

**Preliminary Studies to a Thematic Dictionary of Indonesian Proverbs and Idioms
(Keynote Speech at International Seminar on Foreign Language Teaching,
Linguistics, and Literature – Universitas Negeri Medan)**

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Due to the increasing influx of tourists into the country, scholarship programs for language and culture studies, important book translations, Indonesian has lately become more and more popular. However, there are still some domains of the language that are not easily accessible for English-speaking learners. One of these domains is proverbs / idioms, even though the avid learner might come across some publications about them – yet, unfortunately, the sheer number of such books and articles does not meet the demands of language didactics. Proverbs are “popular wisdoms”, often metaphorical sayings based on observation, handed down from generation to generation. An example could be ‘birds of a feather flock together’, meaning people with the same background (family, interests, etc.) will search / find each other’s company. Idioms are fixed expressions that consist of two or, most of the time, of more words. Usually, they go against Frege’s ‘Principle of Compositionality’, i.e. that the meaning of a complex expression is the sum of the meaning of its constituents. For example, the English idiom ‘to bite the dust’ does not mean that someone would actually ‘eat dirt’ (literal meaning), but that he dies (figurative meaning), i.e. its meaning is not predictable from ‘to bite’ and ‘the dust’. They both are, hence, culture-bound: only native speakers (or philologists / in-depth learners) of the language can understand them; for outsiders, they make no sense, they are unintelligible. In this lecture I am going to present Indonesian proverbs / idioms with the keyword ‘*air*’ (‘water’), and, as these expressions mostly do not have equivalents in European languages or use a completely different imagery, I will analyze their metaphorical structure as well. My corpus consists of commonplace proverbs / idioms used in daily communication and / or in spoken / printed media; their recognition and acceptance as a part of the Indonesian language have already been tested with the help of native speakers. Furthermore, I will showcase a possible structural arrangement of entries in a thematic dictionary of Indonesian proverbs and idioms – using the aforementioned example of ‘*air*’. In the end, hopefully, we will know a little bit more about expressions like ‘*air dalam terenang*’ (‘[like] water in the pot’) and ‘*air di daun keladi*’ (‘[like] water in the caladium plant’), and how and when to use them.

Keywords: Thematic dictionary, Indonesian Proverbs, Idiom