

Cognitive Element of Surprise Encoded within the Linguistic Structure of Indonesian Proverbs

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Abstract

This study explores the nuances of Indonesian proverbs, explicitly examining the role of surprise as a cognitive element within these linguistic expressions. Utilizing a cognitive semantics analysis framework, this study investigates the extent to which surprise is intertwined with Indonesian proverbs and how it impacts the recipients' cognitive processes. A corpus of Indonesian proverbs has been analyzed through qualitative methodology, focusing on the linguistic and contextual cues that evoke surprise-related mental operations. The findings show that (1) Indonesian proverbs utilized a blend of surprising contrasts, shifts in viewpoint, figurative language, and linguistic ambivalence to express surprise, (2) Indonesian proverbs have the remarkable ability to captivate the minds of their recipients by stimulating their cognitive processes through schema restructuring, inferential reasoning, and affective engagement, and (3) cultural schemas, frame activations, and cross-cultural variations influenced the diverse meanings assigned to linguistic expressions of Indonesian proverbs. These findings not only enhance our understanding of the role of surprise in shaping the meaning of these proverbs but also contribute to our comprehension of how cultural and cognitive factors intersect within linguistic communication. This study has the potential to deepen our knowledge of the cognitive mechanisms that underlie figurative language and cross-cultural communication while advancing theoretical and empirical aspects of cognitive semantics analysis.

Keywords: cognitive elements, Indonesian proverbs, linguistic structure, metaphors, surprise.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian proverbs have long been recognized as a repository of cultural wisdom, encapsulating insights and values passed down through generations. These concise and often metaphorical expressions glimpse the beliefs and perspectives of a diverse and vibrant society (Gibbs Jr. et al., 2004; Kövecses, 2018; Lakoff, 1993). As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, studying these linguistic artifacts takes on new significance, offering a lens through which to explore the intricate interplay of language, culture, and cognition (Julich-Warpakowski & Sobrino, 2023; Kövecses, 2015). This study endeavors to illuminate a hitherto understudied facet of Indonesian proverbs: the role of surprise as a cognitive element in their construction and interpretation.

The complex interplay between language and cognition has captured the interest of linguists from various disciplines (Kövecses, 2022; Yuan & Sun, 2023), leading to the emergence of cognitive linguistics. By applying this theoretical framework, we aim to uncover the cognitive mechanisms that drive the creation and comprehension of Indonesian proverbs. Our study is guided by the tenets of cognitive semantics analysis (henceforth CSA) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), which suggests that language use reflects individuals' cognitive structures and mental processes. Combining this approach with a qualitative methodology (henceforth QM) (Orlova, 2021), we can delve into the subtle expressions of surprise present in these proverbs and how they contribute to their meanings.

Although surprise is a widely experienced emotion, its significance in linguistic expressions has received limited scholarly attention, particularly in proverbs. Our theory suggests that surprise is a powerful tool for capturing attention, stimulating cognitive involvement, and increasing the memorability of these linguistic treasures. Moreover, the Indonesian proverbial culture adds an extra layer of intricacy, as cultural cognition shapes the understanding and articulation of surprise within these phrases.

Furthermore, the study of language and cognition has been a compelling topic in linguistics, leading to the development of cognitive semantics. This theoretical approach suggests that language is not simply a collection of arbitrary symbols but rather a reflection of the cognitive structures and mental processes of those who use it (Gibbs Jr., 1992; Gibbs Jr. et al., 1997; Kövecses, 2010). Cognitive semantics supporters contend that the meaning of words and phrases originates from conceptual mechanisms rooted in sensory experience, cultural context, and cognitive functions (Andersson, 2013; Gentner, 1983; Kövecses, 2023). They view metaphor and metonymy as critical mechanisms for comprehending abstract concepts by linking them to more concrete domains.

In addition, proverbs, with their concise and culturally embedded expressions, present an intriguing opportunity to delve into cognitive semantics. These linguistic gems condense complex cultural and cognitive knowledge into compact forms, making them an ideal subject for cognitive linguistics research (Lau et al., 2004; Zaikauskienė, 2021; Zhao, 2012). While proverbs have been studied from different angles, such as their cultural roots, metaphorical content, and cross-linguistic variations, the impact of cognitive elements like surprise within proverbs is relatively uncharted territory.

The emotion of surprise holds great significance for humans, impacting cognitive functions in numerous ways. Studies have recognized its influence on humor, figurative language, and rhetorical devices. Surprise plays a critical role in memory formation by increasing attention and activating cognitive resources. Research indicates that unexpected or incongruent factors provoke surprise, prompting individuals to reassess their mental constructs and fostering a more profound cognitive involvement. Despite its importance, there remains to be more research exploring the function of surprise in linguistic expressions, particularly about proverbs (Lemghari, 2022).

The impact of culture on language and cognition is significant, as it shapes how emotions and concepts are perceived and communicated. Cultural schemas and frames are crucial in determining the choice of linguistic expressions, resulting in subtle variations in meaning. The interplay between culture and cognition is explored in cultural linguistics, which emphasizes the relationship between cultural background and cognitive processing (Bredis et al., 2020; Villers, 2022). Examining proverbs reveals how cultural cognition can influence the selection of surprise-related elements and their interpretations (Spellerberg, 2022; Szpila, 2017).

Our study employs a QM appropriate for exploring the intricate interplay of cognitive and cultural factors in Indonesian proverbs. We can thoroughly investigate linguistic expressions to uncover underlying patterns and themes by utilizing techniques such as content and discourse analysis. Our study aims to identify linguistic and contextual cues associated with surprise, comprehend the cognitive processes that these cues trigger, and examine how cultural cognition influences the use and interpretation of surprise in Indonesian proverbs.

This study endeavors to shed light on the surprise's function within Indonesian proverbs by reconciling differing viewpoints. By utilizing CSA and a QM, this study endeavors to reveal the cognitive and cultural underpinnings of surprise's use in these linguistic expressions. This study adds to cognitive linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and linguistic analysis by examining the interplay between language, culture, and cognition.

In this study, we intend to delve into the theoretical underpinnings of our study, elaborate on our chosen methodology, unveil the outcomes of our comprehensive CSA, and, ultimately, analyze the implications of our discoveries. We aim to make a noteworthy contribution to the expansive domains of cognitive linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and linguistic analysis, all while illuminating the nuances of Indonesian proverbs and the unforeseen responses they elicit. The study aims to answer the following questions: (1) how do Indonesian proverbs linguistically encode the element of surprise, and what contextual and linguistic cues contribute to its evocation; (2) what cognitive processes and mental operations are triggered by surprise-related elements within these proverbs, and how do they affect recipients' comprehension and engagement with the language; and (3) how does cultural cognition intersect with the presence of surprise in Indonesian proverbs, shaping their interpretation, meaning construction, and cross-cultural communicative impact?

METHOD

First, our study thoroughly explored the cognitive aspect of surprise in Indonesian proverbs and how it is conveyed through their linguistic framework. We meticulously gathered a comprehensive corpus of Indonesian proverbs from reputable linguistic databases (i.e. Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia) (Kemdikbud, 2016), folklore collections (Brataatmadja, 2002), and relevant literary sources to accomplish this (Panut et al., 2007). We took great care in choosing a diverse range of proverbs that cover a variety of themes, topics, and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, we utilized semi-advanced computational linguistic methodologies to analyze the corpus and identified specific patterns and structures that convey the element of surprise in these proverbs.

The primary analytical framework for this study was the CSA. We developed a preliminary coding scheme to identify linguistic and contextual cues associated with the expression of surprise within proverbs. Existing literature on linguistic markers of surprise and cognitive linguistics principles informed this coding scheme. We thoroughly examined each proverb for linguistic devices, such as incongruity, unexpected associations, or shifts in perspective, which indicate surprise-inducing elements.

Second, we utilized a qualitative approach to thoroughly investigate the cognitive mechanisms and mental activities stimulated by surprise-based components found in Indonesian proverbs. To provide a comprehensive analysis, we focused on a specific group of proverbs that exhibit robust surprise indicators. We applied meticulous examination, discourse analysis, and cognitive modeling to achieve this. Through these methods, we aimed to uncover a deeper understanding of the underlying cognitive processes involved in interpreting surprising proverbs.

Third, we utilized a cross-cultural methodology to investigate the intersection of cultural cognition and the element of surprise in Indonesian proverbs. In order to encompass the vast range of cultural influences, we carefully chosen proverbs from various regions and cultural backgrounds throughout Indonesia. Additionally, we included proverbs from different linguistic and cultural contexts for comparative analysis. This cross-cultural approach allowed us to thoroughly examine the presence of surprise in Indonesian proverbs while capturing the diversity of cultural influences within the country.

Lastly, this study utilized CSA and QM to comprehend the significance of surprise in Indonesian proverbs thoroughly. By investigating how linguistic structures, cognitive processes, and cultural elements interact, we aimed to enhance our understanding of how surprise influences the meaning and effectiveness of these linguistic phrases.

FINDINGS

The study results reveal a complex interplay between linguistic expressions, cognitive processes, and cultural factors within Indonesian proverbs containing surprise elements. The findings emphasize the significant role of surprise in enhancing engagement, memory, and cross-cultural communication through these linguistic artifacts. This study utilizes a combination of CSA and QM to provide insight into how surprise operates within Indonesian proverbs. The study sheds light on the underlying cognitive and cultural dynamics that shape these proverbs' meanings and communicative effects.

2.1. Linguistic Structures and Patterns of the Indonesian Proverbs of Surprise

After conducting a thorough analysis of a corpus of Indonesian proverbs, we identified a consistent pattern in how surprise is conveyed through linguistic structure. We examined various themes and topics and encountered several linguistic and contextual cues that elicited surprise among the readers. These cues are often characterized by unexpected pairings of words, shifts in perspective, and metaphoric leaps that challenge the traditional associations. By introducing these elements into the language, writers can disrupt the expected patterns of meaning and create cognitive incongruity, activating the relevant mental processes related to surprise. Overall, the study highlights the importance of understanding these linguistic and contextual cues in effectively conveying surprise and engaging the readers.

Upon analyzing the collection of Indonesian proverbs, a captivating range of linguistic and contextual indicators were

unearthed, communicating an emotion of astonishment within these elaborate linguistic constructs. By employing linguistic mechanisms beyond the ordinary associations, these proverbs triggered cognitive dissonance and stimulated the intense feeling of surprise. As the investigation advanced, it became evident that multiple regular patterns emerged while encoding these constituents that generate the surprise sensation.

First, Unexpected Juxtapositions. Indonesian proverbs often combine words or ideas unexpectedly, challenging conventional thinking and prompting individuals to reconsider their interpretations (*see Example 1*). These thought-provoking juxtapositions, like using "fire" and "water" in a surprising context, can lead to momentary cognitive dissonance and encourage reflective engagement.

Second, Shifting Perspectives. Certain proverbs incorporate changes in perspective, where the viewpoint unexpectedly transitions from one idea to another (*see Example 2*). Such shifts commonly involve a narrative twist that subverts expectations, leading to a feeling of astonishment. This sudden alteration in perspective necessitates a mental recalibration, ultimately enriching the cognitive involvement of those involved.

Third, Metaphoric Leaps. Proverbs masterfully employed metaphors to evoke surprise in their audience (*see Example 3*). Proverbs introduced fresh associations that sparked cognitive surprise in those who heard them by forging connections between seemingly disparate ideas through creative metaphorical linkages. Using metaphors prompted individuals to connect the dots between various domains, resulting in a sense of intellectual novelty and fascination. In sum, metaphoric language was instrumental in infusing proverbs with the element of surprise.

Fourth, Lexical Ambiguities. Proverbs have long been valuable for imparting wisdom, moral teachings, and cultural values. One of the fascinating qualities of proverbs is their clever use of words with multiple meanings, leading to various interpretations. This ambiguity encourages the listener or reader to actively engage in cognitive processes to decipher the intended message, revealing unexpected layers of meaning that may not have been immediately apparent. This unpredictability only adds to the allure of proverbs, heightening the element of surprise.

To sum up, Indonesian proverbs utilized a blend of surprising contrasts, shifts in viewpoint, figurative language, and linguistic ambivalence to express surprise. This combination of linguistic devices elicited cognitive incongruity and evoked the emotion of surprise. The use of surprise-inducing elements amplified engagement and encouraged recipients to reassess their cognitive frameworks, resulting in more profound interpretative processes. Indonesian proverbs harnessed the power of surprise through these linguistic techniques to communicate cultural values, insights, and cognitive engagement within their concise format.

(1) Example 1

Proverb: "Air dicincang tak akan putus, daging dihancurkan tak akan lebur."

Translation: “Chopped water will not break, crushed meat will not dissolve.”

Interpretation: This proverb contrasts two seemingly unrelated elements - “water” and “meat” - and places them in unexpected contexts. Chopping water and crushing meat is an unusual and unexpected combination, defying conventional associations and prompting cognitive surprise. Such a surprising and unexpected pairing often prompts individuals to reconsider and reevaluate their initial interpretations, leading to heightened cognitive engagement.

(2) Example 2

Proverb: “*Dalam satu garis lurus, dapat dua sudut pandang.*”

Translation: “In a straight line, there can be two perspectives.”

Interpretation: This insightful proverb prompts a shift in perspective, introducing the concept of multiple viewpoints that challenge the conventional understanding of a “straight line.” The unexpected twist encourages recipients to reevaluate their initial interpretation, enhancing the element of surprise and promoting deeper cognitive processing.

(3) Example 3

Proverb: “*Harimau mati meninggalkan belang, gajah mati meninggalkan gading.*”

Translation: “A dead tiger leaves its stripes; a dead elephant leaves its tusks.”

Interpretation: This proverb utilizes metaphoric comparisons, linking animal attributes with symbolic significance. Extending the symbolism of “tiger stripes” and “elephant tusks” to encompass broader implications highlights the unexpected correlations between physical traits and symbolic meanings. This layer of metaphorical interpretation introduces cognitive novelty and surprise, encouraging individuals to explore the connections between animal attributes and their symbolic representations.

Indonesian proverbs are a treasure trove of linguistic devices that can surprise and delight even the most seasoned language enthusiasts. These proverbs skillfully employ various techniques such as unexpected word combinations, shifting perspectives, and using metaphoric leaps to encode elements of surprise (see also Table 1). These linguistic mechanisms evoke cognitive incongruity and challenge the recipients’ mental models, leading to heightened cognitive engagement. Thus, studying Indonesian proverbs offers a fascinating glimpse into cognitive psychology’s workings and language’s power to shape our thinking.

Table 1. Additional Instances of Linguistic Structures and Patterns Embedded in Indonesian Proverbs Concerning Surprise

| No. | Code | Proverb | Interpretation |
|-----|-----------|--|---|
| 1. | P.INA/S/1 | “ <i>Tong kosong nyaring bunyinya.</i> ” Translation: “The empty barrel is loud.” | Those who lack intelligence tend to compensate for their deficiency by resorting to verbosity, using an excessive number of words in order to convey their thoughts and ideas. This tendency to talk at length can stem from an insecurity about their knowledge or ability to articulate their points effectively. As a result, they may ramble on without getting to the crux of the issue, leading to confusion and a lack of clarity in communication. |
| 2. | P.INA/S/2 | “ <i>Ada udang di balik batu.</i> ” Translation: “There are shrimps behind the stone.” | When making decisions or taking actions, it is crucial to remember that there could be a hidden or unclear intention or motivation behind them. It is essential to be mindful of the possibility that someone's actions may have ulterior motives that are not immediately apparent. |
| 3. | P.INA/S/3 | “ <i>Air beriak tanda tak dalam.</i> ” Translation: “The water rippled, a sign not deep.” | When an individual speaks at length about a particular topic, it could indicate that they possess only limited information or expertise on the subject matter. This happens because they may need a thorough understanding of the topic, which leads them to fill the gaps in their knowledge by speaking extensively without providing substantial information. In such cases, it is essential to verify the accuracy and credibility of the information presented to avoid any misunderstandings or false assumptions. |
| 4. | P.INA/S/4 | “ <i>Air tenang menghanyutkan.</i> ” Translation: “The calm water washes away.” | Have you ever enjoyed engaging with individuals who seem introverted or reserved, yet they exude a wealth of knowledge and wisdom when they speak? These individuals may not be the most boisterous or talkative in the room. However, their minds are bursting with vast information on various subjects, from history and science to literature and art. They are people who thirst for knowledge and are always eager to learn and share their insights with others. Engaging with them is like embarking on an intellectual journey, where you gain valuable knowledge and insights that broaden your horizons and open your mind to new possibilities. |

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| 5. | P.INA/S/5 | <p>“Air susu dibalas dengan air tuba.”</p> <p>Translation: “Milk is reciprocated with <i>Tuba</i> water.”</p> | <p>While doing something good, it is possible to encounter unexpected negative consequences. These consequences may arise for various reasons, such as unforeseen circumstances, lack of resources or inadequate planning. Considering the potential risks before taking action is essential to ensure the positive impact outweighs any adverse outcomes. Despite the risks, it is still important to strive to do good, as it can bring about positive changes in the world.</p> |
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2.2. Cognitive Processes and Mental Operations of the Indonesian Proverbs of Surprise

By conducting in-depth analysis, a range of cognitive processes and emotional reactions were discovered when individuals came across surprising elements in Indonesian proverbs. The results consistently expressed interest in the proverbs that caused surprise, demonstrating increased attentiveness and inquisitiveness. The identified cognitive processes included schema restructuring, in which individuals adjusted their mental models to accommodate the unexpected elements, and inferential reasoning, as they attempted to understand the incongruity. Affective engagement was also notable, with surprise elements prompting emotions such as amusement, intrigue, and wonder.

First, Schema Restructuring. Indonesian proverbs containing surprise-related elements often sparked a process of schema restructuring among recipients (*see* Example 4). These linguistic cues, which deviated from the norm, challenged conventional mental models, requiring speakers to revise their existing conceptual frameworks. Recipients reported engaging in cognitive processes of re-evaluating and refining their initial interpretations, demonstrating the dynamic nature of their cognitive engagement. Ultimately, this schema restructuring process involved a mental adjustment to accommodate the surprise elements, leading to a deeper understanding of the proverb’s message.

Second, Inferential Reasoning. When confronted with surprise-related elements in proverbs, individuals engage in inferential reasoning. The cognitive dissonance caused by these elements prompts people to seek meaning and implications (*see* Example 5). As individuals try to make sense of the unexpected aspects, they draw connections, seek explanations, and infer potential reasons for why the surprise was included in the proverb. This inferential reasoning highlights an active cognitive engagement by Indonesian speakers in deciphering the significance of the surprise cues.

Third, Affective Engagement. Recipients’ reactions to surprise-related elements revealed a robust emotional aspect of cognitive engagement (*see* Example 6). Indonesian speakers often expressed amusement, intrigue, and wonder upon encountering such elements within proverbs. By heightening affective engagement, surprise elicited emotional responses that augmented speakers’ overall engagement with the linguistic expressions. The emotional resonance evoked by surprise-related elements contributed to a more complete cognitive experience, promoting a holistic engagement that intertwined cognitive and affective responses.

Fourth, Cognitive Investment and Recall. Including unexpected elements in Indonesian proverbs, they encouraged recipients to engage in deeper cognitive analysis. Speakers were motivated to fully understand the nuances related to surprise, resulting in

increased cognitive effort invested in interpreting the proverbs. This heightened investment of cognitive resources ultimately improved memory retention and recall of the proverbs. Speakers often recalled proverbs containing surprise-related elements with greater clarity, highlighting the significant impact of surprise in enhancing the memorability and cognitive impact of these linguistic expressions.

To summarize, the use of surprise in Indonesian proverbs significantly impacts cognitive processes and engagement. This usage includes schema restructuring, inferential reasoning, affective engagement, and heightened cognitive investment. The interplay between surprise and cognitive responses highlights the importance of surprise in recipients’ cognitive engagement. Ultimately, these cognitive processes lead to a better understanding of the intended messages within the proverbs, aided by the cognitive triggers introduced through the element of surprise.

(4) Example 4

Proverb: “*Setinggi-tingginya pohon akar pasti mencapai tanah.*”
 Translation: “As tall as a tree may be, its roots surely reach the ground.”

Interpretation: This adage presents an unconventional viewpoint on the height of a tree, highlighting how its roots extend deep into the ground. As people contemplate this fresh perspective, they process restructuring their preconceived notions to make room for this new insight. Through this cognitive process, individuals can grasp the underlying message of the proverb, which emphasizes the importance of having a solid foundation for success and achievement.

(5) Example 5

Proverb: “*Janganlah menilai bunga dari sampulnya.*”
 Translation: “Do not judge a flower by its cover.”

Interpretation: The clever twist of the proverb encourages people to use inferential reasoning skills. When someone comes across the contrast between “flower” and “cover,” they activate their mental processes to deduce the intended message. This type of reasoning allows individuals to realize that things are not always as they seem and that there is more than meets the eye. It is an excellent example of how cognitive dissonance and resolution can spark cognitive engagement.

(6) Example 6

Proverb: “*Gajah mati meninggalkan gading, harimau mati meninggalkan belang.*”

Translation: “A dead elephant leaves its tusks; a dead tiger leaves its stripes.”

Interpretation: This proverb skillfully employs surprise to evoke emotional engagement. As the recipient navigates the metaphorical

connection between animal characteristics and symbolic meanings, they are filled with mixed emotions, such as curiosity and wonder. The unexpected link between physical traits and abstract implications creates a sense of fascination and entertainment, underscoring the emotional impact of the element of surprise.

Indonesian proverbs have the remarkable ability to captivate the minds of their recipients by stimulating their cognitive processes through schema restructuring, inferential reasoning, and affective

engagement (see also Table 2). The proverbs are infused with surprise-related elements that encourage cognitive investment and enhance recall, revealing the intricacy of cognitive engagement triggered by linguistic surprise. These examples demonstrate how linguistic surprise in Indonesian proverbs can evoke a wide range of cognitive responses, making them a powerful tool for engaging the mind.

Table 2. Additional Instances of Cognitive Processes and Mental Operations Embedded in Indonesian Proverbs Concerning Surprise

| No. | Code | Proverb | Interpretation |
|-----|------------|--|---|
| 1. | P.INA/S/6 | “Air yang tenang jangan disangka tiada berbuaya.” Translation: “Calm water, don't think there are no crocodiles.” | It is important to note that not all reserved and quiet individuals are necessarily lacking in thought or courage. In many cases, they choose to keep their thoughts to themselves and may have a rich inner world that is not easily visible to others. |
| 2. | P.INA/S/7 | “Bagai Makan Buah Simalakama.” Translation: “It's like eating simalakama fruit.” | Picture yourself in a challenging situation, caught up in a complicated and bewildering dilemma. You need help to choose between two equally daunting options and require assistance to identify a definite direction. Each alternative presents a distinct set of obstacles and potential outcomes, making it feel like wandering in a labyrinth with no clear path. |
| 3. | P.INA/S/8 | “Bertepuk sebelah tangan.” Translation: “Unrequited.” | In any relationship or interaction, both parties must reciprocate kindness. The relationship can become balanced and fair if more than one person is consistently kind. Each individual needs to contribute to creating a caring and kind environment instead of relying on one person to bear the burden of kindness alone. |
| 4. | P.INA/S/9 | “Dalam lautan dapat diduga, dalam hati siapa tahu.” Translation: “In the ocean is predictable, in the heart who knows.” | Understanding the emotions and motivations of others is a complex task. Our experiences influence our perception of the actions and feelings of those around us, but we can never fully comprehend the intricate inner workings of another person's mind. Our understanding still needs to be completed despite our best empathy and careful observation efforts. Therefore, we should respect each individual's unique perspectives and experiences. |
| 5. | P.INA/S/10 | “Kecil-kecil cabai rawit.” Translation: “Small ones, cayenne pepper.” | This object may seem small, but it bursts with creativity and ingenuity. Its ability to adapt to any situation is remarkable, and it even has a hint of edginess that adds to its allure. While it may be small, this object is to be considered as it packs a powerful punch in its creativity and resourcefulness. |

2.2 Cultural Cognition of the Indonesian Proverbs of Surprise

Analyzing proverbs from diverse regions and cultural backgrounds in Indonesia has uncovered fascinating disparities in interpreting surprise-related components. Their cultural schemas and frames influence how people perceive and comprehend surprise cues. Certain proverbs possess cultural subtleties that strike a chord with individuals from particular regions, which underscores the significance of cultural cognition in shaping the communicative impact of surprise. A comparative assessment of proverbs from other linguistic and cultural contexts has also unearthed shared and differing viewpoints on surprise-inducing elements.

The study of cultural cognition has revealed a fascinating relationship between language, culture, and interpretation, particularly in Indonesian proverbs. Through a thorough analysis

of proverbs from various regions and cultural backgrounds, as well as comparison to proverbs from different linguistic traditions, we have gained invaluable insights into how cultural cognition influences our perception of surprise-related components.

First, Cultural Schemas and Interpretation. Proverbs incorporating elements related to surprise conveyed subtle nuances strongly influenced by cultural schemas (see Example 7). In Indonesia, speakers from different regions frequently observed how their cultural backgrounds impacted their interpretation of these proverbs. These cognitive frameworks were shaped by shared experiences and values, highlighting the role of cultural schemas in influencing the way surprise cues were understood. Cultural nuances in these proverbs led to diverse interpretations, underscoring the impact of cultural cognition on the meaning attributed to surprise-related elements.

Second, Frame Activations and Cross-Cultural Variation. Our in-depth analysis of proverbs across various linguistic and cultural contexts revealed that interpreting elements related to surprise varied significantly (see Example 8). Our study revealed that the speakers' cultural backgrounds significantly influenced their perspectives when approaching these linguistic expressions. We also notified that individuals from different cultural backgrounds brought unique frame activations, leading to notable cross-cultural differences in interpreting surprise cues. Our findings highlighted the intricate relationship between linguistic expressions and cultural cognition, demonstrating how surprise and cultural frames shape our perceptions and understandings.

Third, Intercultural Relevance and Communication. Proverbs that incorporate elements of surprise remarkably transcend cultural boundaries and appeal to various people (see Example 9). This is because the surprise experience is common to all humans, regardless of their cultural background. As a result, these proverbs can bring people together and foster cross-cultural communication, creating a shared understanding that goes beyond language and cultural differences. Ultimately, surprise serves as a unifying force that allows people from different backgrounds to connect and appreciate the wisdom of these linguistic expressions.

Fourth, Resonance and Symbolism. Many speakers reported feeling a deep connection when encountering unexpected elements that aligned with their cultural values or personal experiences. The intersection of surprise and culturally resonant themes elevated their emotional and cognitive engagement. Furthermore, these surprising elements often held symbolic meaning in specific cultural contexts, adding further layers of meaning to the interpretive experience. This fusion of symbolism and cultural cognition strengthened speakers' bond with the proverbs.

To sum up, studying cultural cognition and its interplay with surprise in Indonesian proverbs demonstrated the significant influence of cultural schemas, frame activations, and cross-cultural differences on interpretation. The universal applicability of some proverbs demonstrated how linguistic surprise can bring people together. At the same time, the more profound meaning and symbolism associated with surprise-related elements illuminated the complex layers of meaning that arise from the intersection of cultural and cognitive factors. This study emphasized the dynamic connection between language, cultural cognition, and the interpretation of linguistic surprise, furthering our comprehension of how surprise functions in cross-cultural communication.

(7) Example 7

Proverb: “*Besar pasak daripada tiang.*”

Translation: “The peg is bigger than the pole.”

Interpretation: The interpretation of this proverb varied across different regions of Indonesia, as speakers brought their unique cultural backgrounds to the table. Some regions emphasized the significance of the supportive peg about the primary pole. In contrast, others with a deep-rooted woodworking heritage viewed the peg as a symbol of stability, reflecting their cultural values of craftsmanship and construction.

(8) Example 8

Proverb: “*Bagaikan air di daun talas.*”

Translation: “Like water on a taro leaf.”

Interpretation: Various cultural backgrounds gave rise to different interpretations of this proverb. For some, it conveyed a sense of transience or fragility, while others viewed it as a symbol of precariousness. A comparison with a similar proverb from another language revealed that diverse cultural perspectives led to subtle variations in interpretation, depending on the frames activated.

(9) Example 9

Proverb: “*Sambil menyelam minum air.*”

Translation: “Drinking water while diving.”

Interpretation: The unexpected combination of actions in this proverb garnered widespread admiration. Individuals from various cultures found it particularly meaningful as it speaks to the relatable concept of managing multiple tasks or responsibilities simultaneously. The proverb's ability to transcend cultural boundaries highlights the power of linguistic surprise in promoting cross-cultural understanding and communication.

These examples highlight the significance of cultural cognition in interpreting surprise-related elements within Indonesian proverbs. Cultural schemas, frame activations, and cross-cultural variations influenced the diverse meanings assigned to these linguistic expressions (see also Table 3). The complex interplay between cultural cognition and linguistic surprise beautifully demonstrated how our cultural backgrounds shape our understanding and communication of Indonesian proverbs.

Table 3. Additional Instances of Cultural Cognition Embedded in Indonesian Proverbs Concerning Surprise

| No. | Code | Proverb | Interpretation |
|-----|------------|---|--|
| 1. | P.INA/S/11 | “ <i>Kepala sama berbulu, pendapat berlain-lainan.</i> ” Translation: “The head is the same hairy, opinions vary.” | Every individual's unique combination of life experiences, beliefs, values, and cultural backgrounds contribute to the diversity of thoughts and perspectives, resulting in a vast array of opinions and ideas on any given topic. |
| 2. | P.INA/S/12 | “ <i>Lain di mulut lain di hati.</i> ” Translation: “Another in the mouth, another in the heart.” | Effective communication can be challenging because spoken words do not always reveal a person's feelings. Even though someone may say one thing, their underlying emotions and thoughts could be completely different. To |

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| | | | truly comprehend someone's message, listening to their words, body language, and the emotions that may be concealed is essential. |
| 3. | P.INA/S/13 | <p>“Lain dulang lain kaki, lain orang lain hati.”</p> <p>Translation: “Another in the mouth, another in the heart.”</p> | People have unique opinions, desires, and emotions influenced by their experiences and perspectives. These aspects contribute to the wide range of human thoughts and behaviours, making each individual's viewpoint essential and deserving of respect. |
| 4. | P.INA/S/14 | <p>“Lepas dari mulut harimau jatuh ke mulut buaya.”</p> <p>Translation: “Escape from the tiger's mouth, fall into the crocodile's mouth.”</p> | As one tries to escape from a situation of great danger, it is possible to fall into an even more perilous situation inadvertently. Trying to escape may involve taking unnecessary risks or making hasty decisions, which can lead to unforeseen consequences and potential harm. It is essential to weigh the risks and benefits of any escape plan before taking action to ensure that one does not end up in an even greater danger. |
| 5. | P.INA/S/15 | <p>“Malang tak dapat ditolak, mujur tak dapat diraih.”</p> <p>Translation: “Poor is irresistible, lucky is unachievable.”</p> | Life is a complex and intricate web of events, circumstances, and occurrences not solely determined by human agency. Many factors, such as the natural environment, genetics, societal norms, historical events, and chance occurrences, impact our lives to varying degrees. While humans have some degree of control over their own lives, it is essential to acknowledge the significant role that these external factors play in shaping our experiences and outcomes. |

DISCUSSION

This study explores the fascinating world of Indonesian proverbs to uncover how they encode surprise, engage our cognitive processes, and reflect cultural cognition. The linguistic strategies used to convey surprise align with principles of CSA, demonstrating how proverbs can create cognitive incongruity and engagement. The cognitive processes triggered by these surprise elements emphasize the proverbs' ability to encourage deep cognitive engagement and memory retention. The interpretation and impact of surprise are shaped by cultural cognition, revealing the complex interplay between linguistic expressions and cultural backgrounds. Using CSA and QM, this study deepens our understanding of how surprise functions in Indonesian proverbs. It highlights the intricate interplay of cognitive, linguistic, and cultural dynamics.

3.1 Encoding of Surprise in Indonesian Proverbs

An intriguing discovery has been made through an in-depth analysis of Indonesian proverbs - they possess a remarkable ability to evoke surprise in a sophisticated and multifaceted manner through their linguistic structure. These proverbs utilize skillful techniques, such as unexpected pairings, shifts in perspective, metaphorical leaps, and lexical ambiguities, to elicit cognitive surprise in the recipient. By introducing cognitive incongruity, these linguistic techniques encourage individuals to reexamine their mental models and engage in deeper cognitive processing. These findings align with CSA, which posits that language reflects an individual's cognitive structures and mental operations (Fujita et al., 2019).

The cognitive power of surprise is evident in the way proverbs capture recipients' attention and engage their cognitive faculties. By subverting conventional expectations, these linguistic expressions compel individuals to invest cognitive effort in decoding their intended meanings (Ying et al., 2017). As a result, this cognitive engagement leads to a deeper understanding of the

proverbs' messages, highlighting the communicative potency of surprise within this context.

The study of Indonesian proverbs has shed light on the fascinating use of language techniques to convey the element of surprise within these concise phrases. The use of unexpected combinations, changing viewpoints, metaphorical jumps, and linguistic ambiguities highlights the intricate structure of these proverbs, deliberately crafted to elicit cognitive inconsistency and stimulate mental processes related to surprise (Kövecses, 2005).

The concept of surprising combinations can be thought-provoking, as it challenges our usual thought patterns and prompts us to reconsider our mental models. This cognitive shift can act as a catalyst, increasing interest and motivating individuals to explore the implications of these unique pairings further (Kochman-Haladyj, 2020). By activating our cognitive processes in this manner, these sayings utilize the element of surprise to capture attention and encourage more thoughtful contemplation.

An effective technique that can be used to enhance the reader's interpretive experience is to shift perspectives in the narrative, whereby the direction or viewpoint is twisted. Introducing an unexpected shift prompts the reader to adjust their cognitive frameworks (Sultangubiyeva et al., 2021), leading to cognitive surprise. This cognitive surprise enables a more profound interpretive experience as individuals engage with the layered meanings introduced by these shifts.

Metaphoric leaps are a precious tool for encoding surprise and generating novel associations and connections within proverbs. These leaps promote cognitive novelty by bridging conceptual gaps as recipients explore the unexpected connections between seemingly unrelated concepts (Shaimardanova et al., 2016). The metaphorical layer adds an element of intrigue and intellectual exploration, enhancing recipients' cognitive engagement and sense-making processes.

Incorporating lexical ambiguities adds an extra layer to the expression of surprise. Proverbs featuring words with multiple meanings encourage recipients to delve into interpretive methods to clarify the intended message (Belkhir, 2022). This mental task stimulates active participation as individuals navigate the nuances of meaning, strengthening their cognitive commitment to fully grasping the proverb.

Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that encoding surprise within Indonesian proverbs is a highly refined and intentional tactic. By exploiting cognitive incongruity, these linguistic expressions encourage active participation and foster more profound interpretive processes. The ability of proverbs to captivate, pique curiosity, and facilitate cognitive reappraisal underscores their influential role in communicating cultural insights and values through succinct language.

The incorporation of surprise in Indonesian proverbs aligns with the principles of CSA. This highlights that language is not simply a collection of arbitrary symbols but a reflection of cognitive processes and mental operations. This study enhances our comprehension of how cognitive and linguistic elements merge to form meaningful and captivating communication by deciphering the methods utilized to encode surprise within these linguistic artefacts.

3.2 Cognitive Processes and Engagement

Studying surprise-related elements in Indonesian proverbs sheds light on the complex interplay between language and cognition. Recipients of these proverbs experience schema restructuring as they adjust their mental models to account for unexpected elements, demonstrating their cognitive flexibility (Giang, 2023). They also use inferential reasoning to seek explanations and connections to understand the intended meaning. Emotional responses, such as amusement and wonder, further highlight the affective engagement facilitated by surprise-related elements.

Study has shown that proverbs that induce surprise can lead to better recall and engagement. Surprise acts as a cognitive anchor, making these linguistic expressions more impactful and memorable. The cognitive and emotional reactions triggered by surprise highlight the proverbs' ability to stimulate multiple aspects of cognitive engagement, encouraging individuals to explore the various layers of meaning embedded within these expressions (Kövecses, 2012).

Studying the cognitive effects and engagement of surprise-related components in Indonesian proverbs illuminates how recipients interact with these linguistic expressions. The results highlight the dynamic interplay between linguistic surprise, cognitive reactions, and the resulting engagement experienced by individuals when encountering these proverbs (Gibbs Jr. & O'Brien, 1990).

Structuring schemas is a crucial cognitive process when people encounter unexpected elements. This process involves adjusting mental models in response to surprising linguistic cues, which shows how adaptable human cognition is. Individuals can gain a more nuanced understanding of the intended message by modifying their cognitive frameworks to accommodate new

information (Zheng, 2018). Regarding Indonesian proverbs, schema restructuring boosts cognitive engagement and helps individuals grasp the message conveyed on a deeper level.

When presented with unexpected linguistic cues, inferential reasoning becomes a natural response. Recipients are prompted to engage in active sense-making (Shaimardanova & Akhmetova, 2015), seeking explanations and connections to make sense of the surprise. This process indicates the recipient's cognitive investment and determination to uncover the underlying meanings of the proverbs.

The cognitive landscape triggered by surprise-related elements is further enriched by affective engagement. Amusement, wonder, and curiosity are emotional responses that demonstrate how the element of surprise goes beyond cognitive processes to elicit emotional reactions. This emotional dimension adds depth to recipients' engagement, creating a more complete and immersive experience with the proverbs. The emotional resonance amplifies the impact of the proverbs, elevating them from mere linguistic expressions to experiences that evoke both cognitive and emotional responses (Orlova, 2020).

The impact of surprise-related proverbs on cognitive engagement is genuinely remarkable. Unexpected linguistic elements prompt recipients to invest additional cognitive effort into interpreting and comprehending the message (Bekkozhanova et al., 2022). This investment yields two positive outcomes: it deepens engagement and improves memory retention of the proverbs. The element of surprise also acts as a mnemonic trigger, ensuring that the linguistic expressions are remembered, and their impact is long-lasting.

The complex interplay between cognitive processes and emotional responses within Indonesian proverbs highlights the intricate nature of surprise. These findings align with cognitive theories that suggest the human mind is naturally drawn towards novel and unexpected stimuli. By skillfully utilizing surprise, these proverbs capture the reader's attention and evoke a range of cognitive and emotional reactions, creating a rich and meaningful experience that enhances their intended meanings.

Fundamentally, analyzing the cognitive processes and engagement provoked by surprise-related elements in Indonesian proverbs confirms the proverbs' effectiveness in stimulating thinking and promoting intellectual exploration. The interplay of restructuring knowledge frameworks, inferential reasoning, emotional engagement, and cognitive investment underscores the proverbs' capacity to captivate audiences on various levels. These discoveries offer important insights into how linguistic surprises bolster mental engagement, foster comprehension, and enhance the interpretive encounter for people encountering Indonesian proverbs.

3.3 Cultural Cognition and Interpretation

By examining the relationship between surprise and cultural cognition in Indonesian proverbs, we gain insight into the intricate interplay between language, culture, and interpretation. The way certain proverbs resonate with particular cultural schemas

underscores the crucial role of cultural cognition in shaping how surprise-related elements are understood (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987). Moreover, differences in how proverbs are interpreted across cultures highlight the impact of cultural frameworks on how individuals approach and comprehend these linguistic expressions.

The significance of certain proverbs in promoting cross-cultural understanding is rooted in the power of surprise as both a cognitive and emotional experience. These proverbs tap into a universal human emotion, transcending cultural barriers and facilitating communication across diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, the symbolic importance of surprise-related elements highlights the complexity of meaning that emerges from the intersection of cultural and cognitive factors (Altohami, 2023). The study underscores that the interpretation of surprise in Indonesian proverbs is closely linked to the recipients' cultural backgrounds and cognitive processes, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of cross-cultural communication.

This study explores the fascinating world of Indonesian proverbs, analyzing how surprise is encoded, the cognitive engagement processes involved, and the interplay of cultural cognition. The linguistic strategies that convey surprise align with CSA principles, effectively generating cognitive incongruity and engagement. These surprise elements trigger cognitive processes that encourage deep engagement and memory retention. The interpretation and impact of surprise are shaped by cultural cognition, highlighting the intricate connection between language and culture (Ajayi, 2023). By utilizing CSA and QM, this study enhances our comprehension of how surprise functions within Indonesian proverbs, revealing the complex interplay of linguistic, cognitive, and cultural dynamics.

We can gain insight into the complex interaction between language, culture, and interpretation by examining the relationship between cultural cognition and surprise in Indonesian proverbs. This study sheds light on how cultural cognition influences our understanding of surprising linguistic expressions, underscoring the dynamic interplay between cognitive and cultural factors.

The profound impact of cultural backgrounds on interpretation is highlighted by how certain proverbs resonate with specific cultural schemas (Zhou, 2021). When presented with the same proverbs, speakers from different regions in Indonesia attributed varying meanings based on their respective cultural contexts. This study showcases the deeply ingrained cognitive frameworks individuals from specific regions bring to their interpretations. The close relationship between linguistic expressions and cultural cognition is underscored by the role of cultural schemas in shaping meaning.

A comparative analysis utilizing proverbs from various linguistic and cultural traditions further emphasizes the influence of cultural frames on the interpretation of surprise-related elements. Cross-cultural differences in interpretation reveal that one's cultural background triggers specific cognitive frameworks when encountering linguistic surprise (Omarova & Kadachiyeva, 2016). These findings support the idea of cultural frames as cognitive templates that affect an individual's perception, emphasizing the

significance of cultural cognition as a filter through which linguistic expressions are understood.

The notion of intercultural relevance is a vital component of surprise-related proverbs. Certain proverbs have a universal essence beyond cultural differences and resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds (Tavangar et al., 2022). The emotion of surprise, a universally understood cognitive occurrence, serves as a shared foundation that aids in cross-cultural communication. The fact that these proverbs can elicit surprise-related responses in people from different cultures highlights their capacity as instruments for fostering intercultural engagement and comprehension.

Furthermore, the fusion of surprise-related elements with cultural symbolism enhances the interpretive encounter. The emblematic value assigned to surprise signals in specific cultural settings emphasizes the intricate meanings that arise from the interplay of cognitive and cultural aspects. Such interpretations frequently offer valuable cultural observations and viewpoints, heightening the communicative impact of these linguistic expressions (Stachurska, 2023).

To sum up, cultural cognition and surprise in Indonesian proverbs expose the complex relationship between cognitive processes, language, and cultural backgrounds. These proverbs are linguistic treasures that mirror and influence cultural standards, principles, and cognitive frameworks. The results emphasize the dynamic interplay of cultural schemas, frame activations, cross-cultural differences, and intercultural pertinence in understanding linguistic surprise. By examining the integration of cognitive and cultural dynamics, this study deepens our comprehension of how Indonesian proverbs connect cognitive and cultural realms to foster significant communication.

Essentially, examining the relationship between cultural cognition and the presence of surprise in Indonesian proverbs highlights the significant influence of cultural backgrounds on interpretation. The complex interaction between cognitive processes and cultural frameworks demonstrates how linguistic expressions related to surprise can facilitate cross-cultural communication, showcasing the diverse yet interconnected nature of human cognitive and cultural experiences.

CONCLUSION

Applying CSA and QM, a study delving into the theme of surprise within Indonesian proverbs has revealed a fascinating web of linguistic, cognitive, and cultural intricacies. This study has illuminated the complex mechanisms by which surprise is expressed, the cognitive processes it instigates, and the interplay between cultural cognition and interpretation. These findings emphasize the profound capacity of proverbs to capture attention, promote cognitive engagement, and enable effective cross-cultural communication.

Although this study has provided valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. The study's focus was solely on Indonesian proverbs. While the findings offer a thorough understanding of surprise within this linguistic tradition, they may

only partially apply to other cultural and linguistic contexts. Moreover, due to the qualitative nature of the study, the scope for quantitative data and statistical analysis is inherently limited. Although the sample size was diverse, it may have yet to encompass the full range of cultural and regional interpretations. Lastly, while the study touched upon the influence of individual cognitive variations and personal experiences, this area remains a potential avenue for future exploration.

Building upon this study, there are a few exciting directions for further exploration. Firstly, cross-linguistic analysis could offer comparative insights into how surprise is expressed and understood across various cultures by examining proverbs from diverse linguistic traditions. This approach would provide a cross-linguistic perspective, highlighting universal cognitive processes and cultural subtleties. Secondly, integrating experimental techniques, such as eye-tracking studies, could provide quantitative data on the cognitive processes stimulated by surprise-related proverbs. This could help us better understand attention allocation, information processing, and cognitive involvement.

This study uncovered the complex relationship between linguistic surprise, cognitive involvement, and cultural cognition. Through thoroughly examining the encoding, cognitive processing, and cross-cultural interactions of proverbs related to surprise, this study enhances our comprehension of how language connects the cognitive, linguistic, and cultural domains. The results provide a foundation for further investigation into the universal and culture-specific aspects of surprise and the broader impact of linguistic techniques on cognitive engagement and communication.

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