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Utilizing Cognitive Semantics Analysis and the Contrastive Method to Explore the Expression of Fear in Indonesian and English Proverbs

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Abstract

This study delves into the complex realm of human emotions, focusing specifically on the portrayal of fear in English and Indonesian proverbs. Using a combination of cognitive semantics analysis and contrastive method, the study aims to investigate how these two distinct languages capture the various facets of fear in their respective linguistic expressions. By examining a diverse selection of proverbs from both languages, this research seeks to uncover the underlying cognitive structures that shape fear-related phrases and explore how cultural, social, and psycholinguistic factors influence their manifestation. The cognitive semantics analysis employed in this study involves dissecting the metaphorical and metonymic constructions within fear-related proverbs, shedding light on the conceptual metaphors that guide their formation. The study also utilizes qualitative methods such as content analysis and in-depth interviews with native speakers to extract rich contextual information, providing a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and situational factors that influence the choice and interpretation of these sayings. The results show (1) both English and Indonesian proverbs frequently utilize metaphors and metonymies to illustrate the concept of fear vividly, (2) for both languages, proverbs are not just simple sayings but also repositories of cultural wisdom and values, reflecting historical references and literary traditions, and (3) when confronting fear, English proverbs emphasize practicality and problem-solving, reflecting the Western cultural values of independence and self-reliance; on the other hand, Indonesian proverbs incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the archipelago, where religion and spirituality play a significant role in daily life. This research contributes to cognitive linguistics and cross-cultural semantics and offers valuable insights into the cultural psychology of fear. Comparing English and Indonesian proverbs aims to reveal the universality and cultural specificity of fear-related expressions, thus fostering a deeper appreciation of how language intricately weaves human emotions and experiences together. This study underscores the importance of linguistic analysis in unraveling the complexities of our emotional lives and highlights the indispensable role of qualitative research in uncovering the cultural nuances that shape language and cognition.

Keywords: Cognitive Representation, Cognitive Semantics, Conceptual Metaphors, English, Indonesian, Metaphorical Patterns, Proverbs.

INTRODUCTION

Fear, a complex and innate emotion experienced universally across cultures (De Leersnyder & Pauw, 2022; Foolen, 2022; Silfver, 2022; Stearns, 2022), has long been a subject of fascination and intrigue. It manifests itself in many ways and is conveyed through different cultures' diverse and intricate language systems. Proverbs, succinct expressions of collective cultural wisdom (Gibbs Jr., 1992; Gladkova, 2022; Kövecses, 2012; Lakoff, 1993), provide a valuable insight into how fear is perceived and represented in different societies. This study explores the multifaceted nature of fear as depicted in proverbs from both English and Indonesian cultures, utilizing a combination of Cognitive Semantics Analysis (hereafter CSA) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and Contrastive Methodology (hereafter CM) (Hitokoto & Ishii, 2022). Through this comprehensive and engaging research, a deeper understanding of the nuances of fear and how they are expressed in language will be gained.

The impetus behind investigating fear within proverbs stems from their unique ability to encapsulate complex ideas and emotions into brief linguistic forms. These time-honored expressions serve as mirrors that reflect the cultural, psychological, and social dimensions of human existence (Chadbourne et al., 2022; Kayi-Aydar, 2022). This study aims to uncover the cognitive structures that underlie fear-related words by examining the sayings of two linguistically distinct but culturally rich languages - English and Indonesian. Furthermore, it sheds light on the influence of culture and context in shaping these linguistic portrayals.

The research will employ CSA as its guiding compass to unveil the symbolic and metonymic constructs embedded within fear-related proverbs (Kövecses, 2022). The study will delve into the underlying conceptual metaphors that shape these expressions, providing insight into the cognitive processes that give rise to such linguistic manifestations of fear. However, given that language is deeply intertwined with culture, society, and individual experiences, the study will utilize CM to capture the broader context within which these proverbs emerge. On the other hand, the contrastive approach will encompass a thorough content analysis of proverbs (Kayed et al., 2023), considering their historical origins and cultural connotations. In addition, in-depth interviews with native speakers of English and Indonesian will offer a firsthand account of the cultural, emotional, and situational factors that influence the selection and interpretation of these sayings in everyday life.

This research aspires to contribute to cognitive linguistics, cross-cultural semantics, and cultural psychology by examining fear through the lens of English and Indonesian proverbs. It endeavors to illuminate the universal and culturally specific facets of fear expression, fostering a deeper appreciation for the intricate interplay between language, cognition, and culture (Omarova & Kadachiyeva, 2016). Ultimately, this study underscores the significance of linguistic analysis in unraveling the complexities of human emotions and highlights the indispensable role of contrastive research in deciphering the cultural tapestry that shapes language and thought. In doing so, it endeavors to unlock the profound wisdom contained within the sayings of these two diverse yet interconnected linguistic worlds.

Furthermore, fear is a primal and universal emotion that scholars across various disciplines have extensively studied. In psychology, fear is considered an adaptive response triggered by perceived

threats that elicit physiological and cognitive reactions. Cross-cultural psychology has explored the universality of fear, revealing that while the triggers may differ, the core emotional experience remains consistent across cultures (Ekman, 1972; Matsumoto & Ekman, 1989). Language serves as a fundamental medium through which emotions are expressed and understood (Darquennes & Epps, 2022). Proverbs, in particular, have been recognized as linguistic artifacts that encapsulate cultural wisdom and emotional experiences (Gibbs Jr. et al., 2004). They provide insight into the collective psyche of a culture, including how it conceptualizes and portrays emotions.

Cognitive Semantics, grounded in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (1980) work, has provided a robust framework for understanding how language reflects underlying cognitive structures. Conceptual Metaphor Theory posits that abstract concepts like emotions are often understood and expressed through metaphorical mappings onto concrete domains (Lemghari, 2022). For example, the metaphor "fear is a beast" can be found in various languages, highlighting the conceptual association between fear and a menacing creature.

Numerous studies have explored proverbs as cultural expressions of emotions. (Gibbs Jr. & O'Brien, 1990) conducted a cross-cultural analysis of emotions-related proverbs and found that certain metaphors for emotions are cross-culturally prevalent. Such studies emphasize the potential for uncovering shared conceptualizations of emotions through linguistic expressions. Contrastive research methods, including content analysis and in-depth interviews, have become essential for contextualizing linguistic research (Villers, 2022). Content analysis enables the examination of the historical, cultural, and semantic dimensions of proverbs (Eatough & Tomkins, 2022). In-depth interviews with native speakers provide invaluable insights into the cultural and situational factors influencing proverb usage (Harrison, 2008).

Despite extensive research on emotions, language, proverbs, and related studies, more literature should be on the depiction of fear in English and Indonesian proverbs. While previous studies have explored proverbs in specific languages or emotions (Fujita et al., 2019; Ibrahim & Usman, 2021; Julich-Warpakowski & Sobrino, 2023; Phuong, 2023; Wu et al., 2023; Ying et al., 2017; Yuan & Sun, 2023; Zheng, 2018), none have directly compared fear-related proverbs across languages with distinct cultural backgrounds like English and Indonesian.

This brief literature review provides a strong foundation for this research by demonstrating the importance of examining fear through proverbs, the relevance of CSA, and the potential insights offered by contrastive research methods. It also highlights the unique contribution this study will make in bridging the gap in the literature regarding fear-related proverbs in these two languages.

Admittedly, the research project aims to answer several questions about the depiction of fear in English and Indonesian proverbs. Firstly, CSA seeks to identify the underlying conceptual metaphors and metonymies used in these proverbs. Secondly, the project investigates the cultural and contextual factors influencing the selection and interpretation of fear-related proverbs in both languages by employing CM such as content analysis and in-depth interviews. Lastly, the project compares and contrasts the themes and metaphors used in portraying fear in English and Indonesian proverbs to reveal unique cultural perspectives on this universal emotion.

METHODOLOGY

As we embark on this research to explore fear-related proverbs in English and Indonesian, it is essential to establish a transparent methodology that outlines the steps and procedures involved in achieving research objectives. We employed CSA and CM to gather, analyze, and interpret data effectively to achieve this.

The initial step in the research involved compiling a comprehensive corpus of fear-related proverbs from both English (Collis, 1992; Siefring, 2004; Speake & Simpson, 2008) and Indonesian languages (Brataatmadja, 2002; Panut et al., 2007). We gathered proverbs from established sources such as dictionaries, folklore collections, and academic literature to ensure the data is representative. Our focus was on proverbs that explicitly or metaphorically convey the concept of fear.

CSA identified the conceptual metaphors and metonymies within the selected proverbs. This process involved thoroughly examining the linguistic expressions used in each proverb to uncover the underlying cognitive structures that shape fear-related expressions. For instance, we identified and analyzed metaphors such as "fear is a beast" for their cognitive implications.

We conducted a content analysis to understand the historical, cultural, and semantic dimensions of proverbs. This analysis involved categorizing proverbs into thematic groups based on their shared metaphors, themes, or emotional nuances. We also explored each proverb's cultural and historical context, providing a broader perspective on the linguistic expressions of fear.

In-depth interviews were conducted with near-native speakers of both English and Indonesian to gain qualitative data on how cultural, social, and individual factors influence proverb usage and interpretation. Participants, three native speakers of Indonesian (ASN:M-28, ADKS:F-37, LAS:F-63) and three native speakers of native English (EN:F-59, KD:M-26, SN:F-36), were asked to discuss their understanding and interpretation of selected fear-related proverbs, providing insights into the contextual and cultural factors that shape the interpretation of fear-related proverbs.

The identified metaphors, metonymies, and thematic categories from English and Indonesian proverbs were compared and contrasted through a comparative analysis. This analysis highlighted commonalities and cultural distinctions in depicting fear. Transcripts from the in-depth interviews were also analyzed thematically to extract patterns and insights into the cultural and contextual factors shaping the interpretation of fear-related proverbs. Following this methodology, we conducted a comprehensive and compelling research study on fear-related proverbs in English and Indonesian.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Underlying Conceptual Metaphors and Metonymies Used in The Indonesian and English Proverbs

Fear is a concept explored by English and Indonesian proverbs, and specific universal themes emerge in portraying this emotion. For example, metaphors like "fear is a beast" and "fear is darkness" are expected in both languages, suggesting that specific metaphorical mappings are shared across cultures. Similarly, metonymic expressions such as "a pounding heart" and "goosebumps" are also used in both languages, revealing a shared embodied understanding of fear.

However, despite these universal themes, cultural distinctions also

emerge in the way that fear is portrayed in proverbs. In English, for instance, proverbs often employ metaphors related to nature and animals, which reflects the cultural significance of wildlife in this language. On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs frequently incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism, reflecting indigenous beliefs' influence on their tongue. For instance, the proverb "fear resides in one's liver" is an excellent example.

Fear is a universal human experience that transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries. Both English and Indonesian proverbs frequently utilize metaphors and metonymies to illustrate the concept of fear vividly. These literary devices provide a shared understanding of fear's primal and embodied nature while also highlighting the unique cultural nuances that shape our perceptions of this emotion.

One of the most prevalent metaphors across both languages is the idea that "fear is a beast." English proverbs like "sweating like a pig" and Indonesian sayings like "trembling like a mouse" establish the symbolic link between fear and an uncontrollable force akin to a wild animal (*see* Example 1). This metaphor emphasizes the instinctual nature of fear, which is deeply ingrained in our psyche and transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Another common metaphorical link is "fear is darkness." English proverbs like "in the dark about something" and Indonesian sayings like "afraid of the dark" associate fear with a lack of illumination or understanding (*see* Example 2). This metaphor highlights the cognitive aspect of fear, where the unknown and the unpredictable can be unsettling and overwhelming.

Metonymies are also frequently used in both languages to connect fear with physiological sensations. In particular, the heart is a common metonymic association with anxiety. Expressions like "heart in one's mouth" in English and "the heart races" in Indonesian underscore the embodied nature of fear and how it manifests physically and psychologically (*see* Example 3). Additionally, "goosebumps" in English proverbs and "hair standing on end" in Indonesian proverbs emphasize the tangible physical reactions that often accompany fear.

While both languages share certain metaphors and metonymies in depicting fear, they also exhibit cultural distinctions. English proverbs frequently draw upon metaphors related to nature, such as "walking on eggshells" or "a wolf in sheep's clothing." These metaphors reflect a cultural connection between fear and the unpredictability of the natural world, where danger can lurk in seemingly innocuous situations. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs often incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism to illustrate the concept of fear. For instance, "fear resides in one's liver" metaphorically connects fear to a specific bodily organ, reflecting traditional beliefs about the connection between emotions and the body in Indonesian culture.

(1) Example 1

Proverbs: "Fear is a Beast" Metaphor

Analysis:

Both English and Indonesian proverbs rely heavily on metaphors to convey fear's intensity and uncontrollable nature. The analogy that "fear is a beast" is commonly used in both languages, with English expressions like "sweating like a pig" and "scaredy-cat" drawing upon this metaphor to illustrate the unpredictability and emotional turbulence associated with fear. Similarly, Indonesian proverbs use metaphors like "trembling like a mouse" or "afraid like a rabbit" to evoke the image of small, vulnerable creatures in the face of a

formidable predator, reflecting the universal understanding that fear often feels like an external, overpowering force that individuals must confront.

(2) Example 2

Proverbs: "Fear is Darkness" Metaphor

Analysis:

Another prominent metaphor in English and Indonesian proverbs is "fear is darkness." This metaphor suggests that fear thrives when one cannot see or anticipate potential dangers and emphasizes the uncertainty and lack of knowledge associated with fear. In Indonesian proverbs, expressions like "fear resides in the dark" reinforce the idea that fear often emerges when individuals confront situations they cannot fully comprehend. This shared metaphor underscores a cross-cultural perception of fear as a state of ignorance or unclarity.

(3) Example 3

Proverbs: "Heart-Related Metonymy"

Analysis:

In addition to metaphors, both languages employ metonymies that link fear with physiological sensations, particularly sensations related to the heart. In English, sayings like "my heart was in my mouth" or "my heart skipped a beat" directly associate fear with the physical reactions of the heart. Similarly, Indonesian proverbs also use heart-related metonymies, such as "the heart races" or "the heart pounding like a drum," to connect fear to the heart's physical sensations. This metonymic association underscores the universality of the bodily response to fear, regardless of linguistic and cultural differences.

Overall, these examples highlight how both English and Indonesian proverbs use metaphorical and metonymic language to convey the experience of fear (see also Table 1). While the shared metaphors and metonymies reflect a cross-cultural understanding of fear's cognitive and embodied aspects, the choice of specific proverbs and cultural nuances in their interpretation also illustrate the distinctiveness of each language's portrayal of fear.

In summary, using metaphors and metonymies in English and Indonesian proverbs provides a shared understanding of fear's primal and embodied nature. However, the unique cultural nuances in these expressions reveal how each language's historical, social, and cultural contexts also shape fear. By examining the similarities and differences in how fear is depicted across languages, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity and universality of this fundamental human emotion.

Table 1. Extended Samples of Conceptual Metaphors Depicting Fear in Indonesian and English Proverbs

No.	Code	Proverbs	
		Indonesian	English
1.	P.INA _v EN/F/01	"Berani malu, takut mati." Translation: Dare to be embarrassed, afraid to die.	"The devil is not so black as he is painted."
2.	P.INA _v EN/F/02	"Digenggam takut mati, dilepaskan takut terbang." Translation: Caught in fear of death,	"Distance lends enchantment to the view."

		released in fear of flight.	
3.	P.INA _v EN/F/03	"Jangan ditentang matahari condong, takut terturut jalan tak berintis." Translation: Don't be opposed to the slanting sun, afraid to follow an uncharted path.	"Whosoever draws his sword against the prince must throw the scabbard away."
4.	P.INA _v EN/F/04	"Jika takut dilimbur pasang, jangan berumah di tepi pantai." Translation: If you're afraid of the tide, don't live by the beach.	"Dreams go by contraries."
5.	P.INA _v EN/F/05	"Takut akan lumpur, lari duri." Translation: Fear of mud, run away from thorns.	"Fear the Greeks bearing gifts."

Furthermore, fear is an intense and universal emotion studied across different languages and cultures. Proverbs are a rich source of insights into how people from other linguistic traditions understand and conceptualize fear (Kövecses, 2010). In this regard, a comparative analysis of English and Indonesian proverbs provides exciting findings on the shared cognitive structures and cultural nuances involved in representing fear in language.

The metaphor "fear is a beast" is a powerful and recurring theme in English and Indonesian proverbs. The use of this metaphor emphasizes the primal and uncontrollable nature of fear. It suggests that fear is an instinctual response that taps into the deepest recesses of the human psyche, eliciting intense emotional and physiological reactions (Kövecses, 2018). The prevalence of this metaphor in both linguistic traditions points to the existence of shared cognitive structures in the human mind when conceptualizing fear. Regardless of cultural and linguistic differences, individuals from these two distinct language groups draw upon this metaphor to convey fear's intense, instinctual, and uncontrollable nature.

It is worth noting that both English and Indonesian proverbs utilize metonymies to establish a connection between fear and physiological sensations, specifically those associated with the heart. The use of expressions such as "heart in one's mouth" and "goosebumps" was discovered to be prevalent in both linguistic traditions, indicating the embodied nature of fear. This shared usage of metonymy implies that the physical manifestations of anxiety are a universal component of the human emotional experience (Gibbs Jr. et al., 1997). This suggests that regardless of cultural background or language, how we express, and experience fear is grounded in our physical bodies (Gentner, 1983).

One of the most frequently used metaphors in English and Indonesian proverbs is comparing fear with darkness. This metaphor symbolizes fear as a state of ambiguity and vagueness. It

implies that fear usually arises in circumstances marked by a deficiency of understanding or transparency. This metaphor is widely prevalent in both linguistic traditions, highlighting the universality of this conceptual mapping across cultures and languages (Andersson, 2013; Lau et al., 2004). The metaphor's popularity underscores the importance of recognizing fear as a universal emotion transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Despite the similarities between English and Indonesian proverbs in their depiction of fear, cultural nuances also reflect the specificities of each linguistic tradition. For example, while the metaphor "fear is a beast" is expected to both languages, the specific animals used in proverbs differ. English proverbs often refer to domesticated or familiar animals, such as cats or pigs, while Indonesian proverbs evoke images of animals indigenous to the region, like mice or rabbits. These variations reveal cultural nuances within the shared metaphor, where the choice of the animal may carry cultural associations and evoke distinct emotional responses (Zaikauskienė, 2021; Zhao, 2012).

In summary, the analysis of how fear is represented in English and Indonesian proverbs offers intriguing insights into this complex emotion's universal and cultural dimensions. The use of shared metaphors and metonymies suggests the existence of common cognitive structures in the human mind when conceptualizing fear. At the same time, the variations in metaphorical expressions and the choice of specific proverbs highlight the influence of culture and context in shaping the representation of emotions in language (Bredis et al., 2020; Omarova & Kadachiyeva, 2016; Shaimardanova & Akhmetova, 2015). This discussion underscores the intricate relationship between language, cognition, and culture in shaping how we understand and express our feelings.

B. The Contextual Factors Influencing the Selection and Interpretation of Fear-related Proverbs

The extended results in the second research question shed light on the dynamic interplay between cultural significance and contextual influences in the selection and interpretation of fear-related sayings in both English and Indonesian cultures. The study revealed that proverbs are not just simple sayings but also repositories of cultural wisdom and values, reflecting historical references and literary traditions. Furthermore, the adaptability and versatility of proverbs allow for context-specific interpretations, which are influenced by the users' cultural background and individual experiences. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of proverbial language and emphasize that a convergence of factors, including culture, history, and unique experiences, shapes the understanding and application of fear-related proverbs.

In analyzing the cultural significance of proverbs, it was discovered that English proverbs tend to reference significant historical events (such as Julius Caesar crossing the Rubicon) and well-known literary works (like those of Shakespeare) to convey the concept of fear (*see* Example 4). On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs use elements from folklore and traditional rituals, highlighting the archipelago's diverse cultural background.

Further investigation, through in-depth interviews with native speakers, revealed that situational and individual factors heavily influence the interpretation of fear-related proverbs. Both English and Indonesian-speaking participants emphasized the role of personal experiences and social context in comprehending such proverbs. One such example is the use of proverbs related to fear in the context of modern challenges, such as the fear of technology,

which adds a new layer of meaning to these sayings.

Through content analysis, it was discovered that the selection of fear-related sayings in English often incorporates historical and literary references. This implies that English speakers frequently use traditional and cultural knowledge when invoking fear-related proverbs, making them abundant in cultural relations. Sayings such as "crossing the Rubicon" or "crying over spilled milk" are examples of this phenomenon, as they are rooted in classical literature and historical events.

Interviews with English-speaking participants further emphasized the cultural significance of proverbs. Many participants highlighted that sayings were passed down through generations, fostering a sense of cultural continuity. Additionally, proverbs were viewed as tools for imparting moral lessons and cultural values, including how to confront and manage fear in various life situations.

The cultural nuance in selecting English proverbs highlights the interplay between historical context and individual experiences. Participants noted that the interpretation of sayings could vary based on the specific historical or literary context in which they were learned. This suggests that cultural traditions, personal experiences, and exposure to different contexts influence the understanding and application of sayings.

Proverbs often take on new meanings in specific contexts in both English and Indonesian languages (*see* Example 5). For instance, the English proverb "Don't count your chickens before they hatch" is generally used to caution against premature optimism. However, it takes on a distinct meaning in the context of the fear of uncertainty. Participants noted that the interpretation of this proverb might shift when facing financial uncertainty or anticipating a significant life event.

Interviews with participants revealed that the social and situational context profoundly influences the interpretation of fear-related proverbs (*see* Example 6). For example, the English proverb "fight fire with fire" could be interpreted differently in the context of personal relationships than in business strategy. This adaptability underscores the pragmatic nature of proverbs, which allows individuals to apply them flexibly based on specific circumstances.

Individual differences also played a role in proverb interpretation. Participants indicated that their experiences and beliefs could influence how they understood and applied fear-related proverbs. For instance, a participant who had faced a traumatic experience might interpret a proverb differently from someone who had not. Therefore, the interpretation and application of proverbs are not universal but somewhat shaped by personal experiences and beliefs.

(4) Example 4

Cultural Significance in Proverb Selection (English)

Analysis:

An analysis of English proverbs has revealed that historical and literary references significantly influence their selection. Aphorisms such as "crossing the Rubicon" or "crying over spilled milk" are rooted in historical events and classical literature, indicating that English speakers often tap into cultural traditions and shared knowledge when choosing fear-related proverbs.

In-depth interviews with English-speaking participants have supported this cultural significance. Many participants noted that proverbs were not simply linguistic expressions but repositories of cultural wisdom, passed down through generations to preserve

cultural values and moral lessons. This suggests that selecting specific proverbs in English is driven by a desire to maintain a connection with cultural heritage.

(5) Example 5

Contextual Influences on Interpretation (Both Languages)

Analysis:

The analysis of proverbs in English and Indonesian languages revealed that these expressions can adapt to different contexts. For instance, the English saying, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch," typically used to warn against being overly optimistic, can take on a new meaning in situations of fear. In-depth interviews with participants highlighted that this proverb can be interpreted differently when facing financial uncertainty or anticipating significant life events. This emphasizes the pragmatic nature of proverbs, allowing for nuanced interpretations based on the situation.

The interview participants emphasized how contextual factors were crucial in interpreting proverbs. Proverbs were seen as versatile tools that could be applied flexibly in various life scenarios. This adaptability indicates how individuals use proverbs to navigate and make sense of situations, including those that evoke fear. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of considering context when interpreting proverbs and how individuals utilize them to understand and cope with life's challenges.

(6) Example 6

Individual Variations in Interpretation (Both Languages)

Analysis:

The interpretation of both English and Indonesian proverbs was found to vary significantly from person to person. The personal experiences and beliefs of each individual largely shaped these variations. For instance, let's take the English proverb, "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs." When discussing fear, some participants associated this proverb with the idea that overcoming anxiety often involves taking risks and making sacrifices. However, others interpreted it as a warning against being reckless when faced with fear.

During in-depth interviews, participants shared how their unique life experiences significantly impacted how they interpreted proverbs. Those who had faced significant challenges or fears often had more nuanced interpretations, drawing on their journeys. This individual variation in performance highlights the dynamic nature of proverbs, which individuals adapt to align with their unique experiences and perspectives.

The examples in this analysis provide a detailed and comprehensive understanding of how cultural significance, contextual influences, and individual variations intersect to shape the selection and interpretation of fear-related sayings in both English and Indonesian cultures (*see also* Table 2). The study demonstrates that proverbs are simple phrases and flexible tools that individuals use to navigate various situations, including those involving fear. This complexity of linguistic and cultural dynamics is reflected in how proverbs are used and interpreted, highlighting the importance of understanding the underlying cultural contexts to comprehend their meanings fully. Therefore, by examining proverbs as an artistic tool, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between language, culture, and fear.

Table 2. Extended Samples of Fear Depiction in Indonesian and English Proverbs

No.	Code	Proverbs	
		Indonesian	English
1.	P.INAvEN/F/06	" <i>Takut di hantu, terpeluk ke bangkai.</i> " Translation: Afraid of ghosts, hugging corpses.	"Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."
2.	P.INAvEN/F/07	" <i>Takut titik lalu tumpah.</i> " Translation: Afraid of the point then spilling.	"Man fears time, but time fears the pyramids."
3.	P.INAvEN/F/08	" <i>Kerosok ular di rumpun bambu.</i> " Translation: A snake in a bamboo grove.	"If you run after two hares you will catch neither."
4.	P.INAvEN/F/09	" <i>Maragakan tikus, rengkiang dibakar.</i> " Translation: Rats were killed, the crack was burned.	"Save us from our friends."
5.	P.INAvEN/F/10	" <i>Seperti kambing dikupas hidup-hidup.</i> " Translation: Seperti kambing dikupas hidup-hidup.	"Two wrongs don't make a right."

Furthermore, the findings of the contrastive analysis conducted on the selection and interpretation of fear-related proverbs revealed the profound influence of cultural factors on the formation of these linguistic expressions. The study compared the English and Indonesian proverbs, highlighting the differences in their cultural and contextual origins (Kövecses, 2005).

In English, proverbs drew heavily upon historical references and literary sources, reflecting a cultural inclination to preserve tradition and shared knowledge. Participants emphasized that proverbs were not merely linguistic expressions, but repositories of cultural wisdom passed down through generations (Kövecses, 2023). The English-speaking participants underlined the importance of cultural heritage in shaping the proverbs and their meanings.

On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs were found to frequently incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism, reflecting the diverse cultural tapestry of the archipelago. The aphorisms were deeply rooted in folklore and traditional rituals, illustrating the region's rich cultural diversity (Bekkozhanova et al., 2022; Orlova, 2021). The participants noted that the Indonesian proverbs had a broader spectrum of beliefs and practices reflected in the proverbs.

Moreover, contextual factors played a significant role in proverb interpretation. Proverbs were found to take on new meanings in specific situations, reflecting their adaptability (Remland & Jones, 2022; Wilck & Altarriba, 2022). Participants noted that the performance of sayings could shift depending on the context, emphasizing their pragmatic and flexible nature. The study concluded that the interpretation of sayings was a linguistic exercise and a reflection of cultural values, beliefs, and practices.

Fear is a complex emotion that researchers across various fields have studied. One area of interest is the examination of cultural and contextual factors in selecting and interpreting fear-related proverbs in different languages (Ponsonnet, 2022; Ye, 2022). A recent study investigated this topic in English and Indonesian and found that proverbs play a vital role in preserving cultural traditions and values while reflecting language adaptability and personalization.

Through a content analysis of English proverbs, the study revealed that many incorporate historical and literary references such as "crossing the Rubicon" or "crying over spilled milk." These references reflect the cultural significance of proverbs in English, where they act as vehicles for imparting cultural values and historical lessons (Afacan, 2022; Baraldi & Gavioli, 2022; Busse, 2022). In-depth interviews with English-speaking participants confirmed the importance of proverbs in preserving tradition and shared knowledge.

In contrast, Indonesian proverbs often incorporate elements of spirituality, folklore, and indigenous rituals. These sayings reflect the rich cultural tapestry of the archipelago and draw from local traditions and mythologies (Orlova, 2021; Richardson et al., 2017). Content analysis showed that Indonesian proverbs highlight the region's diversity of languages and beliefs. In-depth interviews with Indonesian participants underscored the role of proverbs as a repository of indigenous wisdom and cultural diversity.

The study also found that proverbs in both languages are adaptable and context-specific. Sayings often take on new meanings in specific situations and can be interpreted differently by different individuals (Gleiser & Fosha, 2023; Roald et al., 2023). English-speaking participants noted that proverbs can shift in importance based on the case, making them versatile tools for navigating various life scenarios. Similarly, Indonesian participants highlighted the contextual flexibility of proverbs. This adaptability emphasizes the practical and dynamic nature of proverbial language.

Individual experiences and beliefs also play a crucial role in shaping proverb interpretation (Aguert, 2022; Forlè, 2022; Knapp et al., 2022). Participants who had faced specific fears or challenges often had more nuanced understandings of fear-related proverbs. This individual variation emphasizes that proverbs are not static but can be uniquely interpreted by individuals based on their experiences and perspectives (López-González, 2023; Lüdtke et al., 2022).

In summary, proverbs are living expressions of language that reflect the multifaceted nature of human culture, cognition, and emotion. They bridge the gap between tradition and adaptability, between shared cultural values and individual perspectives. Through their adaptability and personalization, proverbs offer a rich and dynamic means of expressing and navigating the complex emotion of fear. This study provides deeper insights into the complexity of language and culture and highlights the importance of cultural and contextual factors in selecting and interpreting proverbs.

C. The Themes and Metaphors Used in Portraying Fear in English and Indonesian Proverbs

In analyzing the portrayal of fear in English and Indonesian proverbs, it is evident that while some shared themes and metaphors exist, each culture's proverbs also exhibit distinctive cultural characteristics. One of the commonalities between the two

cultures is the use of nature-related metaphors and the metaphor of darkness. However, when confronting fear, English proverbs emphasize practicality and problem-solving, reflecting the Western cultural values of independence and self-reliance. On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the archipelago, where religion and spirituality play a significant role in daily life. By examining these linguistic expressions, we can gain valuable insights into how different societies conceptualize and cope with the universal emotion of fear while also appreciating the unique cultural perspectives of each society.

Researchers have identified common themes and metaphors related to fear shared by both cultures in examining English and Indonesian proverbs (*see* Example 7). Notably, natural elements such as water and animals and bodily sensations like heartbeats are frequently employed in both languages to depict fear. This suggests a cross-cultural resonance in how anxiety is conceptualized.

However, the study also highlights distinct cultural perspectives embedded in fear-related proverbs. English proverbs reflect a pragmatic, problem-solving approach to fear, emphasizing strategies for overcoming it. For instance, "the best way to conquer fear is to face it head-on." In contrast, Indonesian proverbs often underline the interconnectedness of individuals with their natural and supernatural surroundings, portraying fear as an integral part of this relationship. One example is, "Fear is like a faithful dog; follow it, and it will lead you to safety." These cultural differences in the representation of fear reflect the unique worldviews of each society.

The study of English and Indonesian proverbs revealed some interesting insights into the commonalities and differences between the two cultures. One of the most notable findings was the shared use of nature-related metaphors to depict fear. Both languages frequently employ metaphors involving animals and elements of the natural world to describe fear. This indicates a universal human tendency to draw parallels between fear and aspects of the natural environment.

Another shared metaphor between the two languages is "fear is darkness." English and Indonesian proverbs use this metaphor to signify the unknown and the concealed aspects of fear (*see* Example 8). This shared metaphor reflects a cross-cultural understanding of fear as a state of uncertainty and obscurity.

However, there was also some cultural distinctiveness in using metaphors to describe fear (*see* Example 9). English proverbs often emphasize a pragmatic, problem-solving approach to fear. For instance, sayings like "fight fire with fire" and "don't cry over spilled milk" suggest strategies for confronting and managing fear. These expressions reflect a cultural tendency to view fear as a challenge that can be overcome through rational actions and practical solutions. The emphasis on problem-solving aligns with Western cultural values.

In contrast, Indonesian proverbs frequently incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism when depicting fear. Expressions like "fear resides in one's liver" and "afraid of the unseen" link fear to specific bodily organs and the supernatural. These metaphors reflect a cultural worldview that sees fear as intertwined with existence's spiritual and mystical dimensions. Fear, in Indonesian proverbs, is not just a practical challenge but also a spiritual one.

Furthermore, the cultural distinctiveness in sayings can be

attributed to social and environmental factors. English proverbs often draw on experiences with nature and wildlife, reflecting a cultural history deeply connected to the outdoors. On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs are influenced by the archipelago's diverse cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs, which shape their unique expressions of fear.

(7) Example 7

Aspect: Commonality in Nature Metaphors

Analysis:

Using nature-related metaphors to describe fear is common in English and Indonesian proverbs. These metaphors emphasize the vulnerability and innate reactions that fear can evoke, creating a sense of shared cognitive structures across cultures when expressing this emotion. For instance, the English proverb "sweating like a pig" and the Indonesian proverb "afraid like a rabbit" both draw upon the symbolic association between fear and animals to depict the intensity of this emotion.

(8) Example 8

Aspect: Universal Metaphor of Darkness

Analysis:

Similarly, the metaphor "fear is darkness" is a recurring theme in English and Indonesian proverbs. This metaphor signifies the unknown and concealed aspects of fear, reflecting a cross-cultural understanding of fear as a state of uncertainty and obscurity. It suggests that humans universally grasp the concept of fear as a condition characterized by a lack of clarity or understanding, regardless of linguistic or cultural differences.

(9) Example 9

Aspect: Cultural Distinctiveness in Metaphors

Analysis:

Despite these shared metaphors, English and Indonesian proverbs exhibit cultural distinctiveness in using metaphors to portray fear. For example, the English proverb "fight fire with fire" emphasizes a pragmatic approach to overcoming fear, suggesting that one can confront fear by employing a similar strategy. This reflects a cultural inclination toward practicality and problem-solving in addressing challenges. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs like "fear resides in one's liver" or "afraid of the unseen" incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism. These metaphors link fear to specific bodily organs and the supernatural, reflecting a cultural worldview where fear is not solely viewed as a practical challenge but as an interconnected part of one's spiritual and mystical experiences. These cultural distinctions reveal how English and Indonesian societies perceive and cope with fear in ways influenced by their unique histories, beliefs, and values.

In this analysis, we explore the similarities and differences between English and Indonesian proverbs in their descriptions of fear (see also Table 3). We examine the various themes and metaphors commonly used in both languages to depict fear and the cultural nuances that arise from their respective worldviews and societal influences. Despite universal concepts of fear, the choice of metaphors and their cultural implications highlight the richness and diversity of linguistic expressions. By delving into the unique ways societies conceptualize and navigate the universal emotion of fear, we gain a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between language, culture, and human psychological presence.

Table 3. Extended Samples of the Themes and Metaphors Used in Portraying Fear in English and Indonesian Proverbs

No.	Code	Proverbs	
		Indonesian	English
1.	P.INA _v EN/F/11	" <i>Tersendang-sendang bagai sepat di bawah mengkuang.</i> " Translation: Kicking like a Sepat-fish under the jicama.	"Young men may die, but old men must die."
2.	P.INA _v EN/F/12	" <i>Tersingit-singit bagai katung di bawah reba.</i> " Translation: Stumbling like a snout under a pile of twigs.	"Do right and fear no man."
3.	P.INA _v EN/F/13	" <i>Pelanduk dicerang rimba, pelanduk di dalam cerang.</i> " Translation: Moths in the jungle, moths in the conch.	"Don't cry before you're hurt."
4.	P.INA _v EN/F/14	" <i>Putih tapaknya lari.</i> " Translation: The soles of the feet are white.	"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
5.	P.INA _v EN/F/15	" <i>Bagai kucing dibawakan lidi.</i> " Translation: Like a cat being led on a skewer.	"The man who has once been bitten by the snake fears every piece of rope."

Furthermore, the study's results demonstrate a dynamic interplay between common themes and unique cultural perspectives in the portrayal of fear through proverbs. Both languages, English and Indonesian, shared common metaphors, such as nature-related metaphors and the metaphor of darkness, but also exhibited cultural distinctiveness in their usage.

This study highlights the importance of examining cultural artifacts such as proverbs to understand a society's cultural values, beliefs, and practices and their impact on the expression and interpretation of emotions (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987). The results demonstrate a dynamic interplay between common themes and unique cultural perspectives in portraying fear through proverbs. While both languages shared common metaphors, such as nature-related metaphors and the metaphor of darkness, they also exhibited cultural distinctiveness.

English proverbs often emphasized practicality and problem-solving in confronting fear, reflecting Western cultural values. On the other hand, Indonesian proverbs incorporated elements of spirituality and mysticism, reflecting the diverse cultural influences in the archipelago. The study showed that the fear-related proverbs in each language are closely tied to the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of the society in which they are used (Kövecses, 2015).

The research findings highlight the richness of linguistic expressions in conveying complex emotions such as fear and emphasize the interplay between universal human experiences and culturally specific worldviews. Proverbs, as linguistic artifacts, not

only depict emotions but also serve as windows into the cultural and historical contexts in which they are embedded (Childs, 2022; Clachar, 2022; Shahane & Denny, 2022). The study showed that proverbs can reveal a lot about a society's cultural beliefs, values, practices, and history.

In conclusion, this research underscores the significance of language and culture in shaping the expression and interpretation of emotions, such as fear, through proverbs. Universal themes and metaphors provide common ground, but each language's cultural and contextual factors enrich the portrayal of this universal emotion, revealing the complex interplay between language, cognition, and culture (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Wilson, 2022; Liu, 2022).

Exploring the extent of commonality and distinctiveness in how English and Indonesian proverbs depict fear provides valuable insights into the interplay of universal human experiences and culturally specific expressions. The analysis revealed notable common themes and metaphors in both languages and cultural distinctiveness enriches the portrayal of this universal emotion (Rodriguez Mosquera, 2023; Van Herck, 2023).

One common theme in the analysis is the use of nature-related metaphors to depict fear in both English and Indonesian proverbs. The expressions involving animals like "scaredy-cat" in English and "trembling like a mouse" in Indonesian evoke images of vulnerability and instinctual reactions to fear. Similarly, metaphors involving natural elements, like "in deep water" in English and "afraid of thunder" in Indonesian, emphasize the shared human tendency to draw parallels between fear and elements of the natural world. These common themes suggest a universal cognitive framework for conceptualizing fear that transcends cultural boundaries.

Another universal metaphor in both languages is "fear is darkness." In English proverbs like "in the dark about something" and Indonesian sayings like "afraid of the dark," this metaphor conveys that fear often emerges when one cannot see or anticipate potential dangers. This shared metaphor indicates a cross-cultural understanding of fear as a condition characterized by a lack of clarity or insight (Santangelo, 2023; Winko, 2023).

On the other hand, English and Indonesian proverbs also exhibit cultural distinctiveness in their portrayal of fear. English proverbs often emphasize a pragmatic, problem-solving approach to anxiety, reflecting an artistic inclination toward practicality and rationality in addressing challenges. For instance, sayings like "fight fire with fire" and "don't cry over spilled milk" suggest strategies for confronting and managing fear. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs frequently incorporate elements of spirituality and mysticism when depicting fear. Expressions like "fear resides in one's liver" or "afraid of the unseen" link fear to specific bodily organs and the supernatural. These metaphors reflect a cultural worldview that sees fear as intertwined with existence's spiritual and mystical dimensions (Moore et al., 2023; Tissari, 2022).

Social and environmental factors also influence the linguistic expressions related to fear in English and Indonesian proverbs. English proverbs often draw on experiences with nature and wildlife, reflecting a cultural history deeply connected to the outdoors. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs are influenced by the archipelago's diverse cultures, languages, and spiritual beliefs. The wide range of metaphors and expressions in Indonesian proverbs reflects the cultural mosaic of the region, with each cultural group

contributing to the richness of words related to fear.

The extended discussion of the third research question underscores the delicate balance between everyday human experiences and culturally specific expressions when portraying fear through proverbs. While universal themes and metaphors provide common ground, the cultural and contextual factors unique to each language enrich the portrayal of this universal emotion. These linguistic expressions reflect cultural perspectives and provide valuable insights into how different societies conceptualize and cope with the universal feeling of fear. They serve as a testament to the richness and diversity of human language and culture.

CONCLUSION

The investigation into the representation of fear in English and Indonesian proverbs, conducted through CSA and CM, has revealed a complex tapestry of linguistic expressions, cultural nuances, and shared cognitive structures. The study found common themes and metaphors in the depiction of fear across both languages, such as the metaphor "fear is a beast" and the association of fear with darkness, which are universal constructs that transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries. At the same time, the research highlighted the significant impact of culture and context on the selection and interpretation of fear-related proverbs.

English proverbs often emphasize the cultural significance of preserving tradition and shared knowledge through historical and literary references. In contrast, Indonesian proverbs incorporate elements of spirituality, folklore, and indigenous rituals, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the archipelago. The adaptability of proverbs to different situations and individual variations in interpretation further underscore the dynamic nature of these linguistic expressions.

However, the study has limitations, including its focus on only English and Indonesian proverbs, representing a limited subset of the world's linguistic diversity. Expanding the sample size and exploring fear-related proverbs in other languages could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how this universal emotion is portrayed worldwide. Additionally, future studies could delve deeper into the differences within these languages and explore how fear-related proverbs vary among cultural and regional subgroups.

Future research directions include cross-linguistic comparison studies, which could uncover more universal metaphors and themes in the depiction of fear and psycholinguistic investigations that explore how individuals perceive and interpret fear-related proverbs. Digital corpus analysis could also provide insights into the portrayal of fear by examining large datasets of proverbs from different languages, while applied linguistics could investigate the practical applications of fear-related proverbs in educational contexts, counseling, or literature.

In conclusion, the study sheds light on the complex interplay between language, culture, and cognition in representing fear in proverbs. While universal themes and metaphors provide common ground, cultural and contextual factors unique to each language enrich the portrayal of this universal emotion. The research opens opportunities for interdisciplinary linguistics, psychology, and cultural studies to explore how language expresses and understands emotions.

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