

Analisis Kontrastif Kata-Kata pada Kalimat yang Digunakan dalam Teka-Teki *Nazonazo* dan *Tatarucingan*

Contrastive Analysis of words in Sentences Used in *Nazonazo* and *Tatarucingan* Riddles

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Abstract

Permainan teka-teki tradisional seperti *nazonazo* di Jepang dan *tatarucingan* di Sunda, Indonesia telah lama dimanfaatkan sebagai sarana hiburan dan pendidikan bahasa serta budaya, namun belum banyak diteliti secara mendalam dari sisi perbandingan bentuk maupun makna kosakata tematisnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis persamaan, perbedaan bentuk linguistik, serta makna dan implikasi kultural dari teka-teki tersebut. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif, dengan data berupa 28 teka-teki *nazonazo* yang dikumpulkan secara daring dan 19 *tatarucingan* dari buku, dan dari wawancara informan orang Sunda, yang kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode padan dan agih untuk menemukan pola leksikal dan struktur linguistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa baik *nazonazo* maupun *tatarucingan* sama-sama mengutamakan kosakata keseharian serta teknik permainan kata berbasis plesetan bunyi, makna ganda, dan logika kreatif yang ringan. Namun *nazonazo* lebih menyuguhkan variasi fonetis, aksara visual, dan kata serapan asing dengan nuansa global, sementara *tatarucingan* mengedepankan kedekatan dengan pengalaman lokal, eksplorasi bunyi, serta metafora dan perbandingan konkret terhadap realitas sehari-hari. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa tradisi permainan kata dalam kedua budaya tidak sekadar menyediakan sarana hiburan, melainkan juga berperan penting sebagai media edukasi, pewarisan nilai, dan pembentukan identitas sosial yang khas masing-masing masyarakat.

Kata kunci: Analisis kontrastif, *Nazonazo*, Plesetan bunyi, Teka-teki bahasa Jepang, *Tatarucingan*, Teka-teki bahasa Sunda

Abstract

Traditional riddle games such as *nazonazo* in Japan and *tatarucingan* in Sunda, Indonesia, have long been used as a means of entertainment and language and cultural education, but have not been studied in depth in terms of comparative form and thematic words meaning. This study aims to analyze the similarities and differences in linguistic form, as well as the meaning and cultural implications of these riddles. The method used is descriptive qualitative, with data consisting of 28 *nazonazo* riddles collected online and 19 *tatarucingan* from books, as well as interviews with Sundanese informants, which were then analyzed using matching and distribution methods to find lexical patterns and linguistic structures. The results show that both *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* prioritize everyday words and wordplay techniques based on puns, double meanings, and light creative logic. However, *nazonazo* offers more phonetic variations, visual characters, and foreign loanwords with global nuances, while *tatarucingan* emphasizes closeness to local experiences, exploration of sounds, and concrete metaphors and comparisons to everyday reality. These findings show that the tradition of wordplay in both cultures not only provides entertainment, but also plays an important role as a medium of education, inheritance of values, and formation of the unique social identity of each community.

Keywords: Contrastive analysis, Japanese riddles, *Nazonazo*, Sound puns, Sundanese riddles, *Tatarucingan*

INTRODUCTION

Almost every society in the world has some form of wordplay as part of its linguistic and cultural activities. This is no exception in Indonesian society, which has a variety of regional languages, and Japanese society. In Japanese society, there are various forms of wordplay, one of which is なぞなぞ (*nazonazo*) or Japanese riddles (Bagianto & Aryanto, 2022; Zakiyah, 2014). Meanwhile, in the Sundanese community in Indonesia, a similar tradition is called *tatarucingan* (Lyra, H. M., Wahya, & Permadi, R. Y, 2020). Both *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* originated as oral traditions passed down from generation to generation without knowing for sure who created them.

As the digital era evolves, access to word games from various cultures is becoming more widespread, including through social media such as YouTube and Facebook. For example, channels such as 日本語の森 (Nihongo no Mori) (2020) in the video “*Nazonazo* || なぞなぞって知ってますか? “ and Koyuki’s Classroom (2020), “Japanese riddles: Nazo nazo challenge!! Japanese riddle challenge! .” Games like this not only serve as entertainment for all ages, but also as an educational tool that fosters critical thinking and language proficiency (Danandjaja, 2002). Therefore, research on *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* can contribute to linguistic studies and foreign language teaching, especially in an intercultural context.

Several previous studies have reviewed various aspects of wordplay in Japan and Indonesia. Zakiyyah (2014) compared だじゃれ (*dajare*) and *nazonazo* with puns and riddles in Indonesian, while Hapsari (2022) examined *nazonazo* in the animated film *Detective Conan* and identified types of wordplay such as *dajare* and ごろあわせ (*goroawase*) that utilize sound and meaning. In the context of Sundanese culture, Nizar (2018) examined cultural elements in the *tatarucingan* lexicon that reflect the

value system of society, while Lyra, H. M., Wahya, & Permadi, R. Y, (2020) and Novianti & Giwangsa (2019) examined aspects of humor and cultural values in this tradition.

However, almost all of these studies focus on the form, meaning, and function of wordplay in general. Meanwhile, a specific comparison of words related to animals, fruits, and everyday objects in *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* is important from a theoretical and cultural perspective. Theoretically, this contrastive analysis allows for exploration of how the lexical systems of two languages with very different cultural backgrounds, homogeneous Japanese and multicultural Sundanese, represent the real world through their choice of words. Culturally, the themes of animals, fruits, and everyday objects reflect categories of experience and collective knowledge that are unique to each society. By comparing how the two word game traditions select and process words on these themes, it is possible to reveal differences in perspective, linguistic creativity, and cultural perceptions of the environment.

According to Soeparno (1998: 60), games are activities for acquiring skills in a fun way. If the skills developed are related to language, then the game is called a word game. Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (The Big Indonesian Dictionary/KBBI, 5th edition) defines riddles as questions presented in a vague manner to sharpen the mind or as entertainment. Lyra, M., Meganova, H., & Hera, et al. (2018) refer to riddle sentences as structures that are syntactically correct but often semantically illogical, thus making them anomalous. Wijana (2014, 2022) states that there are at least seven communicative functions of riddle discourse, namely (1) to joke, (2) to mock the interlocutor, (3) to criticize, (4) to boast, (5) to show off, (6) to learn knowledge, and (7) to test intelligence and accuracy.

In the field of linguistics, words is a key element in language proficiency. According to Sutedi (2019), words is a collection of words used by speakers to convey meaning and interact effectively. In *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan*, words is not merely used literally, but to create playful effects through sound ambiguity, double meanings, or cultural associations. Contrastive analysis of words is important to reveal the process of meaning formation as well as the linguistic strategies used by speakers from different cultural backgrounds.

This contrastive analysis follows the steps outlined by Lado (in Parera, 1997:107): (1) conducting a structural description of both languages at the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels; (2) comparing the structures found to identify similarities and differences; and (3) drawing generalizations from the results of the analysis. The focus of this study is limited to words related to animals, fruits, and everyday objects found in wordplay sentences. Based on this description, this study has two main questions: How are the linguistic forms of *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* similar and different in terms of animals, fruits, and everyday objects? Second, what are the meanings and cultural implications of comparing the words choices in these two words game traditions?

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method that aims to describe and analyze *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* puzzles in a contrasting manner. Data was collected from several sources, namely:

1. For *nazonazo* data (Japanese riddles), data collection was carried out through internet sites and social media such as YouTube and related channels.

2. Data on *tatarucingan* (Sundanese riddles) was obtained from a book by Henry Guntur Tarigan and Undang Misdan (1978) entitled *Tatarucingan*, as well as direct interviews with Sundanese informants living in the city of Bandung.

Data collection was conducted using the observation method with eavesdropping techniques (Sudaryanto, 2015:203). The observation method with eavesdropping techniques serves as a method of data collection through eavesdropping on language use without direct interaction with the informants.

After the data was collected and selected according to the research focus, the data analysis process used the matching method and the distribution method as described by Sudaryanto (2015). The matching method is an analysis method that uses a determining tool that is outside the language being studied. The distribution method is a data analysis method whose determining tool is a part or element of the language itself, such as words, phrases, or sentences.

The distribution method is used to analyze language elements from within the system itself, such as sounds, letters, syllables, or morphemes. In this study, this method is evident when the researcher breaks down language units to reveal patterns of wordplay in *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan*. For example, in *nazonazo*, the words “ichinichi” (‘one day’) and “ichinen” (‘one year’), the researcher counted the number of chi (ち) letters in each word to find the logic behind the riddle’s answer.

Meanwhile, the matching method is used if the determining tool comes from outside the language, such as meaning, cultural context, or referential world. In this study, the matching method is evident in the analysis that links wordplay to the cultural context of the speaker, such as in *nazonazo* “Sakana yori, kai ga sukina ko wa doko ni ikitai?” with the answer “Kaigai” (‘abroad’). This wordplay links kai (‘shellfish’) with the phrase *kai ga ii* (‘shellfish is delicious’) and its meaning in Japanese culture. The matching method highlights the relationship between language and reality outside of linguistic structures, such as the underlying social and cultural meanings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Similarities and Differences in Linguistic Form

From the data collected, both *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* are word games related to the names of animals, places, household utensils, professions, and so on. The variety of sentences in both games is predominantly puns, which are words that are creatively twisted to produce a humorous effect or entertain the listener (Wahyuningsih, 2012). In Japanese, this pun is equivalent to the term *dajare*, which is a wordplay based on sound similarity or homophony that produces a funny effect. Yamada Tadao (1981) even defines *dajare* as 少しも感心出来ないつまらないしゃれ (‘a boring pun that doesn’t impress you at all’). In *nazonazo*, the form of puns is not limited to words, but also includes the manipulation of *kanji*, *hiragana*, and *katakana* characters, thereby enriching the variety of wordplay produced (Yamada, 1981; Wahyuningsih, 2012).

Analysis of *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* with themes of animals, fruits, and everyday objects shows that both traditions utilize wordplay techniques such as puns, semantic associations, ambiguity, and syntactic manipulation to produce humorous or surprising effects. Examples of *nazonazo*/pun are as follows (Q: question, A: answer):

1.

Q: *Sekai no mannaka ni iru mushi wa nani?*

(nazogaku.com)

(What insect is in the middle of the world?)

A: *ka*
(mosquito)

The word “sekai” (せかい) means “world” and consists of three *hiragana* letters: せ (se), か (ka), い (i). The middle letter is “か” (ka), which coincidentally also means “mosquito” in Japanese (蚊). Therefore, the answer is “ka” with a double meaning as the middle letter of the word “sekai” and as the name of an insect, thus forming a unique pun in *nazonazo*.

2.

Q: *Naisu na Suika wa, Nan ni naru?* (nazogaku.com)
(Delicious watermelon, so what?)

A: *Ika*
(squid)

The word “Naisu” (ナイス) comes from the English word “nice,” and in this play on words, it is separated into “nai-su,” where “nai” means ‘none’ in Japanese. If the letter “su” is removed from “suika” (watermelon), what remains is “ika,” which means ‘squid.’ So, a watermelon without the “su” (“nai-su-ika”) becomes “ika” (squid), making this answer a creative pun on both sound and meaning.

3.

Q: *Reizokou ni iru doubutsu wa nani?* (nazogaku.com)
(What animals are in the refrigerator?)

A: *Zou*
(elephant)

In the question “What animal is in the refrigerator?”, the word “reizokou” (refrigerator) consists of three syllables: rei-zo-kou. The syllable “zo” in the middle of “reizokou” has a sound similar to “zou,” which means ‘elephant’ in Japanese, so the answer to this riddle is ‘elephant,’ not based on lexical meaning, but through a play on sounds in the word.

4.

Q: *Kokoro ga aru zou wa nan da?* (nazogaku.com)
(What kind of elephant has a heart?)

A: *Shinzou*
(Heart)

Explanation: “shinzou” was chosen because the word consists of the *kanji* 心 (shin), which is related to ‘heart’ or ‘soul’, and 臓 (zou), which means ‘organ’, so it literally refers to the heart as a physical organ, while also playing on the sound of the word “zou”, which means elephant.

5.

Q: *Kita bakari na noni sugu ni ie ni ikou to suru ikimono wa nan da?* (nazogaku.com)

(What kind of creature goes straight home even though it just arrived?)

A: *Kaeru*
(Frog)

The answer “kaeru” was chosen because in Japanese, the word かえる can mean ‘to return home’ or ‘to come back’, but it also means ‘frog’, so this answer is a homophone pun that combines the meaning of returning home and the name of the animal at the same time.

6.

Q: *Ichinichi ni nikai aru noni, ichinen ni ikkai shika nai mono wa nani?* (japanesetactics.com)
(Twice a day, once a year. What is it?)

A: *Chi*
(The letter “chi”)

Data (6) asked why something happens twice a day but only once a year. The answer is “chi,” which comes from the difference in the number of ち (chi) characters in the words *ichinichi* (one day; いちにち), which has two ち characters, and *ichinen* (one year; いちねん), which has only one ち character. Therefore, the letter “chi” is the key to the answer to the *Nazonazo*.

7.

Q: *Yubiwa ni tsuite iteru furuutsu wa nan da?* (japanesetactics.com)
(What fruit is on the ring?)

A: *biwa*
(loquat fruit)

The word “yubiwa” can be written as ゆびわ (YU-BI-WA). If we remove “yu” from the word “yubiwa,” what remains is “biwa.” Biwa, which means loquat fruit, is a type of sweet fruit that is yellowish-orange in color. Since the word “yubiwa” contains the word “biwa” in it, we can conclude that J from *Nazonazo* number (7) is loquat fruit.

8.

Q: *Amai furuutsu de dekite isou na Nihon no mizuumi wa nan da?* (japanesetactics.com)
(In Japan, what lake seems to be made of sweet fruit?)

A: *Biwako*
(Lake Biwa)

In response to the question “In Japan, which lake seems to be made of sweet fruit?”, the answer “Biwako” (Lake Biwa) was chosen because the word “biwa” in Japanese refers to the name of a sweet, orange-yellow fruit, as well as the name of the largest and oldest lake in Japan, located in Shiga Prefecture. The language strategy used in this *nazonazo* is *associative wordplay*, where the answer is formed by exploring the lexical

relationship between the name of the fruit and the name of the place, so that the respondent must find a word that has two references (fruit and lake), namely “biwa”.

9.

Q: *Mori no naka kara ki ga ippon toraremashita. Dou* (japanesetactics.com)
narimashitaka?

(A tree was taken from a forest. So what happened to the forest?)

A: *Hayashi* (Trees)

The answer is “Hayashi,” which means “trees.” The language strategy used is a visual and morphological play on *kanji* characters, where the word 森 (mori, forest) visually consists of three 木 (ki, tree) *kanji*. When one tree (木) is removed, the remaining two 木 characters form 林 (hayashi), which means trees. Thus, this answer uses a strategy of graphic association and morpheme breakdown in the Japanese character system.

10.

Q: *Motsu dake fueru kagu wa?* (Nazogaku.com)
(What furniture vibrates just because it is lifted?)

A: *Teeburu*
(Table)

The word *teeburu* (テーブル) in Japanese means ‘table’. In this play on words, the first two letters, ‘tee’, are similar to the word ‘te’, which means ‘hand’, while the last two letters, ‘buru’, are related to the typical Japanese onomatopoeia ‘buru-buru’, which indicates vibration or shaking. Thus, “teeburu” is a pun that combines the meaning of “hand” lifting and “buru” describing vibration, explaining furniture that vibrates when lifted. The language strategy used is *onomatopoeic pun* (wordplay based on onomatopoeia) and *homophonic pun* (sound pun), where the sound of the word is used to create double meanings and humorous effects in the answer.

11.

Q: *Gohan taberu toki ni daite iru mono wa?* (Nazonazo.com)
(What object do you hug when you want to eat?)

A: *Ita*
(Board)

The answer “ita” (board) was chosen because this wordplay breaks down the phrase “itadakimasu,” a typical Japanese expression before eating, into “ita” (‘board’) and “dakimasu” (‘to hug’). It’s as if Japanese people say “embrace the board” every time they eat, when the original meaning is “bon appétit” or “I humbly accept.”

Language strategy: This game uses morpheme and homonymy techniques, which involve breaking a well-known word or phrase into two parts that literally form a new meaning in the context of the puzzle, exploiting the possibility of double meanings and similar sounds in everyday cultural expressions.

12.

- Q: *Okashi wa san ji, ima wa nan ji?* (Nazogaku.com)
(If the snack is at three o'clock, then what time is it now?)
A: *Ni ji* (Two o'clock)

The key lies in the double meaning of the Japanese character “ji,” which means both “hour” and “letter.” The word *okashi* (おかし, snack) is written with three *hiragana* characters, while the word *ima* (いま, now) is written with only two. Thus, “san ji” (three letters/three o'clock) refers to *okashi*, and “ni ji” (two letters/two o'clock) refers to *ima*. The answer “ni ji” (“two o'clock” or “two letters”) was chosen because it refers to the number of letters in the word *ima* (Nazonazo.com). The strategy applied is *ambiguity-based wordplay* by exploiting the polysemy of the word “ji” and the mapping of the number of letters in *hiragana* writing, so that searching for this hidden meaning requires the morphophonemic sensitivity and lexical creativity of Japanese speakers.

13.
Q: *Sakana yori, kai ga sukina ko wa doko ni ikitai?* (Nazogaku.com)
(A child who prefers shellfish to fish, where would he like to go?)
A: *Kaigai*
(Overseas)

The answer “kaigai” (“overseas”) comes from the word “kai,” which means “shellfish.” Meanwhile, “kaigai” means “overseas.” However, phonetically, “kaigai” sounds like the phrase “kai ga ii,” which means “shellfish is delicious.” Thus, children who prefer shellfish (kai) want to go to a place called “kaigai” (abroad), which is also a pun on “kai ga ii”. This game utilizes the technique of homophones, which is the use of words or phrases that sound the same or similar but have different meanings. In this case, the answer creates ambiguity and a humorous effect through the similarity in pronunciation between “kaigai” (overseas) and “kai ga ii” (“the shellfish is delicious”), requiring the respondent to be sensitive to the sound and double meaning in Japanese words.

14.
Q: *Otousan ga kirai na tabe mono nan da?* (Nazogaku.com)
(What food does Dad hate?)
A: *Papaiya* (Papa doesn't want it) /(papaya)

The answer is “papaiya” (papaya) because in Japanese it sounds almost the same as the phrase “papa iya,” which means “dad doesn't want to” or “dad doesn't like it.” This wordplay relies on the similarity in sound (homophone) between the name of the fruit (papaya) and the phrase in Japanese, resulting in a humorous meaning and a surprise effect in the answer. This question uses homophonic puns, which exploit the similarity in pronunciation between nouns and everyday phrases to create humorous ambiguities that can only be understood through sensitivity to sound and the separation of word morphemes.

15.
Q: *Massugu aruitemo mawatte shimau hito wa?* (Nazonazo.com)

(What kind of person, even if they walk straight, still ends up going in circles?)

A: *Omawarisan*
(Police)

The correct answer is “omawarisan” (‘police’), because it comes from the Japanese term for police officers who patrol the neighborhood. “Omawari” means to turn or go around, and “san” is a suffix of respect. In real life, Japanese police officers often patrol by walking around the neighborhood, even if the route is straight, they continue to turn or go around. This riddle relies on homophones and semantic associations; the word “omawarisan” sounds similar to two terms: “お周りさん” (a person who goes around) and “お巡りさん” (police officer), so the wordplay occurs through the similarity in sound and the dual meaning. This pattern requires the respondent to be sensitive to phonetic nuances and the function of words in Japanese culture.

16.

Q: *Hitori na noni yaku ga futatsu aru shigoto tte nani?* (Nazogaku.com)
(What kind of job has only one person but two roles?)

A: *Tsuuyaku*
(Translator)

The answer “tsuuyaku” was chosen because the word “yaku” means ‘role’, and “tsuu” can mean ‘two’ from the English loanword when written in *Katakana*. In Japanese, “tsuuyaku” means ‘translator’, but phonetically it can also be interpreted as someone who has “two roles”. Language strategy: This game uses *morphemic and homophonic puns*, combining loanword components and original meanings and utilizing similarities in pronunciation and Japanese language structure to arrive at correct and entertaining answers.

17.

Q: *Ugokanai de fumarete bakari no petto tte nan da?* (Nazogaku.com)
(What kind of pet doesn’t move and is always stepped on?)

A: *Kaapetto*
(Carpet)

The correct answer is “kaapetto” (carpet) because in Japanese the word means ‘carpet’, and phonetically contains the word “petto” which means ‘pet’ in Japanese. Carpets do indeed always stay in one place and are often stepped on, so they are humorously likened to “pets” whose fate is to just stay still and be stepped on. This word game uses *kakekotoba* techniques, or morphological and homophonic puns. The word “kaapetto” was chosen because it contains the morpheme “petto” (‘pet’), while also being a logical and humorous answer in the context of everyday life, as is common in Japanese word games, which creatively combine the ambiguity of sound and meaning.

18.

Q: *Kokuban ni iru chou wa nan da?* (Nazogaku.com)
(Butterfly, butterfly, what kind of butterfly is on the

blackboard?)

A: *Chooku*
(Chalk)

The correct answer is “chooku,” which means “chalk.” The word “chooku” contains the syllable “chou” (butterfly) at the beginning of the word, so it is phonetically similar. Chalk is always found on blackboards, and this answer comes from the combination of the sound “chou” in “chooku.” The language strategy used is *homophonic*, which exploits the similarity in pronunciation/phonemes between the keyword (“chou”, butterfly) and the noun that is the answer (“chooku”, chalk), and morpheme analysis, so that listeners must be sensitive to sounds and word associations in everyday Japanese contexts.

19.

Q: *Uji wa ujidemo, kokugo no jikan ni dete kuru uji tte nan da?* (Nazonazo.com)

(Worms, what kind of worms come out during Japanese language (national language) class?)

A: *Shuuji*
(Calligraphy)

The correct answer is “shuuji” (習字), because phonetically the word contains the syllable “uji” (じ), and shuuji is the Japanese character writing lesson commonly practiced in Japanese language classes at school. This puzzle uses the *infix pun* technique (a play on sounds within a word) and *homophonic association*, which involves inserting the sound “uji” into a word that fits the context of the lesson (shuuji/calligraphy), while also utilizing cultural knowledge that shuuji is indeed a compulsory subject in Japanese language classes. The answer requires sensitivity to sounds, word structure, and associations with activities in Japanese schools.

20.

Q: *Shoubugoto ni makete shimau byouin no sensei wa nanika no sensei deshou ka?* (Nazonazo.com.)

(Doctor, what kind of doctor loses at a game?)

A: *Ha isha*
(Dentist)

The correct answer is “haisha” (“dentist”), because there are two homophones in Japanese: “haisha” (歯医者), which means “dentist,” and “haisha” (敗者), which means “loser” or “defeated person.” Thus, “dentist” is the answer because it sounds identical to the word “lose,” in accordance with the question asking for the doctor who loses in a game. This riddle uses homophones, which are word games based on the similarity in sound between two words that have different meanings but are pronounced the same. The answer is funny and surprising because it can only be found if the answerer is sensitive to phonetic ambiguity (homophones) and double meanings in Japanese.

21.

- Q: *Tsune ni kowarete iru choumiryou wa nanda?* (Nazonazo.com.)
(What spice is always spoiled?)
A: *Koshou*
(Pepper)

The correct answer is “koshou” (胡椒), because in Japanese it means pepper, but if written with different *kanji* (故障), the word means ‘damage’ or ‘broken’. These two words are called homophones. So, the answer to this riddle is pepper, because the word “koshou” can refer to a kitchen spice and also mean ‘broken’. This riddle utilizes the *homophone* technique: constructing the answer from words that have different meanings but are pronounced the same.

Nazonazo in data (23), (24), (25), (26), (27), (28), and (29) shows similarities, namely that they all utilize the similarity in pronunciation between Japanese words and words borrowed from foreign languages. The explanation for each piece of data is as follows.

22.
Q: *Taberu to anshin suru keeki wa?* (YouTube
(What kind of cake makes you feel relieved when you eat it?) Nihongo no Mori)
A: *Hottokeeki*
(Hotcake)/’Pancake.’

The correct answer is “hottokeeki” (“pancake” or hotcake), where the word “hotto” is borrowed from the English word “hot,” meaning hot, and is also a Japanese onomatopoeia that describes a feeling of relief or comfort after something has been done. The word “keeki” comes from the English word “cake.” The combination of “hotto” and “keeki” forms the word “hottokeeki” (ホットケーキ), which is a type of pancake or hotcake that is popular in Japan. The answer not only means hot cake, but also “cake that makes you feel relieved.” This riddle uses word association and word ambiguity techniques, combining Japanese onomatopoeia (hotto for a feeling of relief) with English loanwords (hot and cake), thus forming one answer with two meanings: both phonetically and semantically.

23.
Q: *Furansu no pan wa furansu-pan, de wa Nihon no pan wa nan pan?* (japanesestation.com)
(French bread is called furansu-pan, so what is Japanese bread called?)
A: *Ja-pan.*
(Japan)

The correct answer is “Ja-pan” (Japan), because the word “pan” means bread in Japanese (derived from Portuguese), and the syllable “pan” in the English word “Japan” is phonetically identical to the word “pan” for bread in Japanese. By combining the name of the country (Japan) and the word “pan” (bread), this riddle produces an answer

that has two meanings: the name of the country Japan and “bread” in Japanese. This riddle uses the technique of *homophone borrowing*, which combines the sound of a foreign word (the name of the country) and the local term for bread (pan).

24.

Q: *Pan wa pan demo taberarenai pan wa nani?* (japanesestation.com)
(Bread, what kind of bread can't be eaten?)

A: *Furaipan*
(Frying pan)

The correct answer is “furaipan” (“frying pan”). The word “pan” in Japanese means ‘bread’, but in the loanword “furaipan” (フライパン), “pan” means frying pan from the English word “frying pan”. Thus, this answer plays on the double meaning of “pan”: as bread (food) and as kitchenware, namely a frying pan that clearly cannot be eaten. The language strategy used is *homophone* and *semantic borrowing*, which is the use of foreign loanwords that are pronounced the same as local words but have different meanings.

25.

Q: *Pen de kaita ji o keshite shimaishou na iremono wa nanda?* (nazogaku.com)
(What container erases letters written with a pen?)

A: *Pen case.*
(Pen case)/‘Pen holder.’

The correct answer is “pen case” (pen case). The word “pen case” (ペンケース, penkeesu) is an English loanword that means a place to store pens. This play on words occurs because when pen writing is stored in a “pen case,” the letters from the pen seem to be “erased” because they are no longer visible, making the pen case a container that “erases” pen writing in the context of Japanese riddle humor. This riddle uses semantic puns through loanwords, utilizing the sound and meaning of loanwords from English and linking them to the logical function of objects in everyday life.

26.

Q: *Kaze o hikinagara sousaku shiteisou na yuumei na gaka wa dare da?* (nazogaku.com)
(Who is the famous painter who seems to be working while having a cold?)

A: *Gohho.*
(Van Gogh)

The correct answer is “Gohho,” which is the name of the painter “Van Gogh” when written in Japanese. This wordplay occurs because in Japanese, the word “gohho” is written and pronounced similarly to the onomatopoeia for the sound of someone with a cold/sneezing, “gohon gohon” (cough/cold). So, the answer utilizes the similarity in sound (homophony) between the painter’s name and the sound associated with a cold. The strategy used is *homophony with loanwords*, combining foreign names that sound similar to typical Japanese onomatopoeia (cough/cold).

27.

Q: *Sutaa wa sutaa demo pan o taberu sutaa tte nani?* (nazoq.com)
(Star, star, what eats bread?)

A: *Toosutaa.*
(Bread toaster)

The correct answer is “toosutaa” (“toaster” is the English word for a bread toaster). The word “sutaa” means ‘star’, and “toosutaa” is derived from the word “toaster” which begins with “star” and means a bread toaster. This play on words combines the sound “sutaa” (star) found in the word “toosutaa” and relates it to its function (eating/toasting bread). The technique used is *homophone absorption*, which involves combining keywords in the original sentence with loanwords from English that have similar sounds and relevant meanings. The answers require sensitivity to the sounds “hidden” in loanwords and recognition of noun words in Japanese and English.

28.

Q: *Isu wa isu demo karukute, oishii isu tte nani?* (nazo-nazo.com)
(Chair, chair, what kind of chair is light and delicious?)

A: *Karee raisu*
(Curry rice)

The correct answer is “karee raisu” (“curry rice” or nasi kare). The word “isu” means chair in Japanese, but in the word “karee raisu,” when spoken quickly by Japanese speakers, the ending sounds like “isu.” Furthermore, this answer is funny because “nasi kare” is a food that clearly has nothing to do with chairs, but is considered “delicious” (oishii) and “light” (karukute) when compared to actual chairs. This question utilizes the techniques of homophone borrowing and lexical misdirection, which refer to nouns that have the same/similar pronunciation (isu—chair, isu at the end of “karee raisu”) and play on lexical associations with everyday contexts. Respondents are directed to detect hidden sounds in words and interpret descriptive clues creatively rather than literally.

Berikutnya adalah contoh-contoh teka-teki *tatarucingan*:

1. sources
Q: *Di sisi walungan aya tangkal kalapa, di tengah sawah aya naon?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(On the side of the river there is a coconut tree, what is in the middle of the rice field?)
A: “W” (the middle letter of the word “sawah”)

The word “sawah” consists of 5 letters (S-A-W-A-H); the letter that is exactly in the middle is “W”, so what is “in the middle of the rice field” is the letter W.
Language strategy: letter game/orthographic pun (puzzle based on letter position).

2.

- Q: *Baso dibalikkeun jadi naon?* (Mansur: 2023)
(What happens when meatballs are turned upside down?)
A: *bahe* (‘spilled’)

The person being asked thought that the answer is “osab” (read backwards), but it turned out that Jnya was a bowl of meatballs. If you turned it upside down, the meatballs would spill out. This riddle uses a wordplay based on the ambiguity of the word “dibalik,” which can mean either reversing the order of letters or physically flipping an object. The listener initially thought that “baso” would be reversed to become “osab”, but the actual meaning was to flip the bowl of meatballs so that the contents spill out, which in Sundanese is called “bahe”.

3.

Q: *Sapi naon anu bau?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(Which cow smells bad?)

A: *Sapiteng*
(Sundanese pronunciation for ‘septic tank’; can also sound like ‘sepiteng’)

Language strategy: phonetic/homophonic pun (paronomasia) and semantic association (similar-sounding words directed at smelly objects).

4.

Q: *Dicabak biye, ditakol ngabelentrang. Naon cik?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(Held softly, struck loudly, what is it?)

A: *Tai kotok napel dina tihang listrik*
(Chicken droppings stuck to the electric pole)

This riddle uses figurative descriptions and sound comparisons; “dicabak biye” (soft when held) and “ditakol ngabelentrang” (loud sound when struck) describe the condition of chicken droppings on an electricity pole, which when struck will penetrate the pole.

5.

Q: *Bajuna hejo, leumpangna nguriling bari udud* (Tarigan, 1978)
(His clothes are green, he walks in circles while smoking)

A: *Obat nyamuk yang dibakar*
(Mosquito repellent that is burned)

The strategy is personification, mosquito repellent is depicted as a person dressed in green walking around smoking, bringing humor to life through allegory.

6.

Q: *Setan naon anu bisa nangtungkeun sepedah?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(What kind of demon can make a bicycle stand up?)

A: *Setandar* (Bicycle stand)

A play on words using a phonetic pun between “devil” and the actual word “standard,” creating a humorous effect through the similarity in sound.

7.

Q: *Naon cing diudag lumpat, didagoan cicing?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(What is being chased runs, what is being waited for stays still?)

A: *Kalangkang* (Shadow)

The answer “shadow” is appropriate because when chased, it appears to run, and when waited for, it remains still; using personification and paradoxical logic.

8.

Q: *Tukang naon lamun digeroan sok lumpat ngajauhan?* (Nining Kurniasih, 2023)
(What kind of worker, when called, often runs away?)

A: *Tukang maok* (Thief)

Using social behavior association. Thieves will definitely run away when called, using situational humor logic.

9.

Q: *Kalimah naon anu dibaca ti hareup jeung ti tukang sarua hartina?* (Mansur, 2023)
(What sentence has the same meaning when read from front to back and back to front?)

A: *Kasur ini rusak* (This mattress is broken)

Using linguistic symmetry in the form of a palindrome, because the sentence can be read from two directions with the same meaning.

10.

Q: *Oray naon anu teu bisaun ngaleor?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(What kind of snake cannot walk in a zigzag pattern?)

A: *Oray nu ngalegleg linggis*
(The snake that swallowed a crowbar)

Physical logic game: a snake that swallows a crowbar cannot wriggle; humor arises from absurd but reasonable depictions.

11.

Q: *Naon sababna ban mobil tina karet?* (Tarigan, 1978)
(Why are car tires made of rubber?)

A: *Mun tina coklat pasti digembrong sireum.*
(If it were made of chocolate, it would be swarmed by ants.)

A game of absurd logic; the answer seems funny because it uses irrelevant cause-and-effect arguments that are comically plausible.

12.

Q: *Naon sababna lamun anjing keur lumpat sok ngalieuk bae ka tukang?* (Mansur, 2023)

(Why do dogs run and look back?)

A: *Sabab teu make kaca spion.*
(Because it doesn't use a rearview mirror)

Using quirky logic and modern humor, comparing animal behavior with human attributes (mirror).

13.

Q: *Kaca naon anu nyeri?* (Karwati, 2023)
(What kind of glass is painful?)

A: *Kacabok, kacapit*
(Hit, pinched)

Morphological play between the root word “kaca” and the prefix “ka-”, which forms a verb meaning “to be” and is related to pain.

14.

Q: *Petina hiji, mayitna loba, cing naon?* (Mimin Karmini, 2023)
(One petina, many corpses, what now?)

A: *Korek api*
(Matchstick)

Using form and function associations. One container (coffin) holds many sticks (bodies), a clear and humorous metaphor.

15.

Q: *Jalma meuli kasur keur naon?* (Neneng, 2023)
(Why is someone buying a mattress?)

A: *Keur beunta*
(To stay awake / while awake)

Taking advantage of the ambiguity of the word “keur” (‘again’ and ‘for’); humor arises from the reversal of expected meanings.

16.

Q: *Jam naon anu bisa nembang?* (Soleh Chaerudin, 2023)
(What time can sing?)

A: “Jamrud”

Homonym game: “jam” is used as the root word of the name of an Indonesian rock band called “Jamrud,” not as a timepiece.

17.

Q: *Sato naon anu sukuna dina sirah awakna dina sirah?* (Mansur, 2023)
(What animal has its legs on its head and its body on its head?)

A: *Kutu rambut* (Head lice)

Realistic descriptive logic. Lice live on the head, their legs attach to the hair; the answer is humorous because the literal answer matches the strange description.

18.

- Q: *Budak dugul loba kutu, naon cing?* (Nining Kurniasih, 2023)
(A bald child has many lice, what's that about?)
A: *onde-onde cake* (Onde-onde cake)

Visual pun and texture comparison: a bald head full of “lice” is likened to onde-onde with sesame seeds.

19.

- Q: *Bangku naon anu bisa didahar?* (Karwati, 2023)
(What kind of bench can be eaten?)
A: *Bangkuang*
(Jicama)

Syllable game: the word “bangkuang” is broken down into “bangku” + “ang”, creating the illusion that the word “bangku” is edible.

Table of types and number of words used in Japanese *nazonazo* riddles and Sundanese *tatarucingan* riddles

Object Theme	Japanese <i>Nazonazo</i> Puzzles	Sunda <i>Tatarucingan</i> Riddles
Animals	9	4
Body parts	1	0
Letters/Characters	2	2
Fruit	5	1
Place	2	0
Plants/trees	1	0
Furniture (tables, chairs, benches)	3	3
Writing tools / whiteboards	3	0
Food/drinks	8	3
Kitchenware	2	0
Containers	1	0
People/professions	3	1
Spices	1	0
Waste	0	1
Household/daily items	0	2
Vehicles/Technical items	0	2
Abstract objects/natural phenomena	0	1
Name/Cultural identity	0	1

Sources: researcher

Contrastive analysis (similarities and differences) of Japanese *Nazonazo* riddles and Sundanese *tatarucingan* riddles

The proportion of words that appear in Japanese *nazonazo* puzzles in the above data shows certain cultural trends in Japanese society. The dominance of animal (9) and food/drink (8) themes, as well as fruits (5), shows the closeness of Japanese society to nature and food as an important part of their lives and humor. The use of furniture, stationery, blackboards, and words related to professions and places is also quite prominent, showing that aspects of daily life, education, and the work environment are the main inspirations for wordplay. Another unique feature is the presence of the category of letters/written characters (2) and a slight exploration of body organs, kitchen utensils, containers, and spices. This reflects Japanese culture, which greatly values the form, sound structure, and visual beauty of writing (*kanji*, *hiragana*, *katakana*). Conversely, abstract categories such as waste/dirt, modern technical objects, vehicles, natural phenomena, and cultural identity do not appear at all in this data. The absence of these themes indicates that Japanese *nazonazo* puzzles tend to emphasize light, friendly humor that is close to everyday reality and far from sarcasm or taboo themes.

Meanwhile, the proportion of words in Sundanese *tatarucingan* puzzles, which are dominated by animals, letters/writing, furniture, food/drinks, household appliances, vehicles, abstract objects/natural phenomena, and one case of dirt/waste, strongly reflects the cultural character of the Sundanese people, who are simple and close to real life in their village and family environments. The focus on physical objects that are easily found in everyday life, as well as natural phenomena, shows that Sundanese *tatarucingan* culture greatly values familiarity with one's own environment, joy through small things, and the ability to observe one's surroundings keenly. The lack of words about places, body organs, and the almost complete absence of foreign loanwords or global concepts, illustrates the mindset of a society that is still very local and situational in character. Themes such as excrement, simple technical vehicles, abstract objects, and food reveal a culture that is not taboo about discussing everyday realities humorously without sarcastic tendencies or aggressive social criticism. The presence of cultural names/identities also shows a love for local heritage and figures.

The difference between the two is that Japanese *nazonazo* seems open to loanwords from English, such as stationery, kitchen utensils, or place names. Japan is also known for playing with written forms (for example, utilizing the characteristics of *kanji* characters or the number of letters) and loanwords, so that understanding their humor sometimes requires more knowledge of Japanese written language and foreign cultures. Meanwhile, Sundanese humor emphasizes everyday objects that are truly unique and simple in rural environments or families in Indonesia, such as animal dung, simple vehicles, natural phenomena, and even local Sundanese terms. Sundanese humor arises from observations of the reality around them and plays more with situations or physical objects that can be directly seen or experienced.

The construction strategies of Japanese *nazonazo* puzzles and Sundanese *tatarucingan* puzzles both rely on wordplay, especially puns, double meanings, and logic that provoke discernment. Japanese *nazonazo* puzzles use homophones, breaking words into several parts, associating words with two things at once, exploring characters (*kanji*, *hiragana*, *katakana*), onomatopoeia, foreign loanwords, and popular culture as sources of creativity. Japanese humor arises not only from the content of an object but

also from the beauty of its form, pronunciation, and visual interpretation of writing, often causing the respondent to misinterpret before understanding the actual logic. Sundanese riddles emphasize sound and meaning puns, word reversals, metaphors, and personification of everyday objects, village environments, and familiar natural phenomena. Unexpected and sometimes bizarre answers often come from figurative or paradoxical logic, while wordplay stems from a variety of dialects and keen observation of small things around us.

The similarity between Japanese *nazonazo* and Sundanese *tatarucingan* lies in the use of wordplay that relies on puns, double meanings, and indirect logic. Both traditions enjoy deceiving listeners with questions whose answers are unexpected, so that wordplay becomes a means of training sharp thinking, creativity, and sensitivity to language culture. In both Japanese *nazonazo* and Sundanese *tatarucingan*, humor arises from the manipulation of everyday words, such as the names of animals, objects, or foods, which are reversed in both sound and meaning, and often utilize word associations and personification of objects to create a humorous or paradoxical effect.

The difference is that Japanese *nazonazo* more often uses techniques such as word breakdown (morphemes), exploration of character forms, including *kanji* and *hiragana*, and involves many foreign words that have been adapted phonetically into Japanese words. Japanese puzzles also tend to feature visual wordplay, onomatopoeia, and advanced linguistic logic, reflecting a culture of literacy and openness to global influences. Meanwhile, Sundanese riddles are strongly rooted in observations of local life, drawing inspiration from simple objects, natural phenomena, and village customs. Wordplay is usually based on the Sundanese dialect, real situations in the surrounding environment, and creative thinking that often uses metaphors, strange comparisons, or quirky logic that reflects everyday humor.

Cultural Implications

A contrastive discussion of the characteristics and construction strategies of *nazonazo* puzzles in Japanese and *tatarucingan* puzzles in Sundanese reveals that both are cultural products that reflect the mindset and culture of their respective communities. The most striking similarity between the two traditions is the use of words closely related to everyday life, such as animals, food, or household furniture, which are processed with sound play (homophones), double meanings, personification, and sometimes indirect logic, resulting in humor based on linguistic ingenuity. This technique indicates that both Japan and Sunda value sharpness, creativity, and social aspects in language. Riddles serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of sharpening reasoning, strengthening togetherness, and preserving local cultural wealth.

The main difference lies in the source and depth of language strategy exploration. Japanese *Nazonazo* tends to develop with global influences through the use of loanwords, morpheme exploration, and visualization of character forms (*kanji*, *hiragana*), which require further cultural knowledge and visual literacy. A strong culture of literacy, the ability to process foreign loanwords into local puns, and a tendency to think multidimensionally in language (visually and phonologically) are markers of a Japanese mindset that is highly flexible and open to linguistic innovation. On the other hand, Sundanese *tatarucingan* is deeply rooted in observations of agrarian life, natural phenomena, and local customs. The mindset reflected is one of spontaneity, concern for simple things, and the ability to build creative associations from real situations in the surrounding environment. This tradition instills values of flexibility of

thought, humor, and sensitivity to the meaning and sound of everyday life experiences, as well as being a medium for release from fatigue and reinforcement of cultural roots amid the changing times.

Both traditions, despite their differences in exploration techniques and cultural sources, use wordplay as a reflection of the ingenuity, humor, and cultural identity of their communities. *Nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* are not just about answers, but rather ways of processing reality and building a unique creative logic in accordance with the character and philosophy of life of the communities that speak them. Both offer a language education approach that combines cognitive and emotional aspects through joy, imagination, and social interaction that are deeply rooted in local communication traditions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that, first, in terms of linguistic form, both *nazonazo* and *tatarucingan* utilize words that is closely related to everyday life, especially animals, fruits, and simple objects. This pattern shows the tendency of both communities to create humor and wit through words that are easy to understand and relevant, and to avoid taboo or sensitive topics. However, Japanese *nazonazo* is more varied in its construction strategies, often utilizing homophones, morphemes, visual character form games (*kanji*, *hiragana*, *katakana*), and foreign loanwords, reflecting a literate mindset, openness to outside cultures, and an emphasis on aesthetics and linguistic creativity. In contrast, Sundanese *tatarucingan* is more tied to local experiences, exploration of sounds, double meanings, metaphors, and comparisons of real objects and natural phenomena, a true reflection of the mindset of the simple, friendly, and detail-oriented Indonesian village and agrarian communities.

Second, the meaning and cultural implications of comparing the words choices of the two traditions show that wordplay is not merely entertainment, but also has educational and social functions. *Nazonazo* is a means of critical education and language play with global, visual, and phonetic nuances, strengthening intelligence and the ability to adapt to cultural changes. *Tatarucingan* Sunda serves to preserve community traditions through laughter and togetherness, instilling the values of spontaneity, flexibility of thought, and perceptiveness in facing the realities of life. Both show that the tradition of word games is an important part of cultural heritage, a medium for transferring knowledge between generations, as well as an exercise in building reasoning, imagination, and the unique social identity of each nation.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

This study was approved by the institution.

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