey falls from a tree), with 14 times mentioned (as shown in table 4), was here in fact appearing on the third place after *Jigoo jitoku* (One's own actions, one's own reward) and *Juu nin to iro* (Ten men ten colors). This finding suggested that other proverbs could possibly be more familiar when they were given as choices rather than as reproduced recalls. There were incidentally two proverbial data being used in the experiment that had appeared as favorite proverbs in the first empiric inquiry, they were the same *Saru mo ki kara ochiru* (Even a monkey falls from a tree) and another *Zen wa isoge* (Be quick to do good). The latter was placed fourth in the experiment but ninth in the empiric study.

This fact offers a sign that the empiric popularity of proverbs might be different

from experiment as based on the corpus data of the proverbs. The more data included in empiric results, the more proverbs would be referred to by the users as being popular or on the contrary, the more respondents in the experiment investigation, the more proverbs might be counted for.

A result by a larger demographic observation of 132 Indonesian respondents as shown in table 4 pictured similar findings. The most popular proverb which appeared in experiment result was ***Besar pasak daripada tiang*** (Bigger bar than pillar) instead of ***Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya*** (An empty barrel has a high sound) as referring to as the first in the empiric result.

There were other popular proverbs similarly occurring in the experiment, other than ***Besar pasak daripada tiang*** (Bigger bar than pillar); they were ***Di mana bumi dipijak disitu langit dijunjung*** (Wherever you walk down the earth, there you hold up the sky); and ***Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak*** (No elephant tusk is not fractured). Another indication supporting prior argument was

that the dissemination of proverbs as the stock of “paremiological minimum” in the mind of Indonesian respondents tended to be more similar and restricted. They tended to remember and use quite the same proverbs.

A clear inference from this comparative study can be drawn that each of the subcultures has its own repertoire of very frequent proverbs. A combined analysis suggested that the Asiatic (particularly Japan-Indonesian) paremiological minimum referred to as equivalent to an English proverb “To err is human” as expressed in *Saru mo kikara ochiru* (Even a monkey falls from a tree) and *Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak* (No elephant tusk is not fractured). They occurred twice as popular proverbs either in empiric or experiment results. Both proverbs mapped a conceptual metaphor that a man has undertaken his job but the result is unavoidably imperfect due to the wisdom that “nobody is perfect”.

Popularity is a phenomenon in any cultural literacy, and of course in it there is also unpopularity. Of 25 selected proverbs here were 5 least popular proverbs according to 55 Japanese respondents. As seen in Table 5 none of the five least popular proverbs appeared as empirically favorite proverbs in table 3. This finding confirmed that the most popular and the least popular proverbs would not overlap each other despite questioning different respondents by different methods.

Likewise, the same thesis found in an Indonesian paremiological experiment none of the five least popular proverbs cited in the most popular proverbs (as seen in table 5). Of 42 selected proverbs, only one person from 132 respondents cited that *Makan hati berulam jantung* (Eating liver meat with an added-heart) was a strongly familiar proverb.

Apart from the least popular proverbs above, we actually still have many stocks of wisdom that have been forgotten as not

Table 4 Indonesian Most Popular Proverbs by Experiment

RANKING ≥ 60%

No	Proverbs	Strongly Familiar-Familiar-Neutral	Known by %
1.	Besar pasak daripada tiang (Bigger bar than pillar)	116-9	87.9 %
2.	Sekali merengkuh dayung dua tiga pulau terlampaui (Once going by canoe two to three isles skipped off)	100-15-8	75.8 %
3.	Gajah mati meninggalkan gading (An elephant that died left its gading)	100-15-3	75.8 %
4.	Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya (An empty barrel has a high sound)	96-29	72.7 %
5.	Di mana bumi dipijak disitu langit dijunjung (Wherever you walk down the earth, there you hold up the sky)	90-19	68.2 %
6.	Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak (No elephant tusk is not fractured)	89-33	67.4 %
7.	Orang makan nangka awak kena getahnya (Others eat nangka fruit but we are spilt by the sap)	86-19	65.2 %
8.	Jangan dibangunkan ular tidur (Don't wake the sleeping snake up)	82-22	62.1 %
9.	Habis manis sepah dibuang (The sweet is off the waste is thrown away)	80-16	60.6 %

Table 5 Japanese Least Popular Proverbs by Experiment

FIVE LEAST LIST

No	Proverbs	Strongly familiar-familiar	Known by %
1.	Hikaru/kagayaku mono kanarazu-shimo oogon/kin narazu (It is not necessarily gold what glitters)	1-6	1.8%
2.	Akidaru-wa oto-ga takai (An empty barrel has a high sound)	1-0	1.8%
3.	Shinchoo-no hooki-wa yoku sooji suru (A newly made broom sweeps well)	1-0	1.8%
4.	Ichi yo ochite tenka-no aki-wo shiru (With the fall of one we know that autumn as come to the country)	0-4	0%
5.	Kudasaru mono nara akaba de mo (If it is a present, even a red leaf should be accepted)	0-2	0%

Table 6 Indonesian Least Popular Proverbs by Experiment

FIVE LEAST LIST

No	Proverbs	Strongly familiar-familiar	Known by %
1.	Ibarat menghela rambut dalam tepung, rambut jangan putus tepung jangan terserak (Like drawing a hair out from butter, the hair is not cut off and the butter does not move)	4-13	3.0%
2.	Dunia diadang, saku dijahit (The world is blocked, the pocket is sewed)	4-10	3.0%
3.	Seperti orang buta kehilangan tongkat (As a blind man lost his stick)	3-83	2.3%
4.	Berjenjang naik bertangga turun (Taking stairway up, taking staircase down)	2-23	1.5%
5.	Makan hati berulam jantung (Eating lever meat with an added-heart)	1-36	0.7%

cited in the empiric and the experimental list. Above proverbs were still cited as being familiar, and of 109 empiric Japanese proverbs and 41 Indonesian proverbs at least one of the proverbs was mentioned by the respondents. As a matter of fact, there are more than a hundred proverbs or even thousands in the Japanese or Indonesian language as listed in proverb dictionaries (paremiographies). The empiric and experimental data have furnished a stock of short-listed proverbs that were very familiar to each society, or popular proverbs.

6. Competitive Wisdom

Becoming popular proverbs just like other kinds of popularity is never without competition. A proverb, as Taylor (1931) briefly defines it a short sentence of wisdom (see also Mieder, 1993), had been persistently contested by other proverbs before it came out to be a favorite. Like in any competition, there would come to be gradable winners as well as gradable losers. What is actually contested, the preferable forms of proverbs such as memorable, short, or rhyme?; or reasoning of expressive proverbs like logical, illogical, exaggerating-logical, paradoxical, or fancy reasoning? (Arimi, 2004)⁸. An

analysis to any single proverb shows that none of these competitive schemes make the popularity of a proverb. Each proverb encounters one or more of which forms or reasoning. Proverbs are created to be in rhyme, short and thus easy to remember. Similarly, proverbs which employ metaphors as their word resources are fully rich with not only logical reasoning such as **Hokusui bon ni kaerazu** (Water running out from a vessel doesn't return to it), but also illogical reasoning **Isogaba maware** (In haste, go round), exaggerating-logical **Hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu** (A hundred hearsays are not worth a sight), paradoxical **Zen wa isoge** (Be quick to do good), or fancy reasoning **Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru** (Fortune comes to a smiling house). The same schemes also happen to Indonesian proverbs.

Firstly, the competitive scheme might relate to the content of the proverbs. People tend to use certain wisdom that hopefully fulfills their needs. The needs should certainly be close to their real living such as society, economy, law, belief or religion. A set of values, norms or rules in the fields was restated in the word-gems of proverbs. Proverbs particularly the popular ones have been used as a remedy to prescribe people to cope with the complexities of sociocultural problems. Furthermore, the wisdom which is inherently realized by the proverbs comes to play in such prototypes of human problem-solving. In short, selected proverbs appear to become popular due to competitive wisdom among a large amount of proverbs. Secondly, those which were regarded as not competitive, not to mention unpopular, were dismissed from the contest. There is a strong tendency that different proverbs for similar wisdom would come to the following contest. Here again we witnessed that there were losers among the proverbs. Table 7 and Table 8 respectively present contested proverbs in

Japanese and Indonesian with the conflated list of defeated proverbs.

Table 7 and Table 8 show that all popular proverbs have competed with at least another proverb with similar wisdom. **Hokusui bon ni kaerazu** (Water running out from vessel doesn't return to it), for instance in table 7, has competed with at least three other proverbs, i.e., **Kinoo wa togamezu** (The past cannot be undone); **Rakka eda ni kaerazu** (Fallen blossom doesn't return the branch); and **Hakyou futatabi terasazu** (A broken mirror cannot be made to shine). It is a clear fact that **Hokusui bon ni kaerazu** has won the contest 8 times mentioned by the 87 respondents. A similar fact also found in the Indonesian proverbial context, **Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba** (Milk was rewarded by poison) for instance, has defeated its rivals **Permata dibalas dengan senjata** (A jewel was rewarded by a gun); and **Santan dibalas dengan tuba** (Coconut milk was rewarded by poison) also by the same score of 65 respondents. An important note may arise from such contests that only one dominant proverb appeared to be a popular proverb.

Fascinatingly, through the strict competition people might refer to twin proverbs with similar wisdom. Japanese proverbs No.16 **Kooboo mo, fude no ayamari** (Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake) and No.1 **Saru mo ki kara ochiru** (Even a monkey falls off a tree) constituted this example. Both popular proverbs bring about an equivalent wisdom saying that whoever can make a mistake, that is why there is nobody (who is) perfect. Necessarily, the same reality was also found in the Indonesian popular proverbs (as seen in Table 8) in which the third ranked proverb, **Air beriak tanda tak dalam** (Moving water runs shallow) precisely has similar wisdom with the first place popular proverb, **Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya** (An empty barrel has a high sound)⁹⁾. The Indonesian respondents decided to refer to both as popular proverbs

Table 7 Japanese Contested Proverbs

NO	Japanese Popular Proverbs/Explanation	Defeated Proverbs with Equivalent Wisdom
1.	Saru mo ki kara ochiru (Even a monkey falls off a tree) 'Even Homer sometimes nods'	(a) Ayamachi no nai hito wa nai (No person is without a fault)
		(b) Jozu no te kara mizu ga moru (An expert sometimes makes a slip)
2.	Isogaba maware (In haste, go round) 'The more haste, the less speed'	(a) Seitewa koto wo shisonzuru (In haste, one ends in failure)
		(b) Tanki wa sonki (Short temper causes losses)
3.	Toki wa kane nari (Time is money) 'Time is money'	(a) Omoi tatta ga kichinichi (The day resolved is a lucky day) there is no time like present;
		(b) Zenikane wa wakimono (Money is a thing that gushes forth of itself) money will come of itself.
4.	Hokusui bon ni kaerazu (Water running out from vessel doesn't return to it) 'It is no use crying over a spilt milk'	(a) Kinoo wa togamezu (The past cannot be undone)
		(b) Rakka eda ni kaerazu (Fallen blossom doesn't return the branch)
		(c) Hakyou futatabi terasazu (A broken mirror cannot be made to shine)
5.	Inu mo arukeba, boo ni ataru (A dog, if it walks round, will clash with a stick) 'Even dog has his day'	(a) Inu nimo hoonen ari (Every dog will have his day)
		(b) [....]
6.	Ishi no ue nimo sannen (Sit patiently for three years even on a stone) 'Perseverance brings success'	(a) Hito no itasa wa, sannen mo shinbo suru (One can stand other's pains even for three years)
		(b) Tenfeki atsumatte, taikai to naru (Many drops of water make a big sea)
		(c) Machushi garu ufu iyoo tuyuru (One who waits patiently will catch a big fish)
7.	Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru (Fortune comes to a smiling house) 'Laugh and grow fat'	(a) Jin too waraaran kwa tu ru waraariiru (We can laugh happily with our children but not with money)
		(b) [....]
8.	Nifo ou mono wa ifto wo mo ezu (If you try to catch two birds you cannot get one) 'If you run after 2 hares you will catch neither'	(a) Aru ichi-mon, nai sen-ryo (A mon in hand is worth a thousand ryo not in one's possession (mon=old coin))
		(b) Toranu tanuki no kawazan'yoo (Don't count your chickens before they are hatched)
9.	Zen wa isoge (be quick to do good) 'A good thing is to be done quickly' (=strike the iron while it is hot)	(a) Seishin iftoo, nanigoto ka narazaran (There is nothing that can not be achieved with firm determination)
		(b) Yii kutoo isugi (Do good things quickly)
10.	Tanakara botamochi (Bota mochi from a shelf (botamochi is a kind of traditional Japanese cake made of rice and sacrificed for ancient tombs)) 'An unexpected piece of good luck'	(a) Wazawai tenjite, fuku to naru (Misfortune is converted into happiness)
		(b) Un wa, yuusha o tasuku (Destiny helps brave men)
11.	Buta ni shinjyu (Pearls for pig) 'Casting pearl before swine'	(a) Neko ni koban (Gold coins to a cat)
		(b) [....]
12.	Nido aru koto wa sando aru (What happened twice will happen three times) 'History always reiterates'	(a) Ichinan satte mata ichinan (One difficulty is followed by another)
		(b) [....]
13.	Isseki nichoo (One stone and two birds) 'Kill two birds with one stone'	(a) Aiaigasa no, nure tsubame Two swallows wet under one umbrella or Two lovers walking under one umbrella
		(b) [....]
14.	Nanakorobi yaoki (Seven times fall down, and eight times stand up) 'It is a long lane that has no turning (English: if at first you don't succeed, try, try again)'	(a) Eiko seisui wa, yo no narai (The rise and fall of life are the usual way of life).
		(b) Hito no shichinan wa miyuredomo, waga juunan wa miezu (one can see others' seven defects, but not one's own ten defects)
15.	Hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu (A hundred hearsays are not worth a sight) 'Better one eye-witness than two hearsay-witnesses'	(a) Denbun wa, jikken ni shikazu (Actual observation is better than hearsay)
		(b) [....]
16.	Kooboo mo fude no ayamari (Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake) 'Even Homer sometimes nods' (=No.1)	(a) Kappa no kawanagare (Even a Kappa may be drowned)
		(b) [....]

Table 8 Indonesian Contested Proverbs

No	Indonesian Popular Proverbs/Explanation	Defeated Proverbs with Equivalent Wisdom
1	Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya (An empty barrel has a high sound) 'Actions speak louder than words'	(a) Besar bungkus tak berisi (Big wrap no content)
		(b) Busuk tidak tahu dibaunya (A spoiled thing never knows its smell)
2	Berakit-rakit ke hulu berenang-renang ke tepian (Use a canoe to hulu, swim to the shoreline) 'No pain no gain'	(a) Berguru dahulu sebelum bergurau (Study first before making a joke)
		(b) Rugi menentang laba, jerih menentang boleh (A detriment challenges a benefit, a fatigue challenges a result)
		(c) Berpahit-pahit dahulu bermanis-manis kemudian (Tasting the bitter first before tasting the sweet)
3	Air beriak tanda tak dalam (Moving water runs shallow) 'Actions speak louder than words'	(a) Beriak tanda tak dalam, berguncang tanda tak penuh (Moving means shallow, shaking means not full)
		(b) Tinggi kelepur, rendah tikam (The high is kelepur, the low is tikam)
4	Besar pasak daripada tiang (A bar is bigger than the pillar) 'An expenditure costs more than income'	(a) Masuk sebesar lubang penjahit keluar sebesar lubang tabuh (Coming in as a sewing hole, going out as a drum hole)
		(b) Masuk tiga keluar empat (Three comes, four goes)
		(c) Awak rendah sangkutan tinggi (You are short the hanger tall)
		(d) Tinggi duduk dari cangkung (Sitting is higher than bowing)
5	Bagai air di daun talas (As water drops on the taro leaf) 'someone who often makes up his/her mind'	(a) Ke mana angin yang deras ke situ condongnya (Where wind blows there it curves)
		(b) Seperi baling-baling di atas bukit (As a windmill on the top of a hill)
		(c) Lidah bercabang bagai biawak (A tongue branches like a dragon)
		(d) Bagai pancang diguncangkan arus (As a paddy stick is waved by stream)
6	Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba (Milk was rewarded by poison) 'A goodness is turned into a badness'	(a) Permata dibalas dengan senjata (A jewel was rewarded by a gun)
		(b) Santan dibalas dengan tuba (Coconut milk was rewarded by poison)
7	Di mana bumi dipijak di situ langit dijunjung (Wherever you step down the earth, there you hold up the sky) "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"	(a) Masuk kandang kambing mengembik, masuk kandang kerbau menguak (come into the goat barn make a sound like a goat's, come into the buffalo's make a sound like a buffalo's)
		(b) Kecil dikandung ibu, besar dikandung adat, mati dikandung tanah (Little is in mother's stomach, big is in customs, dead is inside the earth)
		(c) Di rumah beraja-raja di hutan berberuk-beruk (At home as king, at the jungle as monkey)
		(d) Dimana ranting di patah, di situ air di sauk (Where subbranch is broken, there water is taken)
8	Bagaikan pungguk merindukan bulan (As a little owl missed the moon) 'Wishing something impossible'	(a) Menantikan kucing bertanduk (Waiting for a cat having horns)
		(b) Bagai si lumpuh hendak merantau (As a limp wishes to migrate)
		(c) Seperi kura-kura hendak memanjat pohon (As a turtle wants to climb a tree)
		(d) Minta tulang kepada lintah, sisik kepada keli (Demanding a bone to lintah, sisik to limbat fish)
9	Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak (No elephant tusk is not fractured)	(a) Tak ada padi yang bernas setangkai (None a bunch of paddy has no empty rice seed)
		(b) Segala yang baik ada cacatnya (Every good thing has a bad thing)

as respectively 10 and 14 times-mentioned.

As viewed by the comparative tables, we do not reach the answer yet on the further question of why the 16 Japanese and 9 Indonesian short-listed proverbs came into popularity although they mapped the same wisdom as other defeated proverbs. There are at least two major reasons that make defeated proverbs not sound to the people; they are lexical choices, and dialectal influences. Firstly, a lexical choice ranges into a set of features such as modern-archaic word; urban-rural sense; and ameliorative-pejorative meaning in that the first of each couple tends to dominate the people's trend. In other words, people choose modern, urban and ameliorative lexicon other than others. Although the relativity of these terminologies is quite difficult to measure, semantic features sufficiently help to differentiate such following lexicons in the proverbs. *Aru ichi-mon, nai sen-ryo* (A mon in hand is worth a thousand ryo not in one's possession) (mon=old coin) sounds more archaic than *Nito ou mono wa itto wo mo ezu* (If you try to catch two birds you cannot get one). *Zeni-kane wa waki-mono* (Money is a thing that gushes forth of itself) arguably sound rural rather than the straightforward *Toki wa kane nari* (Time is money). *Wazawai tenjite, fuku to naru* (Misfortune is converted into happiness) sounds more pejorative because of the lexical choice of 'misfortune' than *Tanakara bota mochi* (Bota mochi from a shelf). In Indonesian contested proverbs, we found that the lexicons *kelepur* and *tikam* are archaic rather than *beriak* (moving) and *tak dalam* (shallow), *padi* (paddy) and *setangkai* (a bunch) as rural rather than *gading* (elephant tusk) and *retak* (fractured), other couples *rumah* (home) and *hutan* (jungle) as rural rather than *bumi* (earth) and *langit* (sky), *busuk* (spoiled) or *bau* (smell) as pejorative rather than *tong kosong* (empty barrel) or *bunyi* (sound).

Secondly, people might prestigiously use standard dialect for their popularly proverbial utterances rather than local dialects. The proverb *Ishi-no ue nimo sannen* (Sit patiently for three years even on a stone) appears to be popular rather than its rival *Machushi garu ufu iyoo tuyuru* (One who waits patiently will catch a big fish) which comes from Okinawan Japanese dialect. Likewise, *Zen wa isoge* (be quick to do good) is popular rather than another Okinawan proverb *Yii kutoo isugi* (Do good things quickly) as well as *Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru* (Fortune comes to a smiling house) instead of *Jin too waraaran kwa tu ru waraariiru* (We can laugh happily with our children but not with money) (Shimabukuro, 2003). In Indonesian popular proverbs, people tend to use *Besar pasak daripada tiang* (A bar is bigger than the pillar) rather than *Awak rendah sangkutan tinggi* (You are short the hanger tall) that comes from Malay dialect (in Riau, Indonesia). Another example, the proverb *Di mana bumi dipijak di situ langit dijunjung* (Wherever you step down the earth, there you hold up the sky) is far more popular than *Masuk kandang kambing mengembik, masuk kandang kerbau menguak* (Come into the goat barn, make a sound like a goat's, come into the buffalo's make a sound like a buffalo's) which roots in Minangkabau dialect (in West Sumatera, Indonesia).

A scheme that we can draw from this analysis is that proverbs appear to be popular not only previously contesting themselves to other similar or different proverbs in wisdom, but also by virtue of the lexical-choice decisions and dialectal preferences. Other than this in a further analysis, the discovery of a small number of the most popular proverbs not only provides a taxonomy of content proverbs and related contexts, but also reveals generally prototypical associative-patterns of selected wisdom. Together with other

pieces of linguistic usages, proverbs help increasing the efficacy of human cognitions that are expressed in such a way in the form of emotions, beliefs and desires. People will benefit from the proverbs as prototypes to map their cognitions about life.

A prototype, as defined by Bussmann (1995) as a model or proto-image of all representatives of the meaning of a category, builds a thought pattern of preparing or solving life problems. There are at least five proverbial prototypes as related to human life, i.e., society, economy, politics, culture, law, and belief or religion. A prototype of social life, for instance, comes to the people as norms, values or rules in social interaction such as working, giving and taking something, speaking, etc. Every society has its own ways to understand and implement the set of norms, values, or rules in their societal life.

As related to the sense of being popular, proverbial prototypes also follow the themes of the popular proverbs that are mostly relevant to contemporary trends of life as in line with the nature of being 'popular'. The most popular proverbs in Japan show that **society, law, belief or religion** prototypes have dominated their people's wisdom. Themes on politics (including power and interest relation, leadership, diplomacy), culture (such as art, customs, tradition), and economy (family income, property ownership, finance, trade) seem to have no trends currently (see the table 9).

The **social prototype** ranges into categories of working, timing, and charity, while **the law** relates to the nature of truth, and **the belief or religion** deals with destiny and fate. It is revealing to note that specific prototype of 'work' in Japanese trend's life, as according to its people, include details of its **ways, experience, result, performance, effect, effort, technique and strategy,**

decision, motivation, and spirit, those of which suggest a strong will, competition, survival and productivity in the social life. It is a fantastic data that 11 out of 16 or 68.75% of the popular wisdom talk about 'work'. It is not surprising that the wisdom is also supported by routine expressions in everyday social communication, such as *yoroshiku* with its politeness-grade variants *yoroshiku onegaisimasu*, *yoroshiku onegaiitashimasu*, *dozo yoroshiku onegaiitashimasu* for saying such 'glad to work with you'; then *gambaru* with its politeness-grade variants *gambatte kudasai*, *gambatte, gambarimasu, gambari, gambare*, for saying like 'Do your best or I will do my best', and for closing routine *Otsukare* with its variants *too otsukare sama, otsukare sama desu, otsukare samadeshita* for meaning 'we have done our best'. These linguistic markers altogether with proverbial wisdom create such a 'work' atmosphere as ideal as the people expect, not to mention 'workaholic climates', such as a created working-time of up to 12 hours, having preferable words for 'busy' rather than 'relaxed', and an established perception that it is good to find man going back home late after work (see Kataoka and Kusumoto, 1994) rather than soon to assemble with the family, also considerably encourage people to work hard.

Along with a work prototype, the way people adopt the wisdom from such English translated proverb "Time is money" for ***Toki wa kane nari*** also contributes to creating a conducive work atmosphere. By this popular proverb, people are attracted to appreciate time like money than it might positively encourage them to work and reach more (about the popularity and its analysis see table 9).

Working hard for reaching the best life is a trend phenomenon, but giving help or presents from a part of the work result is another popular phenomenon. The icon of

Table 9 Thematic-Prototype Relation in Japanese Proverb Content Analysis

NO	Japanese Popular Proverbs/Explanation	Meaning Analysis	Thematic Class	Prototype
1.	Saru mo ki kara ochiru (Even a monkey falls off a tree) ‘Even Homer sometimes nods’	‘Someone who has been exercised in a job sometimes also makes a mistake’	Working: Experience and Result	Social
2.	Isogaba maware (In haste, go round) ‘The more haste, the less speed’	‘When a job is done in a hurry the result will be poor that need to be repeated to get the better’	Working: Ways and Performance	Social
3.	Toki wa kane nari (Time is money) ‘Time is money’	‘Appreciating time like money will make someone working and productive’	Time and Work	Social
4.	Hukusui bon ni kaerazu (Water running out from vessel doesn’t return to it) ‘It is no use crying over a spilt milk’	‘Don’t grieve about having done something that cannot be undone’	Working: Result and Effect	Social
5.	Inu mo arukeba, boo ni ataru (A dog, if it walks round, will clash with a stick) ‘Nothing ventured nothing gained’	‘Someone who wants to do something will get something’	Working: Effort and Result	Social
6.	Ishi-no ue nimo sannen (Sit patiently for three years even on a stone) ‘Perseverance brings success’	‘Doing something with full patience will obtain a result’	Working: Effort, Performance and Result	Social
7.	Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru (Fortune comes to a smiling house) ‘Laugh and grow fat’	‘Someone who is cheerful will get a fortune rather than the solemn one’	Destiny: Way of life	Belief or Religion
8.	Nito ou mono wa ifto wo mo ezu (If you try to catch two birds you cannot get one) ‘If you run after 2 hares you will catch neither’	‘Having ambition to take many things in one time will loose all’	Working: Technique and Strategy	Social
9.	Zen wa isoge (Be quick to do good) ‘A good thing is to be done quickly’ ‘Strike the iron while it is hot’	‘When it is appropriate to do something don’t postpone’	Working: Decision	Social
10.	Tanakara botamochi (Bota mochi from a shelf (botamochi is a kind of traditional Japanese cake made of rice and sacrificed for ancient tombs)) ‘An unexpected piece of good luck’	‘A good luck comes to an unsuspecting place’	Fate or Destiny	Belief or Religion
11.	Buta ni shinjyu (Pearls for pig) ‘Casting pearls before swine’	‘Giving something precious to one who cannot appreciate it is useless’	Charity: Aptness	Social
12.	Nido aru koto wa sando aru (What happened twice will happen three times) ‘History always reiterates’	‘One should alert to repeated things’	Fate or Destiny	Belief or Religion
13.	Isseki nichoo (One stone and two birds) ‘Kill two birds with one stone’	‘Once doing one thing taking two things’	Working: Technique and Result	Social
14.	Nanakorobi yaoki (Seven times fall down, and eight times stand up) ‘It is a long lane that has no turning’ ‘if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again’	‘Keep trying to do something until the goal is achieved’	Working: Motivation and Spirit	Social
15.	Hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu (A hundred hearsays are not worth a sight) ‘seeing is believing’	‘Eyewitness is an evidence and fact rather than hearsaywitnesses’	Truth: Evidence and Fact	Law
16.	Kooboo mo fude no ayamari (Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake) ‘Even Homer sometimes nods’ (=No.1)	‘Someone who has been exercised in a job sometimes also makes a mistake’	Working: Experience and Result	Social

charity as reflected in ***Buta ni shinjyu*** (Pearls for pig) which means ‘Giving something precious to one who cannot appreciate it is useless’ apparently implies that people are suggested to give something to other people. What wisdom teaches by this proverb is about what the right thing is for the right person. A set of other proverbs also reflects the tradition of giving presents in a certain time during the years in Japan such as found in ***Kudasaru mono nara akaba de mo*** (If it is a present, even a red leaf should be accepted), ***Morau/Itadaku mono wa natsu mo kosode*** (As a gift even a wadded silk garment is acceptable even in summer), ***Morau mono wa natsu mo botamochi*** (If it is a present, even a rice cake should be accepted in summer too), ***Morai mononi kujoo*** (-wa iu na) (Do not make complaints against a gift).

A materialist life seems not complete without spiritualism in their popular culture. Based on the mostly remembered proverbs, people of Japan believe that life is not always logical or workable. Three out of 16 proverbs mentioned about a prototype of belief and religion systems. In ***Warau kado niwa fuku kitaru*** (Fortune comes to a smiling house), for instance, they believe that someone who is cheerful will get a fortune rather than the solemn person. And by ***Tanakara bota mochi*** (Botamochi or a rice cake from a shelf) people believe that a good luck comes to an unsuspected place. Nevertheless, good luck or bad luck could come to anybody so that people should be alert to certain familiar occasions such as found in ***Nido aru koto wa sando aru*** (What happened twice will happen three times). This proverb warns people to be prepared before the case might happen again.

Finally, one prototype which pertains to law emerges once in the Japanese popular proverb list. The proverb ***Hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu*** (A hundred hearsays are

not worth a sight) explains the nature of truth that eyewitness is an evidence and fact rather than hearsay. In other words, a rule which recommends people hold it is that seeing is believing.

To summarize, based on the content analysis above, the Japanese popular proverbs map a set of society, law, belief and religion prototypes to assign a number of typical wisdoms in working, timing, charity, nature of truth, fate and destiny. As correlated to the contemporary trends of life in Japan, the popular proverbs considerably function to guide and stimulate their people to achieve the best of life in society, law, belief and religion .

In comparison to Indonesian popular proverbs, the thematic-prototype relation might happen to have similarities and differences to those of Japanese. The most popular proverbs in Indonesia show that **society** and **economy** prototypes are much more dominant than **law, belief or religion** prototypes as found in a Japanese context or other themes on politics and culture in general (see the table 10).

The **social prototype** falls into thematic categories of **behavior, working, attitude, and way of life**, meanwhile the **economy** relates to a single theme of **management**. In a specific social prototype, either Japanese or Indonesian people use a similar subprototype of ‘working’ as referring to their collective favorite proverbs. In contrast to the Japanese context, most popular proverbs in an Indonesian context merely function to control and criticize the society (attitude and behavior) and economy (management) of the people. Such function indicates that the society and economy of the people remains in unstable condition. People use or quote the proverbs massively to remind others or themselves so that they will not turn into such as been pictured in the proverbs.

Table 10 Thematic-Prototype Relation in Indonesian Proverb Content Analysis

No	Indonesian Popular Proverbs/Explanation	Meaning Analysis	Thematic Class	Prototype
1	Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya (An empty barrel has a high sound) 'Actions speak louder than words'	'Those who talk more than work mirror unintelligent people'	Behavior: Talk, Work, and Unintelligent person	Social
2	Berakit-rakit ke hulu berenang-renang ke tepian (Use a canoe to hulu, swim to the shoreline) 'No pain no gain'	'Nothing can be enjoyed without doing any effort'	Working: Effort and Result	Social
3	Air beriak tanda tak dalam (Moving water runs shallow) 'Actions speak louder than words'	'Those who talk more than work mirror unintelligent people'	Behavior: Talk, Work, and Unintelligent person	Social
4	Besar pasak daripada tiang (A bar is bigger than the pillar) 'An expenditure costs more than income'	'An expenditure costs more than income'	Management: Over-spending in Finance	Economy
5	Bagai air di daun talas (As water drops on the taro leaf) 'Someone who often makes up his/her mind'	'Someone who often makes up his/her mind'	Attitude: Changing principle	Social
6	Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba (Milk was rewarded by poison) 'A goodness is returned into a badness'	'A goodness is returned into a badness'	Behavior: Moral	Social
7	Di mana bumi dipijak di situ langit dijunjung (Wherever you step down the earth, there you hold up the sky) "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"	'When traveling or migrating, follow the customs of the local people'	Way of Life: Guidance	Social
8	Bagaikan pungguk merindukan bulan (As a little owl missed the moon) 'Wishing something impossible'	'Wishing something impossible because of not measuring his/her own competence'	Attitude: Unconsciousness	Social
9	Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak (No elephant tusk is not fractured) 'Nobody is perfect'	'Something or somebody is never perfect'	Working: Judgment and Result	Social

That is why the theme of **behavior** attracts many people of Indonesia to quote two different proverbs but similar in meaning altogether; they are **Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya** (An empty barrel has a high sound) and **Air beriak tanda tak dalam** (Moving water runs shallow) which both mean that those who talk more than work mirror unintelligent people. The recent social condition in Indonesia illustrates not too different a situation as the proverbs reveal in their meaning. The public communication which has been performed by many Indonesian

political and social leaders lately suggested that most of them talked more, not worked. Another phenomenon which is not far from social or political interest is that people tend to forget other's kindness and service. The phenomenon as shown in this popular proverb **Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba** (Milk was rewarded by poison) opens up such a condition that there are people who tend to turn the goodness (they accepted) into a badness just for fulfilling their interests. Although the three proverbs above may serve a function to control the people's behavior,

they in fact reveal a certain condition that might happen in society.

Similarly to behavior prototypes, the attitude of people also becomes a prototype that is used to map their contemporary social condition. The attitude of someone who often makes up his/her mind as revealed in **Bagai air di daun talas** (As water drops on the taro leaf) suggests an attitude of inconsistency that also presumably relates to the behavior of talking more than working. Interestingly, most of the frequent proverbs are interrelated with each other to build a certain condition. The proverb **Bagaikan punggung merindukan bulan** (As a little owl missed the moon) might come to an end that because of talking more than working, often making up one's mind, people are at last pictured to be fond of wishing for something impossible. A wish is only for a speech that can be made up and should not be realized.

One optimistic lesson drawn from Indonesian popular proverbs deals with a 'work' prototype. The two proverbs of **Berakit-rakit ke hulu berenang-renang ke tepian** (Use a canoe to hulu, swim to the shoreline) which means nothing can be enjoyed without doing any effort, and **Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak** (No elephant tusk is not fractured) which means that something or somebody is never perfect, convincingly work for stimulating people to perform a job. The first one refers to an effort, and result of work, while the other deals with a judgment and result of the work. Although this 'work' prototype is not as detailed as the Japanese work-proverbs, people are simply guided to do an effort before enjoying the result. In the case of being imperfect, the other proverb goes to give a spirit that nobody is perfect.

The prototype of economy describes the current condition of Indonesian economic management. Indonesia has been undergoing an economic crisis for more than five years

since the fall of authoritarian regime of Soeharto in 1998. The proverb **Besar pasak daripada tiang** (A bar is bigger than the pillar) depicts a condition that the expenditure costs more than income, that is over-spending in finance. A number of mass demonstrations forced the government to accomplish its economic recovery program as soon as possible. Another kind of proverb that is used to refer to such a condition, as used as a slogan in many demonstrations, was **Gali lubang tutup lubang** (Dig a new hole to cover another hole) which means life with full debts. By this proverb, people take a new loan as a debt to repay a former debt. This description is not surprising to note for today's condition.

The last prototype is about a way of life which seems like a cliché but is still not out of season. **Di mana bumi dipijak di situ langit dijunjung** (Wherever you step down the earth, there you hold up the sky) gives a guidance to people that when traveling or migrating they are suggested to follow the customs of the local people. The wisdom implies a social security in life when entering new alien areas. Besides, by holding to this remedy, people easily adapt to a new social situation and hopefully enable themselves to interact with each other more in the right way.

Based on this detailed analysis, a combined thesis can be drawn that the universal trend of wisdom between Japan and Indonesia assigns a **social prototype** which puts on similar 'work' thematic classes in particular, and more precisely on efforts and results of a work as duly represented by **Saru mo ki kara ochiru** (Even a monkey falls off a tree) as well as its variant **Kooboo mo, fude no ayamari** (Even the priest Kooboo did make a mistake) and **Tidak ada gading yang tidak retak** (No elephant tusk is not fractured) which collectively mean that 'nobody is perfect'.

7. Closing Remarks

This comparative analysis gives evidence that language is not simply a medium for conveying ideas, it also reveals norms, values, or rules that encourage its people to act in such a way as is suggested by the meaning of the language.

As a result of the fieldwork, the comparative language reality reveals that both Japanese and Indonesian societies possess their own stocks of proverbs which put them into useful wisdom. Among the number of different-nation proverbs, some of them are similar in meanings. Such similarity occurred due to the reasons of the same view of world, and the same shared experience (Arimi, 2002).

By communicating in proverbs, people are actually not indulged in a verbatim meaning of the sentence at all. Ideas can be caught when people know the context or understand the metaphor as used in the proverbs. The metaphors actually appear with established meanings. In this metaphor as said by Pinker (1994: 230), ideas are objects, sentences are the container, and communication is sending. People collect ideas from their experience, put them into expression and then people unpack it to extract the content (c.f. Pinker, 1994)

We have extracted the contents of popular proverbs in Japanese and Indonesian contexts. From a linguistic viewpoint, we could map that proverbs to both societies were treasures of wisdom which, in a specific Japanese context, popular proverbs are assigned to guide and stimulate their people to achieve the best of life in society, law, belief and religion; meanwhile in particular Indonesian context, popular proverbs serve to control and criticize the social (attitude and behavior) and economy (management) of their people.

Relating to popular culture reality as

seen in the the most-remembered proverbs, both societies pose a 'work' prototype collectively. Although in different details of the work themes, the 'work' prototype is used to encourage people to make efforts and take the results for reaching a better life. Particularly, appreciating time, charity, objectivity of truth and belief of mythology pose in the dominant Japanese proverbs. Otherwise, moral behavior, attitude and the economic way of life take popular positions in the Indonesian stock of wisdom.

By the sense of popularity, we have observed that any languages, including proverbs, are dynamic in their growth regarding their competitive forms which contest one another to achieve the dominant positions in society. As a consequence, there are a number of forms of language that are subordinated, not used, or become variants to the dominant ones. In the context of competitive proverbs, the closer the wisdom in the proverbs to the people's need, the more competitive the proverbs are.

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- 2) Website resources on Japanese proverbs might be found in <http://www.okinawa.com/proverbs.html> that includes Okinawan proverbs, authored by Zenko Shimabukuro; then <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Japanese-proverbs> that includes Encyclopedia: Japanese proverbs; <http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/5623/kotowaza.html> that entitled its pages Nihon-No-Kotowaza; <http://www.angelfire.com/il/SumieSociety/taste.html> that entitled its homepage A Taste of Japan consisting of Kotowaza, junishi, bonsai, origami, hanakotoba; <http://www.fornink.com/> that belongs to Foreign Ink. Ltd in America giving cyber lessons on Japanese language. Besides, there is a newsletter “(Sakai) City Life News” published in English, one of its columns on page 6 given for Japanese Proverbs, written in Japanese characters and translated into English with its equivalent as well.

The sites that contributed to Indonesian proverbs were available on the web such as <http://www.permias.org/peribahasa.phtml> designed by Persatuan Mahasiswa Indonesia di Amerika Serikat (Indonesian Students Association in USA) that provides

a special space for those who are interested in completing proverbs in the list and can contact to okki@permias.org, by the same author and web address, there is another page for antiproverbs or proverbial parody entitled Peribahasana; <http://www.invir.com/> that provides free access to Indonesian monolingual proverbs and their meaning. Although it is very simple, it is systematically listed and easy to find alphabetically; <http://www.dwp.or.id/article.php?id=149> that offers one column for Indonesian proverbs, and expression, but unfortunately only a few proverbs were put in and discussed; <http://www.fortunecity.com/victorian/milton/50/pageb.htm> that presents Indonesian proverbs in special pages under the title of “Warung Bahasa”, this site belongs to foreign author.

- 3) Japan’s population was 127.3 million as of October 1, 2001. (source: <http://www.japanfs.org/en/japan/population.html>)
- 4) Indonesia’s population was **206.3 million as 2000** (source: http://www.bps.go.id/sector/population/Pop_indo.htm)
- 5) Those 6.9 % who said that they rarely, or never use the proverbs are quoted below:
 1. (I hardly use proverbs). Frankly speaking, proverbs are **meaningful** and **convenient** things, the more proverbs you learn the more **lessons** you can get from them.
 2. I don’t often use proverbs. But when I don’t find a good word, a proverb is a **choice**. And if you know a lot of proverbs, you are **regarded as an intelligent**.
 3. I rarely use proverbs in my **daily life**, but proverbs are **useful** when I want to **express something**.
 4. Proverbs aren’t used so in my **daily life**.
 5. A proverb is **traditional** from **Japan**, but I rarely use proverbs.
 6. A proverb is **interesting**, but I don’t use

it.

On the other hand, it is important to note that there are some respondents who admittedly use the proverbs often, or said useful and important such as the data quoted in the following.

1. Japanese proverbs are one of **Japanese cultures**. We often use and know some of the proverbs. And proverbs are **convenience** to **express some words**.
2. We use it when we tell something in **brief** in order to make its contents **easy to understand**.
3. A proverb is **important** and **useful for life**.
If I confused over an issue, I remember a proverb and act as it suggests to.
- 6) Here is presented method of analysis of indicating the popularity by virtue of qualitative content of analysis:

= beggars can never be bankrupt); Shineba subete chookeshi (on death, all accounts are cleared off); Shinnin ni kuchi nashi (The dead have no mouths = dead men tell no tales); Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya (An empty barrel has a high sound); Kaki di atas, kepala di bawah (Legs are above, head is down). Secondly, an illogical reasoning opposes the acceptable common sense; it is bias, alluding, etc., such as pictured in Gojuppo hyappo da (after all, fifty paces or a hundred paces are the same); Air tenang menghanyutkan (still water runs deep); Besar pasak daripada tiang (A bar is bigger than the pillar); Thirdly, an exaggerating-logical reasoning contains a logical proposition but it is made exegeratingly, for instance Meikura hebi ni ojizu (blindmen are not afraid of snakes); Mekura ni, kagami wo

Criteria given to Respondents	Criteria for Content Analysis	Inference
(1) strongly unfamiliar (you think this proverb is not Japanese or old-fashioned)	Unknown/ unfulfilled	Mostly Unpopular
(2) unfamiliar (you never hear this proverb)	Irrelevant	Unpopular
(3) neutral (you are not sure of this proverb; you hear but don't care of the meaning)	Doubtful/ unsure	Identified
(4) familiar (you hear this proverb and know the meaning)	Nearly Equivalent	Popular
(5) strongly familiar (you ever use this proverb and know the meaning)	Highly Equivalent	Mostly Popular

- 7) Arimi (2000) discusses the collective mind in Indonesian proverbs. He classifies 42 categories of them those of which were taken into representing the experiment data in this research.
- 8) Arimi (2004), "Peribahasa: A Study of Indonesian Characters and Wisdom" (soon to appear), classifies reasonings of proverbs into five, i.e., logical, illogical, exaggerating-logical, paradoxical, and fancy reasoning. Firstly, a logical reasoning meets common sense such as expressed in Koromo wa atarashiki ni shikazu (new clothes are better than old ones); Hadaka de otoshita tameshi nashi (there is no example that a naked man lost anything

uruna (Don't sell a mirror to a blind man); Hito wa, bokuseki ni arazu (Man is made of neither wood nor stone); Tenteki atsumatte, taikai to naru (many drops of water make a big sea); Susu di dada tidak dapat dielakkan (Breasts on the chest are unavoidable). Fourthly, a paradoxical reasoning consists of ambivalence of either logical or illogical proposition, for example Kanemochi kuroo ooshi (Rich people have many worries) that means much coin much care, but also no matter with the money; Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba (Milk was rewarded by poison). Finally, a fancy reasoning contains of imaginative proposition no matter how logic or illogic something. The truth is not

of necessarily disputable or acceptable, as found in examples *Jinsei wa, asatsuyu no gotoshi* (life is like the morning dew); *Nusumi-gui wa umai* (Eating by stealth tastes delicious) a stolen fruit tastes sweet; *Naki-tsura ni hachi* (Bees sting a crying face); *Bagaikan pungguk merindukan bulan* (As a little owl missed the moon).

- 9) Because these two proverb are similar in wisdom, the rival proverbs of each other should happen to be variations of one another.

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Contested Wisdom in Indonesian and Japanese Proverbs : A Linguistic-Cultural Mapping

Sailal ARIMI

The term 'proverbs' has recently been assumed unpopular as according to people who live by images of urban culture which abandon traditionality. This paper attempts to examine whether traditionally proverbial wisdom still becomes a reference part of people's knowledge repertoire. The research investigated 152 respondents, conducted in the City of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and Osaka, Japan. Based on the content analysis, it linguistically mapped that proverbs in both speech communities were treasures of wisdom where in a Japanese context, popular proverbs are assigned to guide and stimulate their people to achieve the best of life in social, law, belief and religion; meanwhile in an Indonesian context, popular proverbs serve to control and criticize the society (attitude and behavior) and economy (management) of their people. By the sense of the popularity, it is culturally mapped that a proverb, a universally and inherently given entity in any language, contests with another to achieve a dominant position in the community. As a consequence, a number of proverbs become subordinated, unused, or variants to the dominant ones. A combined analysis suggested that the closer the wisdom in the proverbs to the people's need, the more competitive the proverbs are.

Keywords : popular proverb, contested wisdom, linguistic-cultural mapping