

## The Japanese Adjectives Jouzu and Tokui

Zaid Mohd Zin, Nor Sahayu Hamzah, Rozita Che Rodi

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, Selangor, Malaysia

Email: zaidmz@upm.edu.my norsahayu.hamzah@gmail.com, ita\_cherodi@upm.edu.my

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### Abstract

This study is a semantic study that explores the genre of meaning in general. The use of adjective lexicons with synonymous meanings in Japanese sentences often confuses learners due to the differences meaning in comparison to their mother tongue. The objective of this study is to discuss the similarities and differences of the usage of the synonymous adjectives between Japanese and Malay language in the construction of sentences. The data for the study is selected from *Nihongo Hyougen Bunkei Jiten* and *ejje.weblio.jp* website. The textual analysis of the study was carried out based on Lado's (1966) theory. The findings of this study underline four differences in the vocabulary systems between Japanese and Malay language. The adjectives *jouzu* and *tokui* are synonymous in term of meanings but are different in their usage. Japanese *adjectives* changes the form according to the timeline of the tenses meanwhile the Malay adjectives changes form depends on the Malay adverb used. In conclusion, Japanese adjectives *keiyoushi-I* and *keiyoushi-Na* have four features while the Malay adjectives have nine features. The outcomes of this study can be used as a reference for teachers and learners to enhance the usage of adjectives *jouzu* and *tokui* in Japanese teaching and learning. Further studies on other Japanese adjectives also should be carried out.

**Keywords:** Semantic, Adjective, Japanese Language, Malay Language.

### Introduction

Language is the medium of communication for the interaction with one and another. In this era of globalization, the ability to communicate in various languages has a paramount importance. This importance contributes to the introduction of the syllabus of foreign language learning at the higher and secondary learning education institutions. The ability and the skills of learner communication can be enhanced by using correct Japanese adjectives in constructing sentences. Sillar (1988) explains that the writing, visual and verbal image are an important combination in the process of transmitting, receiving and exchanging of information. This encourages learner to master the usage of adjective lexicons. However, the usage of adjective in the mother tongue

does not reflect the similar meaning in the learning of different language. The difference of the language system also contributes to the incorrect usage of adjective lexicons. Corder (1973) illustrates that there are three factors affecting the foreign language learning: the influence of the mother tongue, fallacy of language and unsuitable teaching techniques. Thus, this study identifies the system of vocabulary in the Japanese language and explore the similarities and differences of its usage in the vocabulary system between the Japanese and Malay language. The construction of a grammatical sentence in Japanese language involves the usage of an accurate lexicon, correct spelling, appropriate writing selection and grammatical sentence structure. The main weakness of learners in the construction of Japanese sentences is in selecting the suitable adjectives or lexicons. According to Lado (1957), comparative studies between two languages can be seen in terms of the usage of grammar system, vocabulary system, sound system or writing system. Fatin Nadirah (2018) states that the mother tongue or the first spoken language is able to influence negative transfer that leads to errors in the second language learning process. Wiyayanti and Duduong (2018) and Nursanti (2019) describes that learners are confused about the usage of lexicon which have the same meaning in their mother tongue however different usage in Japanese language. This is because there are some differences usages of adjectives that need to be focused on foreign language learning. The study focuses on the comparison of Japanese vocabulary systems by looking the synonymous adjectives in the Malay language.

### **Synonym**

Collins (2006) justify that a word or expression which means the same as another word or expression is a study of synonym. Thus, the study of lexicon which has similar definition is also encompassed in the study of synonym. Synonyms is an ancient Greek word, *synonymy*. The syllables 'syn' means similar while 'nymy' stands for the name. In literal definition, synonymous can be defined as the similarity of meaning according to Jackson (1988) in Leonard & Griselda (2014).

**Definition of *Ruigigo***

The *ruigigo* in Japanese language can be defined as follows:

一言語体系の語彙のなかで、互いによく似た意味をもつ2つ以上の単語  
[Two or more words in the vocabulary of a single language system that have similar meanings to each other]

*Japanese Language Education Dictionary* (1982)

*Ruigigo* in Japanese language has three classifications namely:

- a. *Dougigo* is the type of synonymous vocabulary which has the same meaning. For example, 'ball' in Japanese language has two lexicons namely *sakkaa* and *futtobooru* while lexicon for 'ping pong' in Malay terms use the lexicon *pi<sup>n</sup> po<sup>n</sup>* and *takkyuu*. *Dougigo* is usually derived from loan words that are translated directly from foreign languages to Japanese.
- b.
- c. *Housetsu Kankei* is a type of synonym which shows the meaning of vocabulary that has a narrower comprehension with its synonymous vocabulary. For example, *chichi* and *oya* have the same meaning. However, the meaning of *chichi* refers to a speaker's own father and this word can only be used by the speaker to refer the father with first person pronoun. On the other hand, *oya* has a broader meaning which is referring to the parents and the elderly in general and can be used by the first, second and third speaker person pronoun.
- d. *Shisateki Tokuchou* is a synonym that shows the vocabulary that has the same meaning or matches with other lexicons but is different in terms of usage (Table 1).

**Table 1.**

*Tsumetai* and *samui*

アリさんは冷たい水を飲みます。 <i>Ali san wa tsumetai mizu o nomimasu.</i>	/	Ali minum air sejuk. (Ali drinks cold water)
アリさんは寒い水を飲みます。 <i>Ali san wa samui mizu o nomimasu.</i>	X	

*Kamus Bahasa Jepun, Melayu dan Inggeris* (The Dictionary of Japanese, Malay and English language), Arai (2008), defines adjective *tsumetai* as 'dingin' (cold) and *samui* as 'sejuk' (cold). However, the usage of adjective in *Kamus Jepang-Indonesia* Sudjianto, Dian Meilani & Andini (2017) interpret the meaning of *tsumetai* as cold to refer to things and *samui* as cold to refer to temperature or weather.

**Japanese Adjectives**

According to the Japanese Language Education Dictionary (1982), adjective or *keiyoushi* is divided into four categories such as personality, colour, condition, characteristic and emotion.

***Keiyoushi-I* and *keiyoushi-Na***

*Keiyoushi* is divided into two types: *keiyoushi-I* and *keiyoushi-Na*. *Keiyoushi-I* in Japanese, for instance, are *samui* (寒い), *ooki* (大きい) or *chiisai* (小さい) which ends with ‘I’ [い] while *keiyoushi-Na* generally does not end with ‘I’ [い] with the exception of *kirai* (きらい), Lee Ng (1998) while *keiyoudoushi*, classified as pure half-*keiyoushi*, Thaiyibah & Yoko (1997). The root word for the Japanese adjectives will change in the form of sentences according to the timeline of the tenses it is used in, Thaiyibah & Yoko (1998) divides sentence and timeline of tenses forms as shown in the Table 2.

**Table 2.**  
*Keiyoushi-I* and *Keiyoushi-Na*

Keiyoushi [形容詞]	Present	Present (Negative)	Past	Past (Negative)
<i>Keiyoushi-I</i> [い形容詞]	あついです <i>Atsui desu</i> (Hot)	あつくないです <i>Atsuku nai desu</i> (Not hot)	あつかったです <i>Atsukatta desu</i> (Hot) (Past)	あつくなかったです <i>Atsuku nakatta desu</i> (Not hot) (Past)
<i>Keiyoushi-Na</i> [な形容詞]	しずかです <i>Shizuka desu</i> (Silent)	しずかではありません <i>Shizuka dew arimasen</i> (Not silent)	しずかでした <i>Shizuka deshita</i> (Silent) (Past)	しずかではありませんでした <i>Shizuka dew arimasen deshita</i> (Not silent) (past)

**Literature Review**

Contrastive analysis is an area of language study that compares two languages in all aspects to look at the similarities or differences. Both mentioned languages are equally important as one is the native language and the other being the target language, which is the new language being learned, Tarigan (2009). Contrastive studies of Japanese language have been gaining place in Malaysia through the introduction of elective subjects in more than 100 schools under the

Ministry of Education, MOE (2019). This comparative study has greatly assisted lecturers, teachers and learners in learning Japanese language in Malaysia.

Ng (2019) through the study *Penguasaan Sebutan Kata Adjektif Bahasa Jepun dalam Kalangan Pelajar Cina di Sebuah IPTA Malaysia* discusses the aspects of phonetic in the adjectives of Japanese and Chinese language. This study found that Chinese learners are very weak in pronouncing the Japanese language adjectives. The findings of this study also explain that although Chinese and Japanese language using the same Kanji letters, it does not help Chinese learners in local universities to master Japanese phonetic skills. Chinese learners who have limited Mandarin knowledge had a negative impact on Japanese language learning processes. This proves Lado's theory (1957) that studying the same element in native language may be easy, but it is complicated in the process of transitioning to a new language.

Naila Fauziah (2019) in *Analisis Kontrastif Ungkapan Kecharusan dalam Bahasa Jepang "Nakerebanaranai", "Naitoikenai" dan "Harus" dan "Mesti" dalam bahasa Indonesia* explains the meaning of the *nakerebanaranai* and *naitoikenai* have similar meaning but different usage. This study also compared the functions of the vocabulary system in Japanese and Indonesian language. The findings show that there are four situations in sentence in which the phrase *nakerebanaranai* can be used in subjective manner. Secondly, it refers to the situation in which the factor is causal incident. Thirdly, the intention of the speaker as the subject and fourthly, it describes an inevitable situation. On the other hand, the usage of *naitoikenai* is similar to the usage of *nakerebanaranai* with the exclusion of facts mentioned whereas in Indonesian language, the word *nakerebanaranai* and *naitoikenai* mean "harus" (should) and "mesti" (must) and can be used in all situations.

Wan Mohd Fairaz (2018), in the study entitled *Kesilapan Binaan Ayat Bahasa Jepun Terjemahan Dalam Kalangan Pelajar KUIS* has used Ichikawa (1997) model to classify the types of learners' errors in learning Japanese. The findings of this study have identified errors in some elements of grammar and vocabulary systems through lexicon selection. There are several possibilities for this type of error. The results of the study showed problem in learners' misinterpretation of the meaning of the Japanese lexicon directly into the native language. As a result, differences in the technical meaning of the Japanese language have led to mistakes in the learners' sentences. This study does not deny the influence of the learners' mother tongue as well as its contributing to the errors among the KUIS Japanese language learners.

Subsequently, Kang, Syahrina & Jamal Rizal (2017) in *Analisis Kontrastif daripada Aspek Fonologi antara Bahasa Jepun dan Bahasa Mandarin dalam Sebutan Nombor* has found phonological similarities in pronunciation. Comparative study of the sound system has showed the presence of vocal and consonant sounds in both Mandarin and Japanese.

language. For example, the “/” vowel sounds “one” in Mandarin whereas the word “*chi*” in *ichi* means “one” in Japanese is pronounced ‘y’ in Mandarin. The findings also suggest that skills in sound pronunciation need to be mastered in order for the message to be spoken accurately. This is intended to minimize learners' mistakes due to the background of the speakers which has greatly influenced their learning of the new language. This study also argues that the ability of Chinese learners to produce different pronunciation sounds gives merit in Japanese language learning. The findings of this study are contrary to Lado theory (1957) which explains the similarity of native languages to some extent in influencing the transition process of the new language (Ng, 2019).

The study emphasizes on the Japanese language adjectives *jouzu* and *tokui* which have synonymous meaning. The data collected is from Japanese dictionary *Ikita Reibun De Manabu Nihongo Hyougen Bunkei Jiten* and *ejje.weblio.jp* website. This study will discuss the meaning based on the dictionary as well as the usage of adjectives *jouzu* and *tokui* in comparison to the Malay language. The objectives of this study are to identify the Japanese language lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui* and to evaluate the similarities and differences of synonym *jouzu* and *tokui* in Malay language.

In the learning process of the Japanese language, learners have to understand synonymous lexicons that have similar meaning in Malay language. For example, *tsumetai* and *samui* have a similar meaning to “dingin” (cold) and “sejuk” (cold) in Malay language (Takuji, 2008). Misunderstandings, difficulties in understanding the similarities and differences as well as the contextual usage are also influenced by a negative transfer in second language learning (Fatin Nadirah, 2018). The weakness of learners in mastering the accurateness and appropriateness of using the lexicon in the right context has prompted the learners to create mistakes in sentence-construction (Ichikawa, 1997). Based on these circumstances, a form of qualitative and descriptive study focuses on the comparison between *jouzu* and *tokui* in Malay lexicons. The analysed data are sentences using lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui* are obtained from *Ikita Reibun De Manabu Nihongo Hyougen Bunkei Jiten* and additional data from *ejje.weblio.jp* website. According to Lado (1966), comparative or contrastive is a study of comparison related to two sounds, two grammatical structures, two vocabulary systems, and two writing systems. The two systems in question are the two systems of different languages including the mother tongue - the first language of the speaker and the target language. This study discusses the two vocabulary systems which is lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui* in Japanese and Malay vocabularies.

### Discussion

Verhaar (1978) defines synonym as the phrases with meanings similar to those of other phrases, whereas *Kamus Linguistik* (1997) defines synonyms as two or more words having the same or almost identical meaning in a language. The relationship between two

synonymous lexicons is considered to be bilateral. The findings of this study, hence, respond to the following objectives:

**Identification of the Japanese language lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui*.**

**Lexicon *jouzu* in Japanese language**

Lexicon *jouzu* is translated as follows:

能力の優れた人の意。やりかたがうまい。  
Someone who has the ability / ability to do something well.

*Shinmeikai Japanese Language Dictionary (2012)*

Lexicon *jouzu* can be interpreted as referring to individuals who have the ability to perform well. In this study context, the *jouzu* lexicon is from the group of *keiyoushi-Na*. Generally, *jouzu-na* and *tokui-na* in *keiyoushi-Na* group is in the instances when each lexicon ends with *na*. The usage of *jouzu* lexicon refers to the capability in skill. *Kamus Dewan Bahasa Edisi Keempat (2015)* refers the lexicon “*pandai*” (clever) as a well-educated and capable individual. Thus, lexicon *jouzu* in Japanese language is synonymous to lexicon “*pandai*” (clever) in Malay language.

Below are examples of sentences using lexicon *jouzu* collected from *Ikita Reibun De Manabu Nihongo Hyougen Bunkei Jiten*, used by Japanese language teachers and learners.

1. 奥さんが料理上手で、ご主人が幸せですね。  
*Okusan ga ryouri jouzu de, goshujin ga shiawase desu ne.*  
Beruntungnya si suami kerana isterinya pandai memasak. (Husband is so lucky because wife is good at cooking.) p.345
2. だいぶ上手になりましたね。あともう少しというところ  
です。 *Daibu jouzuni narimashita ne. Ato mou sukoshi toiu*  
*tokorodesu.* (Kamu) sudah cukup pandai. Hanya sedikit sahaja  
lagi.  
(You've become quite good. It's just a little more) p.176
3. ア ; 今日どうだった。うまく踊れた。  
*Kyou dou datta. Umaku odoreta?*  
Hari ini macam mana? Menari dengan baik? (How was it today? Did you dance well?)  
イ ; うん、まあまあね。はじめてにしては上手だって、先生もほめてくれ  
たし。



*Un, maamaa ne. Hajimete ni shite wa jouzudatte, sensei mo homete kureta shi.*  
 Hmm, boleh lah. Cikgu memuji, katanya (saya) kali pertama pun pandai. (Hmm, it's okay. The teacher praised me and said that I was good the first time I danced.)

ア； へー褒められたんだ。やるなあ。

*Hee homeraretanda. Yarunaa.*

Wah! Dapat pujian. (Awak) telah melakukannya. (Wow! Got praise. You did it.)

p.256

Referring to the example 1 above, the speaker (subject) compliments for her husband's (object) good fortune because she is a good cook. In example 2, the speaker compliments the object using the second person pronoun, whereas in example 3, the speaker uses the lexicon *jouzu* in reference to the expression of the teacher that has been repeated by the speaker to the person he or she speaks with (object). The sentence spoken is a form of compliment by the teacher to the speaker in the situation that the speaker is a good dancer. The *onyomi jouzu* is read as *jou* [上] and *zu* [手] that are formed in kanji as *ue* [上] and *te* [手]. The *jouzu* lexicon is formed from the kanji *ue* [上] which refers to "atas" (on) and in literal meaning can be referred to as height. Next, *te* [手] refers to "tangan" (hand) and literally defined as ability or expertise. The meaning denoted in this lexicon is closely related to cleverness and great ability (Lina Rosliana, Aryudananta, 2019). It is also explained in another study that the *jouzu* lexicon is referred to a great increase in a particular matter (achievement) (Aryudananta, 2019). The use of the *jouzu* lexicon can be summarized in Table 3 as follows:

**Table 3.**

The use of *jouzu*

Sentence	Lexicon <i>jouzu</i>	Content
1. 奥さんが料理上手で、ご主人が幸せですね。	The speaker compliments the one he speaks to (object)	Complimenting someone as good at cooking
1. だいぶ上手になりましたね。あともう少しというところです。	The speaker compliments the object	Complimenting someone on his ability.
2. うん、まあまあね。はじめにしては上手だって、先生もほめてくれたし。	The speaker tells the impression of a third person to the object.	Complimenting a good dancer in the.



### Lexicon *tokui* in Japanese Language

Lexicon *tokui* is translated as follows:

自分の思いどおりの結果になったりそういう状態であったりして、満足である。ほかの人よりも優れているということ、自信をもつ。他のことよりもうまくやれるという自信がある。

*Shinmeikai Japanese Language Dictionary (2012)*

A satisfaction with the situation, decision according to personal preference. Having the confidence that your personal skills are better than others. Confident in doing something more than anything else.

Based on the translation provided, the *tokui* lexicon can be defined as the skill or mastery in a particular field. Next, the speaker believes that his skills or abilities are better than others. Thus, the speaker has the right to say he is good at something by using the *tokui* lexicon. This translation corresponds to lexicon "mahir" in Malay which refers to as efficient and trained in a particular field or skilled in field of knowledge that has been learnt (Kamus Pelajar Edisi Kedua, 2015). The following are an example of a sentences using *tokui* lexicon.

4. かのじよは英語が得意な一方で、数学がとても苦手です。  
*Kanojo wa eigo ga tokuina ippou de, suugaku ga totemo nigate desu.*  
Dia (perempuan) **mahir** berbahasa Inggeris, cuma lemah dalam matematik.  
(While she is good at English, she is very bad at Mathematics.)

p.33

5. 彼女は英語が話せて、その上パソコンも得意だそうです。  
*Kanojo wa eigo ga hanasete, sono ue pasokon mo tokui da sou desu.*  
Dia (perempuan) boleh berbahasa Inggeris, malahan **mahir** menggunakan komputer.  
(She speaks English and is also good (skill) at computer.)

p.36

6. 小泉大臣は英語が得意ということだったが、全然そんなことはなかったです。  
*Koizumi daijin wa eigo ga tokui to iu koto datta ga, zensen sonna koto wa na katta desu.*  
Menteri Koizumi dikatakan mahir berbahasa Inggeris hakikatnya tidak begitu.  
(Minister Koizumi said he was good at English, but it never happened.)

p.174

Based on sentences 4, 5 and 6, the speaker explains matters regarding the skills that the third person possessed. The usage of *tokui* lexicon in the sentence above can be summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4.**The use of *tokui*

Sentence	Lexicon <i>tokui</i>	Personal Pronoun
4.かのじよは英語が得意な一方で、数学がとても苦手です。	Good at English and bad at Mathematics.	Third Speaker
5.彼女は英語が話せて、その上パソコンも得意だそうです。	Good at English and is also good (skill) at computer.	Third Speaker
6.小泉大臣は英語が得意ということだったが、全然そんなことはなかったです。	Not good at English.	Third Speaker

The following are examples of sentences to highlight the usage of *tokui* lexicon as first-person pronoun and second person pronoun.

7. 私は英語が得意です。  
*Watashi wa eigo ga tokui desu.*  
 Saya mahir berbahasa Inggris.  
 (I am good at English.)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

8. 私は運動が得意です。  
*Watashi wa undou ga tokui desu.*  
 Saya mahir bersenam. (I am good at exercise.)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

9. 僕は走るのが得意です。  
*Boku wa hashiruno ga tokui desu.*  
 Saya mahir berlari.  
 (I am good at running.)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

10. あなたは掃除が得意です。  
*Anata wa souji ga tokui desu.*  
Kamu mahir mengemas. (You  
are good at cleaning.)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

11. 料理は得意なの。  
*Ryouri tokui nano.* (Kamu)  
mahir memasak?  
(Are you good at cooking?)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

12. あなたは作文が得意ですか。  
*Anata wa sakubun ga tokui desu ka.*  
Adakah kamu mahir menulis?  
(Are you good at writing?)

*ejje.weblio.jp*

Based on the examples given, sentence 7 to 9 highlight the speaker using a *tokui* lexicon to refer to his 'skill' or ability in a particular field or subject. This further reinforces the translation of the dictionary which explains the speakers' confidence about their skills being above others (*Shinmeikai Japanese Language Dictionary*, 2012). From sentence 10 to 12, the speaker gives praise or question to the speaker without the consent of the object (speaker). This is contrary to the usage of the particle *ne* [ね] used at the end of the sentence to express the function of requesting and obtaining agreement on a matter. In addition, the use of *ne* [ね] particles are also intended to express the meaning of the sentence that is spoken honestly and not sarcastically (Reny Wiyatasari, 2018).

### **The similarities and differences of lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui***

This study discusses in precise detail on the similarities and differences of *keiyoushi-Na* for lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui* with “pandai” (clever) dan “mahir” (skilled) in Malay.

13. 料理が一番得意です。  
*Ryouri ga ichiban tokui desu.*  
(Saya) yang paling **mahir** memasak.  
(I) am the most skilled at cooking.
14. あなたは料理が得意です。  
*Anata wa ryouri ga tokui desu.* Kamu  
**mahir** memasak  
You are good at cooking.

15. 彼女は高校時代料理が得意でした。

*Kanojo wa koukou jidai ryouri ga tokui deshita.*

Dia (budak perempuan) **mahir** memasak sewaktu zaman persekolahan.

She was good at cooking in high school.

The sentence 13 above uses *tokui* lexicon as the first-person pronoun to express the statement on "my" skills at cooking. The definition of *tokui* lexicon contains elements of self-confidence as well as the belief that the he or she can do better than the others. The speaker refers to himself using the lexicon *tokui* but it is slightly different from the lexicon *jouzu* that requires the speaker to use the antonym or opposite lexicon to refer to the speaker as the first person pronoun. Thus, the opposite lexicon is also used in the category of *keiyoushi-Na*, *heta* or *nigate* (*wkwk-japan.com*, 2020). The usage of the *tokui* lexicon is more appropriate to demonstrate one's own skills to refer to the speaker (*nihon5-bunka.net*, 2018).

Sentence 14 uses the second person pronoun in the form of the sentence *Anata wa ryouri ga tokui desu* (You are good at cooking). The *jouzu* lexicon can alternate between sentences but at the end of the sentence, *jouzu* lexicon has an addition of particle *ne* [ね] which is used to express the emotions and feelings of the speaker. In addition, *yone* [よね] particles are used if the speaker has a higher level of confidence than the other speaker, to agree with his or her opinion (Nakajima, 2006). However, in situations where a statement can reach mutual agreement to the other speaker, it is more appropriate to use particle *ne* [ね] (Reny 2019).

In sentence 15, *tokui* lexicon is used as the predicate of a sentence. Thus, the adjective should be placed at the end of the sentence in past tense form. Thus, *keiyoushi-Na* has no significant changes in the root word except in the copula *desu* [です] which is changed to *deshita* [でした]. The following table shows the similarities and differences between both languages on the usage of the adjective lexicons. The summary of discussion shown in Table 5:

**Table 5.**The use of *jouzu* and *tokui*

No.	Sentence	Meaning
13.	a.料理が一番得意です。√ b.料理が一番上手です。*	(Saya) yang paling <b>mahir</b> memasak. (I) am the best (skill) at cooking.  (Saya) yang paling <b>pandai</b> memasak. (I) am the best (clever) at cooking.
14.	a.あなたは料理が得意です。√ b.あなたは料理が上手ですね。√	Kamu <b>mahir</b> memasak. (You are good (skill) at cooking.)  Kamu <b>pandai</b> memasak. (You are good (clever) at cooking.)
15.	a.彼女は高校時代、料理が得意でした。√ b.彼女は高校時代、料理が上手でした。√	Dia (budak perempuan) <b>mahir</b> memasak sewaktu zaman persekolahan. (She was good (skill) at cooking in high school.)  Dia (budak perempuan) <b>pandai</b> memasak sewaktu zaman persekolahan. (She was good (clever) at cooking in high school.)

The meaning of “pandai” (clever) and “mahir” (skilled) is interchangeable in Malay language. In contrast, the *jouzu* lexicon does not allow the speaker to use first person pronoun to describe himself. Instead, the lexicon used is replaced with opposite words or antonym which is *heta* and *nigate* which means “stupid” or “bad/weak”. This discrepancy is confusing learners due to being influenced by the negative language transfer of the mother tongue (Fatin Nadirah, 2018). This means that the use of this lexicon is limited in the sentence as a second- and third-person pronoun. When referring to speakers as a first-person pronoun, the opposite word or antonym of *jouzu* is used as a sign of humility. Through *Look East Policy*, The Malaysia Prime Minister called on teenagers to emulate the Japanese attitude of high humility. In addition to their humbleness, they are committed in doing everything with trust and accountability (Zanariah, 2019). The *tokui* lexicon which means “skill” is summarized as a characteristic of the adjective in which the speaker can be expressed as the first, second and third person pronouns. On the contrary, the usage of lexicon “clever” and “skilled” still refers to individual's ability, wisdom, skills in particular (Kamus Dewan Edisi Empat, 2015). The summary of the similarities and differences are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.**

The similarities and differences of *jouzu* and *tokui*

Personal Pronoun	<i>jouzu</i> <i>u</i>	<i>tokui</i> <i>i</i>
Usage	Has the element of praising or complimenting a person's skill.	Confidence in one's own ability or other people.
First Person Pronoun	Cannot be used due to unnatural form of sentence in Japanese language	Can be used.
Second Person Pronoun	Can be used.	Can be used.
Third Person Pronoun	Can be used.	Can be used.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the lexicons *jouzu* and *tokui* in Japanese language have the same meaning and are synonymous. The *jouzu* lexicon can be defined as “clever” or capable of doing something while the *tokui* lexicon refers to “skill”. Lexicon also has synonymous meaning in Malay language. Adjective lexicons in Japanese have four features while Malay has nine features. The Japanese adjectives are further divided into two parts: *keiyoushi-I* and *keiyoushi-Na*. *Keiyoushi* can change depending on the time scale for *keiyoshi-I* and copula for *keiyoshi-Na*. Although the lexicon *jouzu* and *tokui* are synonymous, the *jouzu* lexicon have the element of praising while the *tokui* lexicon contains the features of expressing a person’s ability and skills. Technically in Japanese, “*tokui*” and “*jouzu*” lexicons have the similar definition and meaning but they cannot be used in all sentences compared to the “*pandai*” and “*mahir*” lexicons in Malay language.

Furthermore, the present study can be extended to other “*keiyoushi*” lexicons in Japanese language to see more similarities and differences between Malay and Japanese adjectives. The research data can be further expanded by analysing short stories articles or novels in both languages. The construction of grammatical sentences in the Japanese language involves using the use of accurate lexicon, correct spelling, appropriate writing selection, and arrangement of the sentence structure following its grammar. The main shortcoming for students in constructing sentences in Japanese language is often observed through their selection of appropriate lexicon. Students are often confused in using the correct synonymous lexicon in Japanese sentences because there are variances in the meanings when compared to their native language. Therefore, this study looks at the use of synonymous lexicons that have the same meaning but cannot be used for all context in sentences.

Also, a comparative study in language can be seen from the aspect of using different dialects or languages. There are synonymous lexicons in foreign languages, particularly the Japanese language but they are less likely to be used by the non-native speakers of the language. This is because there are different characteristics of synonyms that need to be adhered by non-native speakers. Even so, there are synonyms which meanings are easier to comprehend although they are used in diverse contexts by speakers of different demographics. The outcomes of this study can be used as a reference for teachers and learners to enhance the usage of adjectives *jouzu* and *tokui* in Japanese teaching and learning.

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