

A Comparative Study of Four-Character Idioms (Yojjukugo) with Indonesia Proverbs Containing The Element of Water

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Abstract

This research is titled Comparative Study of Japanese Proverbs (*Yojjukugo*) with Indonesian Proverbs Containing Water Elements." This study uses a qualitative method with a comparative study approach. The data for the study were obtained from various sources, including posts by users of the X application, the short story "Still Water Runs Deep", posts on the Gurusiana website, and the Idiom Encyclopedia website. The analyzed data consist of grammatical units in the form of sentences and discourse containing *yojjukugo* and Indonesian proverbs. The analysis method used is the review method from Sudaryanto. This study aims to provide deeper insights into the usage and meaning of these expressions in different cultural contexts. *Yojjukugo* has two types of meanings: *yojjukugo* with a literal meaning and *yojjukugo* with an idiomatic meaning. Idiomatic meaning usually consists of a combination of several words that result in a different meaning and is often found in expressions or proverbs. *Yojjukugo* with idiomatic meaning is called idiomatic *yojjukugo* because it contains a hidden message behind its literal meaning. In contrast, proverbs are expressions in ancient literature that are very poetic and part of Indonesia's cultural heritage. Proverbs passed down from generation to generation must be preserved as part of Indonesia's cultural and ancient literary heritage. Proverbs, also known as aphorisms, are indirect expressions with implied meanings that can be understood by both listeners and speakers. The aim of the comparative study of *yojjukugo* and proverbs containing water elements is to understand how these two forms of expressions depict the same concept, particularly related to water, in different languages and cultures. This study seeks to explore the similarities and differences in meaning, usage, and context of *yojjukugo* in Japanese and proverbs in Indonesian that contain water elements.

Keywords: Yojjukugo, Proverbs and Water

Introduction

Kridalaksana (2008:169) defines a proverb as a sentence or part of a sentence that has been passed down through generations and is used to reinforce the meaning in writing, providing advice, teaching, or life guidance. Proverbs are often used as an alternative to convey meanings indirectly in various languages around the world. A proverb always carries a different meaning from the literal meaning of the words because it uses figurative language or expressions that cannot always be interpreted from their lexical meanings.

The Indonesian language has a vast number of proverbs, with Gandasudirja (1986) noting as many as 700 proverbs. According to Fasya (2011), humans have a historical record created from their habit of carefully observing various events that regularly occur in their surroundings. Research on proverbs has been conducted extensively, including Harja (2013), who studied the form and meaning of Indonesian proverbs formed by plant elements, plant types, and things related to plants. Alemina (2018) researched the comparison of meanings in Mandarin proverbs and Indonesian proverbs that use the word "Air" (water).

The oldest known Chinese characters date back to the 16th century BC, but the number and form of modern characters suggest that these characters have undergone development over several hundred years. Like Egyptian hieroglyphs, the earliest Chinese characters began as simple illustrations, which over time became more abstract and adopted a form better suited to modern writing.

These characters, along with many other elements of Chinese culture, came to Japan via the Korean Peninsula starting around the fourth century AD. Because the Japanese did not have their own writing system, Chinese characters were soon adapted for the Japanese language as well.

Kanji are Japanese characters adopted from Chinese characters. Kanji has two reading methods: the on-yomi (音読み), which mimics the Chinese pronunciation, and the kun-yomi (順読

み), which mimics the pronunciation of the original Japanese vocabulary. This can be seen in the kanji "上." This kanji has the on-yomi readings "jou" and "shou," while its kun-yomi readings include "ue," "uwa," "kami," "ageru," "agaru," "noboru," and "noboseru."

According to the Dictionary Goo, "Jukugo" is defined as follows:

1. 2字またはそれ以上の漢字で書かれる漢語。熟字。「幸福」「美少」など。
2-ji matawa sore ijō no kanji de kaka reru kango. Jukuji. "Kōfuku", "bishō" nado.
2. 二つまたはそれ以上の簡単が合わさって、一つの単語として用いられるようになったもの。複合語。合成語。

Futatsu matawa sore ijō no kantan ga awasatte, hitotsu no tango to shite mochi rareruyō ni natta mono. Fukugōgo. Gōsei-go.

3. 寛容によって、特定の意味持ち用いられるようになった語句。慣用語。成句。イデオム。「気が抜ける」「油を売る」などの類。

Kan'yō ni yotte, tokutei no imi-mochi mochi rareru yō ni natta goku. Kan'yōgo. Seiku. Idiomu. 'Ki ga nukeru'-yu o uru' nado no rui.

Translation:

1. Kanji written with two or more kanji characters. Jukuji (two or more kanji characters combined). Example: "kōfuku" (happiness), "bishō" (beautiful girl).
2. A word consisting of two or more simple elements combined and used as one word. Compound words. A compound word.
3. Phrases that, through extensive use, have acquired a special meaning. Kan'yōgo, seiku, and idioms. Examples: "ki ga nukeru" (to lose enthusiasm), "abura o uru" (to waste time).

Of the many types of jukugo that exist. Idiomatic Yojijukugo is a type of jukugo with four kanji characters that is very interesting to study. Because they contain a lot of culture, philosophy and history. The ability to convey complex concepts in a very concise simple form. This makes it interesting for an effective and concise communication tool.

When viewed from the Weblid dictionary the definition of Yojijukugo is

漢字 4 字で構成される熟語。特に、「以心伝心」「不信実行」など、成語として用いられるものをいう。

Kanji 4-ji de kōsei sareru jukugo. Tokuni, "ishindenshin", "fushin jikkō" nado, seigo to shite mochi rareru mono o iu.

Translation:

A phrase composed of four kanji characters, often used as an idiom or a fixed expression with a specific meaning. Examples include "ishindenshin" (heart-to-heart communication) and "fushin jikkō" (untrustworthy action).

Methodology and Theory

Research Method

This research employs a qualitative research method. The methodological approach used in this study is descriptive comparative. The research is conducted in three stages: (1) data collection stage, (2) data analysis stage, and (3) data presentation stage (Sudaryanto 2015:6).

This research is based on several sources of data, including posts by users of the X application, the short story "Air Tenang Menenggelamkan," posts by users of the Gurusiana website, and the Idiom Encyclopedia website. The data presented in this research consists of grammatical units in the form of sentences and discourse that contain ****yojijukugo**** and Indonesian proverbs. The data collection techniques used in this research include the literature technique and the note-taking technique. The data analysis technique used is the comparative technique, by comparing and finding the similarities and differences in meanings between the two proverbs. The data presentation in this research is done by describing the aspects related to this issue using ordinary language.

Theory

Yojijukugo has two types of meanings: yojijukugo with ordinary word meanings and yojijukugo with idiomatic meanings (Kardy & Hattori, 2013). Idiomatic meanings are usually a combination of several words that produce a different meaning and are often found in expressions or proverbs. Yojijukugo with idiomatic meanings are called idiomatic yojijukugo because they

contain hidden messages behind their literal meanings. Oota (2006) classifies the idiomatic meanings of yojjukugo into seven categories: attitude meanings (shisei), characteristic meanings (tokuchou), emotional meanings (kanjou), process meanings (katei), result meanings (kekka), time, period, and frequency meanings (jikan, jiki, hindo), as well as the art of speaking meanings (wajutsu). On the other hand, yojjukugo that do not have idiomatic meanings merely represent their lexical meanings and are called non-idiomatic yojjukugo.

Proverbs are expressions in classical literature that are highly poetic and are part of Indonesia's cultural heritage. Proverbs passed down from generation to generation need to be preserved as part of Indonesia's culture and classical literature. Proverbs, also known as sayings, are indirect expressions but carry implied meanings that can be understood by both the listener and the speaker (Akbar, 2020). Proverbs are a form of expression commonly found in classical literature and were widely used in everyday life in the past. This is because proverbs are an easy way to provide advice, satire, or reprimand and are generally accepted by those receiving the advice. In terms of content and meaning, proverbs offer valuable insights into the social, historical, and daily lives of people in the past.

Literature Review

Previous research conducted by Rosi (2020) titled "Analysis of the Formation and Meaning of Yojjukugo Containing the Kanji Element 'Big'" (Journal Article) discusses the formation and meaning contained in yojjukugo that include the kanji element for "big." Meanwhile, research by Than (2020) titled "A Comparative Study of Four-Character Idioms in the Japanese Language and the Myanmar Language" (Article) focuses on comparing the meanings of yojjukugo with the Myanmar language, using a random sample of existing yojjukugo.

This study focuses on comparing the lexical and idiomatic meanings of ****yojjukugo**** that contain the element of water with Indonesian proverbs that also include the element of water. By concentrating on the water element in this research, it is hoped that the study will reveal the differences and similarities between the two.

Findings and Discussion

Suiseimugyo 「水清無魚」

Lexical Meaning : There are no fish in water that is too clear.

Idiomatic Meaning : Even though a person's heart is clean and noble, if it is too excessive, others will not like it.

Example Sentence :

きれいい好きのはいいことだけど水清無魚、度がすぎると友達がいなくなりますよ。

Kireisuki no wa ī kotodakedo suiseimugyo, do ga suguru to tomodachi ga inaku narimasu yo.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/suiseimugyo/>)

Translation:

"Liking cleanliness is good, but if it's too much, like water that's too clear with no fish, you might lose friends."

This sentence conveys that while maintaining cleanliness is a good habit, doing it excessively can make others uncomfortable and distant, potentially leading to a loss of friendships.

Suigyonomajiwari/Suigyonokō 「水魚之交」

Lexical Meaning : A relationship like water and fish.

Idiomatic Meaning : A very close and inseparable relationship or friendship.

Example Sentence :

あの夫婦は、水魚之交、運命で結ばれたかのような夫婦です。

Ano fūfu wa, suigyonokō, unmei de musuba reta ka no yōna fūfudesu.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/suigyonomajiwari/>)

Translation:

"That married couple has a very close relationship, like water and fish, as if they were united by destiny."

This sentence illustrates a very close and harmonious relationship between a husband and wife, using the idiom "水魚之交" to emphasize that they are perfectly matched and mutually dependent, like a fish that cannot live without water.

Suitōkyosei 「水到渠成」

Lexical Meaning : Water flows, channels form.

Idiomatic Meaning : With the acquisition of knowledge, virtue naturally follows. Alternatively, things will fall into place over time without the need for intervention.

Example Sentence :

焦らなくても、水到渠成、がんばり続けていさえすれば時がくればおのずと叶うものだよ。

Aseranakute mo, suitōkyosei, ganbari tsuzukete i sae sureba toki ga kureba onozuto kanau monoda yo.

(Source: <https://yoji.jitenon.jp/yojid/1795.html>)

Translation:

“Don't rush; like the saying 'water flows, channels form,' if you keep striving, everything will naturally fall into place in due time.”

This sentence advises against hastiness, emphasizing that with perseverance and continuous effort, desired outcomes will eventually be achieved without the need for forceful intervention.

Suitekisekisen 「水滴石穿」

Lexical Meaning : A drop of water can carve a stone.

Idiomatic Meaning : A parable that even a small force, when accumulated, can become a great strength.

Example Sentence :

水滴石穿の思いで長年頑張ってきたおかげで、志望校に合格することが出来ました。
Suitekisekisen no omoi de naganen ganbatte kita okage de, shibōkō ni gōkaku suru koto ga dekimashita.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/suitekisekisen/>)

Translation:

“Thanks to years of perseverance and hard work, like the saying 'a drop of water can carve a stone,' I succeeded in getting into the school of my dreams.”

This sentence conveys that through consistent and diligent effort over many years, one is finally able to achieve the goal of being accepted into the desired school.

Suiten'ippeki 「水天一碧」

Lexical Meaning : The sky and water merge into one blue.

Idiomatic Meaning : A state where the horizon blurs the boundary between the sea and sky, making everything appear to merge into one blue color.

Example Sentence :

海は顔に海水がかかるとしょっぱいしべたべたするから好きじゃなかったけれども、この水天一碧を見たら考えが変わりました。

Umi wa kao ni kaisui ga kakaru to shoppaishi betabeta surukara suki janakatta keredomo, kono suiteen'ippeki o mitara kangae ga kawarimashita.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/suitennippeki/>)

Translation:

“I didn't like the sea because the saltwater on my face felt sticky and salty, but after seeing the view where the sky and water merge into one blue, my perspective changed.”

This sentence reflects how someone's initial dislike of the sea, due to the physical discomfort caused by saltwater, changed after witnessing a beautiful scene where the sea and sky appear to merge seamlessly into a harmonious blue.

Isuikyūsui 「以水救水」

Lexical Meaning : Using water to save water.

Idiomatic Meaning : Trying to control a strong current in the wrong way, which only strengthens the current. This phrase originates from attempting to stop the flow of water by pouring more water into it.

Example Sentence :

健太くんは、両親の喧嘩を止めようとしたが以水救水。

Kenta-kun wa, ryōshin no kenka o tomeyou to shitaga isuikyūsui.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/mizuwomottemizuwasokuu/>)

Translation:

“Kenta tried to stop his parents' argument, but it was like using water to save water.”

This means that Kenta's attempt to stop his parents' argument was ineffective, similar to trying to extinguish a fire by adding more fuel, thereby worsening the situation.

Mizu o motte ishi ni tōzu 「以水投石」

Lexical Meaning : Throwing stones with water.

Idiomatic Meaning : Using futile or ineffective efforts or strategies to achieve a particular goal.

Example Sentence :

先輩の意見は絶対で、健太くんが何を言おうとも以水投石だった。

Senpai no iken wa zettai de, Kenta-kun ga nani o ioutomo mizu o motte ishi tōzu datta.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/mizuwomotteisinitouzu/>)

Translation:

“The senior's opinion was absolute, and whatever Kenta said, it was like throwing stones with water.”

This indicates that despite Kenta's efforts to change the senior's opinion, his attempts were pointless, much like using ineffective means to achieve something.

Cisuikafū 「地水火風」

Lexical Meaning : Earth, water, fire, and wind.

Idiomatic Meaning : In Buddhism, these are the four elements believed to constitute everything in the world: earth, water, fire, and wind. These elements are also referred to as the 'four great elements' or 'four main elements'.

Example Sentence:

ともちゃんも健太くんも学校も地水火風から成り立っています。

Tomo-chan mo Kenta-kun mo gakkō mo cisuikafū kara naritatte imasu.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/tisuikafuu/>)

Translation:

“Tomochan, Kenta, and the school are all composed of earth, water, fire, and wind.”

This describes how Tomochan, Kenta, and the school are all made up of the four basic elements according to Buddhist philosophy, emphasizing their fundamental unity and essence.

Kyōkasuigetsu 「鏡花水月」

Lexical Meaning : Flowers in a mirror, the moon in the water.

Idiomatic Meaning : Something beautiful that appears real but cannot be touched or grasped, akin to an illusion or a shadow. In a deeper sense, it also refers to profound and subtle experiences or emotions that are difficult to express in words, much like the beauty in poetry or art that can only be felt.

Example Sentence:

ともちゃんはとても幻想的に美しく、鏡花水月のように、触れたら消えてしまいそうでした。

Tomo-chan wa totemo gensō-teki ni utsukushiku, kyōkasuigetsu no yō ni, furetara kiete shimai sō deshita.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/kyoukasuigetu/>)

Translation:

“Tomo-chan was so beautifully fantastical, like flowers in a mirror or the moon in water, that it seemed she would disappear if touched.”

This idiom is used to describe beauty that is so exquisite and elusive that it seems unreal or difficult to approach or fully comprehend. The expression is often employed to depict something that is very beautiful and delicate, similar to flowers reflected in a mirror or the moon reflected on water, which would vanish if touched or approached too closely, like an illusion.

Suikōsetten 「水光接天」

Lexical Meaning : The reflection of light on the water's surface that seems to touch the sky.

Idiomatic Meaning : The shimmering light of the moon reflected on the water's surface, appearing to touch the distant sky, creating a majestic and awe-inspiring night scene.

Example Sentence:

雲が晴れると、月が輝き、まさに水光接天だった。

Kumo ga hareru to, tsuki ga kagayaki, masani suikōsetten datta.

(Source: <https://idiom-encyclopedia.com/suikosetten/>)

Translation:

“When the clouds cleared and the sky was bright, the moon shone brightly, like the reflection of light on the water that seems to touch the sky.”

The phrase “水光接天” (suikōsetten) is used to describe a very beautiful and dramatic scene where the bright light of the moon or sun is reflected on the calm or clear water surface. It refers to moments when nature provides an overwhelmingly impressive and breathtaking view, often used in literature or to describe beautiful and enchanting natural scenery.

Air Tenang Menghanyutkan (Still Waters Run Deep)

Idiomatic Meaning : A quiet person often possesses deep knowledge.

Example Sentence :

Ombak besar nampak sangat mengerikan, berbeda dengan air tenang, justru memberi kenyamanan dan ketenangan. Pepatah “air tenang menghanyutkan” bisa dianggap salah, meski memiliki makna yang sangat kuat, yaitu orang pendiam lebih banyak memiliki ilmu. Meski diam bukan berarti bodoh dan tidak berbuat apa-apa. Justru dengan diam, maka dapat berpikir lebih jernih, belajar lebih banyak, dan “menenggelamkan” kemudian tanpa perlu “berisik”.

Translation:

The proverb “still waters run deep” suggests that people who are calm and quiet often have a great deal of depth or knowledge. While large waves may seem frightening, still water offers comfort and tranquility. However, the proverb conveys the strong meaning that a quiet person may have much wisdom. Just because someone is silent does not mean they are ignorant or inactive. On the contrary, their silence allows them to think more clearly, learn more, and “drown” others later without needing to make noise.

(Source: <https://tintaemas.co.id/air-tenang-menenggelamkan/>)

This proverb is also used to state that a calm and quiet person often has deep thoughts or knowledge. They may not talk much or seem active, but they can possess profound wisdom and insight because they are more inclined to reflect and think things through deeply. The analysis of this proverb shows how important it is to understand context, and how meanings can vary. The proverb not only encompasses the physical danger of still water that can be deceptive but also characterizes a person who is quiet and wise, who may not always appear active but has a depth of thought and effective actions in the right situations.

Air Beriak Tanda Tak Dalam (Shallow waters make the most noise)

Idiomatic Meaning : A person who talks a lot usually lacks knowledge.

Example Sentence :

Peribahasa yang sering kita baca ketika di bangku sekolah. Masih ada yang ingat apa makna peribahasa tersebut?

Yup, Air beriak tanda tak dalam, maknanya adalah: orang yang banyak bicara biasanya tidak berilmu atau dalam kata lain orang yang terlalu banyak berbicara adalah orang yang tidak terlalu paham masalah pembicaraannya.

Translation:

A proverb we often read during our school days. Does anyone still remember what the meaning of that proverb is?

Yup, “Air beriak tanda tak dalam” means: a person who talks a lot usually lacks knowledge, or in other words, someone who talks too much is someone who does not fully understand the topic they are discussing.

(Source: <https://www.gurusiana.id/read/ruryariyani/article/air-beriak-tanda-tak-dalam-0>)

The proverb “Air beriak tanda tak dalam” (shallow waters make the most noise) teaches an important lesson about the value of having sufficient understanding and knowledge before expressing opinions or speaking. It also reminds us that the depth of what is being said is often more valuable than the mere quantity of words spoken. This proverb is a reminder that people

who talk excessively often do so without having a deep understanding of the subject, much like shallow water that makes a lot of noise as it flows.

Air Mata Jatuh ke Perut (tears fall into the stomach)

Idiomatic Meaning : Feeling deep sorrow but keeping it inside.

Example Sentence :

Mungkin ramai antara kita yang seperti air mata jatuh ke perut.

Terpaksa menelan semua sakit dijiwa gara-gara risau dengan orang sekeliling yang ada ketikanya terlalu judgemental dan tiada empati.

Translation:

Many of us might be like tears falling into the stomach.

Forced to swallow all the pain inside because of worries about the people around us who are sometimes too judgmental and lack empathy.

(Source: Aplikasi X, Akun: Areefah Ahmad)

The phrase “Air mata jatuh ke perut” (tears fall into the stomach) describes an emotional reality where a person must suppress and swallow their sadness due to concerns about being judged or the lack of empathy from others. This highlights the importance of creating a supportive and empathetic environment for better emotional well-being. It illustrates the idea of silently bearing emotional pain, holding back tears, and not expressing one's sorrow outwardly.

Air Diminum Serasa Duri, Nasi Dimakan Serasa Sekam (drinking water feels like thorns, eating rice tastes like husks)

Idiomatic Meaning : A deeply sad emotional state.

Example Sentence :

Betul lah kata pepatah dulu dulu

"Air diminum serasa duri, nasi dimakan rasa sekam"

Cukup untuk gambarkan perasaan aku sekarang ni kihkihkih

Translation:

"It's true what the old saying goes:

'Water drunk feels like thorns, rice eaten tastes like husks.'

This perfectly describes how I feel right now, kihkihkih."

(Source: Aplikasi X, Akun: Mod Two Jaga)

The proverb “Air diminum serasa duri, nasi dimakan serasa sekam” (drinking water feels like thorns, eating rice tastes like husks) vividly portrays the writer's deep sadness or suffering. It suggests that when someone is going through a difficult time, even the simplest and most enjoyable things in life can feel unpleasant and painful. This expression underscores how emotional distress can distort one's perception of everyday experiences, turning them into something harsh and unbearable.

Bagai Air di Daun Talas (Like Water on a Taro Leaf)

Idiomatic Meaning : A person who lacks steadfastness or is indecisive.

Example Sentence :

Saya percaya VisionOS rujukan kepada iOS 18 kelak yang saya dapat rasakan era Neumorphism akan bermula.

Pandangan saya masih utuh, Apple akan ke arah Neumorphism. Pendirian saya kekal dan bukan lalang "bagai air di daun talas".

Translation:

I believe VisionOS is a reference to the future iOS 18, where I can sense the beginning of the Neumorphism era. My view remains unchanged; Apple will move towards Neumorphism. My stance is firm and not like 'water on a taro leaf.'

(Sumber: Aplikasi X, akun: Xavier Nava)

In the context of the statement about VisionOS and Neumorphism, the proverb “bagai air di daun talas” is used to emphasize that the author's view is stable and unwavering, contrasting with the typical instability associated with water on a taro leaf. This proverb is often used to describe someone who cannot make up their mind or is easily swayed, but here it's used to highlight the opposite-firmness and consistency in opinion.

Darah Lebih Kental daripada (Air blood is thicker than water)

Idiomatic Meaning : Family bonds are stronger than any other relationships.

Example Sentence :

Darah lebih kental daripada air terdengar seperti kutukan ketimbang harapan. Kemiripannya dengan sang bapak adalah takdir yang menentukan identitasnya.

Translation:

Blood is thicker than water sounds more like a curse than a hope. His resemblance to his father is a fate that defines his identity.

(Source: <https://omong-omong.com/kutukan-orangtua/>)

The short story by Inas Pramoda uses the proverb "darah lebih kental daripada air" (blood is thicker than water) to depict the identity dilemma faced by the character Naya. It suggests that the resemblance to her father feels more like a fate that determines her identity, rather than just a strong family bond. This reflects how family relationships can profoundly shape one's identity and choices, often feeling more like an inescapable destiny rather than just a connection.

Sambil Menyelam Minum Air (while diving, drink water)

Idiomatic Meaning : Accomplishing two or more tasks at the same time.

Example Sentence :

Sebuah *peribahasa* yang cocok untuk menggambarkan sosoknya. *Sambil Menyelam Minum Air* memiliki makna mereka yang mampu melakukan beberapa pekerjaan pada waktu yang sama. Seperti halnya gadis kelahiran 2003 asal Bogor yang memanfaatkan waktu luangnya untuk belajar dan bekerja.

Translation:

An apt proverb to describe her. "Sambil Menyelam Minum Air" (While Diving, Drink Water) refers to those who can accomplish several tasks at the same time. Just like the girl born in 2003 from Bogor, who uses her free time to study and work.

(Source: <https://kumparan.com/ni-made-susilawati/sambil-menyelam-minum-air-ly9AsiGmubb>)

The proverb "sambil menyelam minum air" (while diving, drink water) is well-suited to describe someone who efficiently multitasks, such as the girl born in 2003 from Bogor. She uses her free time to both study and work, embodying the idea of being productive by accomplishing multiple goals simultaneously. This shows her ability to manage her time effectively, balancing learning and working to maximize her productivity.

Air Jernih Ikannya Jinak (clear water, the fish are tame)

Idiomatic Meaning : A peaceful and prosperous place.

Example Sentence :

Kembali ke negeri kelahiran di Negeri Sembilan yang "air jernih ikannya jinak".

Translation:

Returning to my homeland in Negeri Sembilan, where "the water is clear and the fish are tame."

(Source: Aplikasi X, Akun: @tarmizianuwar)

The proverb "air jernih ikannya jinak" (clear water, the fish are tame) can be interpreted as a depiction of a place or society that is clean, harmonious, and where people live peacefully. It highlights the relationship between a good environment and the behavior of its inhabitants, suggesting that a good environment fosters a peaceful and harmonious society. In the context of someone returning to their birthplace in Negeri Sembilan, this proverb serves as a reminder or hope that their homeland is a beautiful and tranquil place, where people live in harmony. It evokes pride and comfort in returning to a homeland rich in positive values.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Structure: "Yojjukugo" in Japanese consists of four kanji characters, whereas Indonesian proverbs are typically composed of longer sentences. This highlights a significant structural difference between the two types of expressions.

Moral Messages: Both Japanese "Yojjukugo" and Indonesian proverbs share a common goal of conveying moral lessons, advice, and life wisdom. They are used to teach and warn through the hidden meanings within the expressions.

Religious and Cultural Elements: "Yojjukugo" often contains elements of Buddhist teachings, indicating the influence of religion in shaping these expressions. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs generally do not include religious elements but are products of oral tradition and local culture, passed down through generations.

Idiomatic Meaning: Both “Yojjukugo” and Indonesian proverbs have idiomatic meanings that depict water elements found in the surrounding environment. This suggests that natural elements, particularly water, play an important role in various expressions in both cultures.

Difference in Meaning: While both cultures have expressions involving “clear water” and “tame fish,” the meanings conveyed are different. In “Yojjukugo”, such an expression can mean that excessive kindness may result in good intentions not being appreciated by others. In contrast, the Indonesian proverb “air jernih ikannya jinak” describes the safety and prosperity of a nation.

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