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Humor and Wisdom: A Critical Analysis of Binary Oppositions in Tenas Effendy's *Pantun Kelakar*

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Abstract

This study examines the nuanced application of binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar," a collection of Malay jesting couplets. Through rigorous qualitative analysis of selected pantuns, we explore how binary opposition functions as a sophisticated literary device to encapsulate complex cultural wisdom and philosophical concepts inherent in the Malay worldview. Our research reveals that Effendy's pantuns ingeniously employ contrasting perspectives to illuminate multifaceted aspects of Malay life, mainly focusing on marital dynamics and societal attitudes towards physical differences and disabilities. The study demonstrates how these pantuns serve not merely as entertainment but as powerful vehicles for cultural expression, moral instruction, and subtle social commentary. By juxtaposing opposing viewpoints on issues such as having a cleft-lipped wife, multiple spouses, a beautiful wife, a mute wife, or a disabled husband, the pantuns encourage critical reflection on societal norms and values. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of Malay literature and culture, showcasing how traditional poetic forms can be analyzed using modern literary theory to yield profound insights into cultural values and philosophical outlooks. Our findings highlight the pantun's vital role in preserving and transmitting cultural wisdom across generations while revealing the sophisticated literary techniques employed in Malay oral traditions.

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INTRODUCTION

Malay pantun, more than mere poetry, represents a vital cultural treasure within the rich heritage of the Malay people (Effendy, 2008). As a traditional art form deeply embedded in Malay culture, pantun serves not only as a means of expression but also as a manifestation of beauty imbued with profound symbolism (Braginsky, 2004). Pantun is employed in various contexts, from expressions of love and respect in daily life to conveying essential messages in formal events and traditional ceremonies. It functions to express its speakers' ideas and perspectives and reflect its creators' lives.

When composing Malay pantun, all experiences, beliefs, and philosophical expressions are grounded in the natural environment, demonstrating the close and unshakeable relationship between Malay society and nature. Nearly 85 percent of Malay Pantun uses nature as its theme, showing the near and unshakeable relationship between Malay society and nature (Nikmah, 2021).

In Malay culture, self-expression is often carried out through the interpretation of symbols, reflecting values of politeness in social interactions. This worldview produces noble values upheld by Malay society, making pantun a relevant instrument for communication (Hussain, 2005). The symbolic and metaphorical nature of pantun allows it to convey complex philosophical concepts and ideas (Muhammad, 2015). Therefore, ingenuity in creating meaningful pantun requires a deep understanding of Malay culture and the skill to connect words deftly and intelligently. The use of pantun in daily communication also reflects the politeness values upheld in Malay culture. This is in line with the findings of Rahmi et al. (2023) in their research on language politeness in the Kampar dialect Malay community, which is also part of the Malay family.

Pantun is one of the original forms of oral poetry that thrives in the Nusantara region, covering Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Southern Thailand/Pattani Malay, and Southern Philippines/Mindanao-Sulu-Palawan Malay. In Indonesia, pantun is not only favored by people of Malay ethnicity but also by various other ethnicities such as Acehnese, Javanese, Batak, Banjar, Sundanese, Kaili, Bima, Toraja, and Bugis (Harun, 2015).

However, in the contemporary context, the preservation and appreciation of pantun face significant challenges. The rapid pace of globalization and the pervasive influence of popular culture have led to a declining interest in traditional literary forms among Malay youth

(Ngibadiyah, 2022). There is a growing disconnect between younger generations and the deeper meanings embedded in pantun, particularly those employing sophisticated literary devices such as binary oppositions (Akbar, 2021). This disconnect threatens the survival of pantun as an art form and the transmission of cultural wisdom it encapsulates.

One of the primary issues facing Malay pantun is the declining interest among younger generations, particularly in understanding and appreciating its deeper meanings. This decline is significantly pronounced regarding pantuns that employ complex literary devices such as binary oppositions. Additionally, the intricate use of binary oppositions in pantun, a key element of its aesthetic and philosophical value, is increasingly misunderstood or overlooked by contemporary audiences. This lack of understanding impoverishes the interpretation of pantun, reducing a rich cultural artifact to mere rhyming verses without appreciating its more profound cultural significance.

The study of Malay pantun reveals the artistic and aesthetic qualities of literature and reflects the worldview and thoughts of Malay society. The pantun is a form of verse used in Malay culture to complement daily conversation, convey knowledge, satirize, educate, employ figures of speech, express emotion, and provide entertainment. Pantun not only serves as entertainment but also as an effective medium of proselytization in Malay society. Through pantun, moral values and religious teachings can be conveyed in an exciting and memorable way (Meylani, 2024). Additionally, the pantun reflects the Malay perspective on nature and possesses significant aesthetic value within the context of Malay oral tradition (Andriani, 2012).

This research focuses on the Malay people's understanding of binary opposition, which defines their belief in two opposing yet interconnected aspects of life (Ding, 2009). The literary analysis approach facilitates an understanding of how literature uses differences and contradictions to uncover deeper meanings (Culler, 2002). Malay pantun often employs binary opposition to illustrate the duality within individuals and life, encompassing interactions between life and death, joy and sorrow, as well as love and separation (Mulya, 2018).

Existing scholarship on Malay pantun has primarily focused on its cultural significance (Hussain, 2005), its role in preserving Malay wisdom (Muhammad, 2015), and its linguistic features (Ding, 2009). While these studies have contributed significantly to our understanding of

pantun, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding the specific use of binary oppositions in contemporary Malay pantun, particularly in the works of modern masters such as Tenas Effendy.

This study aims to address these issues and fill the identified research gap by comprehensively analyzing binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar." By focusing on this specific literary device within a contemporary collection of pantun, we offer insights into how traditional Malay wisdom and cultural values are encoded and transmitted through modern iterations of this art form.

The importance of this research is multifaceted: it contributes to the preservation of Malay cultural heritage by demonstrating the continued relevance and sophistication of pantun in addressing contemporary issues; it provides a deeper understanding of the sophisticated literary techniques employed in pantun, particularly the use of binary oppositions in creating nuanced meanings; it offers a framework for appreciating and interpreting pantun that can be used to revitalize interest among younger generations; and it explores how humorous pantun can serve as a vehicle for subtle yet powerful social critique through the use of binary oppositions.

Given the identified issues and research gap, this study seeks to answer the following questions: How are binary oppositions employed in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar" to convey Malay cultural values and wisdom? What themes and cultural concepts are predominantly expressed through these binary oppositions? How does using binary oppositions in humorous pantun contribute to the broader understanding of Malay philosophical outlooks and social commentary? How can studying binary oppositions in pantun enhance appreciation and understanding of Malay cultural heritage among contemporary audiences, particularly younger generations?

The primary objectives of this research are to analyze the application of binary oppositions in Effendy's work, demonstrating how this literary device functions as a sophisticated means of encapsulating complex cultural wisdom and philosophical concepts inherent in the Malay worldview to explore the themes and cultural concepts predominantly expressed through binary oppositions in "Pantun Kelakar"; to examine how the use of binary oppositions in humorous pantun contributes to social commentary and cultural critique; and to develop a framework for interpreting and appreciating pantun that can be used to revitalize interest in this art form among Malay youth.

Malay pantun is a form of oral literature rich in cultural values and local wisdom. As part of the broader Malay tradition, pantun has a vital role in conveying the teachings and values of the community. Malay oral traditions and manuscripts have been shown to encapsulate profound insights into life's complexities, offering potential for societal betterment. Historically, Malay rulers were renowned for their egalitarian approach, fostering harmonious societies that gave rise to significant literary works. These contributions, however, have yet to receive due recognition from scholars and practitioners. Higher education institutions cannot solely shoulder the extensive research required to explore this rich cultural heritage fully; it necessitates collaborative commitment from local governments to support efforts in revitalizing these traditions (Andalas, 2020).

Analyzing the application of binary opposition in Malay pantun provides a deep understanding of the Malay view on balance and harmony in life. Binary opposition functions as a tool to depict the inherent duality of universal balance, not merely contradictions. This concept reflects the Malay philosophical perspective that believes life always has two interconnected sides. It is essential to recognize and accept the opposing traits within humans.

The concept of binary opposition, as introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure in structural linguistics, forms the theoretical foundation of this research. Saussure emphasized the relative nature of language, where meaning is formed through differences and contrasts between its elements. He proposed that the relative nature of language drives binary opposition, that words are defined by their antonyms, and that the meaning of a word is closely related to its context in the language system. Saussure's 'systemic principle' describes the analytical approach of language structure as a system, where binary opposition is one of the essential practices for understanding how elements are interconnected in the broader system (Saussure, 2011).

In literary analysis, binary opposition facilitates a deeper understanding of how meaning is formed through contrast and comparison between elements of literary texts. It is used to develop impactful comparisons between opposing concepts such as life and death, dark and light, right and wrong, fortune and misfortune, happiness and sadness. This allows us to study how meaning emerges not only from words or phrases alone but also from comparisons and contrasts between opposing elements in the text (Saussure, 2011).

The concept of binary opposition is not exclusive to pantun; it is also evident in other forms

of Malay oral tradition, including folklore, folk poetry, and petatah petitih (Sugiharto, A. & Widyatwati, 2012). Additionally, binary opposition is a prominent concept in Malay proverbs, which further substantiates its pervasiveness in the Malay oral tradition (Andalas, 2020). Specifically in Malay pantun, binary opposition creates striking contrasts between its lines. We often find comparisons between opposing concepts, such as love and longing, happiness and sadness, or life and death. Malay pantun relies on binary opposition to convey meaning in a broader scope (Mulya, 2018), with contrasts often becoming symbols of life cycles or natural changes.

This research analyzes the concept of binary opposition in Malay culture by examining Pantun Kelakar by Tenas Effendy. Tenas Effendy, whose full name is Tengku Nasyaruddin Effendy, was born on November 9, 1936, in Kuala Panduk, Pelalawan, then part of the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). A prolific author and respected cultural figure, Effendy has significantly contributed to preserving and promoting Malay literature and culture. Throughout his illustrious career, he has authored sixty-six books published both domestically and internationally. His works span a wide range of topics within Malay literature and culture, including *"Ragam Pantun Melayu"* (Varieties of Malay Pantun), *"Pantun Nasehat"* (Advice Pantun), *"Tunjuk Ajar dalam Pantun Melayu"* (Guidance in Malay Pantun), *"Pemakaian Ungkapan dalam Perkawinan Melayu"* (The Use of Expressions in Malay Weddings), and *"Kelakar dalam Pantun Melayu"* (Humor in Malay Pantun), among others (Sunarsih, E., & Zulfahita, Z., 2022).

Effendy's contributions to Malay literature and culture have been widely recognized, earning him numerous accolades. He has been honored as a "Tokoh Pemimpin Adat Melayu Serumpun" (Figure of Malay Customary Leadership), "Tokoh Budayawan Riau Terfavorit" (Favorite Cultural Figure of Riau), and "Budayawan Pilihan Sagang" (Chosen Cultural Figure by Sagang). His influence extends beyond Indonesia, as evidenced by his recognition from the Malaysian Riau Student Association. These accolades underscore Effendy's significant role in preserving and promoting Malay cultural heritage.

In the context of our study, Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar" serves as a rich source of material for analyzing the use of binary oppositions in Malay literature. His deep understanding of Malay culture and mastery of the pantun form makes his work particularly valuable for exploring the nuanced ways in which Malay wisdom and cultural values are expressed through this traditional poetic form. The study aims to provide insights into how

universal balance can enrich and empower individuals and enhance understanding of Malay literature and culture. It focuses on two main aspects: in-depth analysis and description of binary opposition in pantun and the identification, exploration, and understanding of the opposing conditions depicted in pantun.

Field observations reveal a declining interest in pantun among Malay youth, with many struggling to interpret its deeper meanings, particularly those employing binary oppositions (Akbar, 2021). This study addresses the following questions: How is binary opposition used in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar" to convey Malay cultural values? What key themes are represented through these binary oppositions? How can understanding binary oppositions in pantun enhance appreciation of Malay cultural wisdom?

This research aims to uncover the complexity of the Malay worldview by analyzing binary oppositions in Effendy's work, contributing to efforts in revitalizing interest in pantun among younger generations (Ngibadiyah, 2022). The study seeks to answer these questions by examining how binary oppositions in pantun reflect Malay cultural attitudes, social norms, and philosophical perspectives.

By examining binary opposition in Malay pantun, this research facilitates a better understanding of the use of contrast and comparison in this poetic tradition. It allows us to delve deeper into hidden messages, philosophical implications, and cultural ideals integrated within it. The concept of binary opposition offers valuable insights to unravel and appreciate the richness and beauty of Malay pantun, thus expanding our understanding of how this culture represents differences and comparisons in a unique and valuable poetic form.

Through this analysis of Tenas Effendy's Pantun Kelakar, we aim to uncover the representation of duality in Malay worldviews and demonstrate how this literary work expresses Malay society's cultural and philosophical values. This study will contribute to a deeper understanding of Malay cultural values, philosophical perspectives, and the intricate ways these are expressed through the traditional art form of pantun.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the use of binary opposition in meaning within Tenas Effendy's collection of Malay pantun titled "Pantun Kelakar." The qualitative method is particularly suitable for this research as it allows for an in-depth exploration of cultural

phenomena and literary texts (Creswell, 2018). This approach facilitates a nuanced understanding of the complex cultural and linguistic aspects embedded in Malay pantun.

The primary data collection was conducted through the documentation method, focusing on the written source of "Pantun Kelakar" by Tenas Effendy (2004). This method is effective for literary studies as it allows for a thorough examination of the text in its original form (Bowen, 2009). From this book, ten pairs of pantun were purposively selected to ensure a comprehensive representation of binary opposition in meanings related to various aspects of Malay life and culture. The purposive sampling technique is appropriate for this study as it allows the researcher to focus on specific characteristics of interest, which is crucial for in-depth qualitative analysis (Patton, 2015).

Subsequently, observation was carried out through close reading and careful examination of each line of the selected pantun to identify the use of binary opposition in meaning (Katz-Buonincontro, 2018). The researcher scrutinized pairs of words, phrases, or concepts presented in opposition or contradiction within this pantun. This process involved aligning and comparing contrasting meanings to capture the nuances of duality in perspective that the pantun aims to convey. Close reading, as a method of literary analysis, allows for a detailed examination of the text's linguistic and thematic elements (Brummett, 2019). The analysis of binary opposition in Malay pantun can also be related to studying language and thought in Malay proverbs. Hamzah and Hassan (2011) showed that the language structure in Malay proverbs reflects the mindset and cultural values of the people.

The collected data were then subjected to in-depth analysis using qualitative analysis techniques such as close reading and contextual interpretation (Creswell, 2018). Close reading was performed to capture every detail and nuance implied in binary opposition. Meanwhile, contextual interpretation helped the researcher understand the broader and more profound meanings by considering the cultural context, philosophy, and worldview of Malay society that underlies the creation of this pantun.

The theoretical framework underpinning this research is the concept of binary opposition introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure in the field of structural linguistics (Saussure, 2011). Saussure emphasized the relative nature of language, where meaning is formed through differences and contrasts between its elements. This concept serves as a foundation for understanding how the use of binary opposition in Malay pantun can reveal

deeper meanings about the duality of the Malay worldview.

In addition, this research builds upon several previous studies that have explored the relevance of binary opposition in literary analysis, each contributing unique insights while also revealing areas for further investigation:

Wardani (2019) Examined binary oppositions in Charles Baudelaire's poem "Abel and Cain," demonstrating how this concept can be applied to Western poetry. While insightful, this study focused on a non-Malay context, leaving room for exploration of binary oppositions in Malay literary traditions.

Susilastri (2019) We analyzed binary oppositions in the short story "Tentang Perempuan (TPT)" by Benny Arnas, showcasing the concept's applicability to modern Indonesian literature. However, this research did not address traditional forms like pantun, indicating a gap in analyzing binary oppositions in classical Malay literature.

Bahardur (2018) We applied deconstruction theory to analyze binary oppositions in Budi Darma's "Kritikus Adinan," highlighting the concept's relevance in contemporary Indonesian prose. While this study broadened the application of binary opposition analysis, it did not explore its use in traditional poetic forms such as pantun.

These studies collectively demonstrate the versatility of binary opposition as an analytical tool across various literary genres and cultural contexts. However, they also reveal a significant research gap: the application of binary opposition analysis to traditional Malay poetic forms, particularly pantun. This gap is especially notable given the pantun's cultural significance and its potential to reveal deep-seated cultural values and worldviews through its use of contrasting elements.

Furthermore, while these studies effectively apply binary opposition analysis to individual literary works, they do not extensively explore how this concept might be used to understand broader cultural perspectives or philosophical outlooks. This presents an opportunity for our research to not only fill the gap in the analysis of Malay pantun but also to extend the application of binary opposition analysis to uncover deeper cultural insights.

By focusing on Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar," our study addresses these gaps, exploring how binary oppositions in traditional Malay pantun can reveal nuanced cultural attitudes, social norms, and philosophical perspectives. This approach enriches the theoretical and methodological basis for applying binary opposition analysis specifically to Malay pantun literature while contributing to a

broad understanding of how traditional literary forms encode and transmit cultural wisdom.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, triangulation methods were employed (Denzin, 2017). This included data triangulation (using multiple data sources), investigator triangulation (involving multiple researchers in the analysis process), and theoretical triangulation (applying multiple theoretical perspectives to interpret the data).

The analysis process followed the steps outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) For qualitative data analysis: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This systematic approach ensures a thorough and rigorous analysis of the pantun.

Ethical considerations were also taken into account, particularly in respecting the cultural significance of the pantun and ensuring an accurate representation of Malay cultural values. While the pantun analyzed are in the public domain, care was taken to interpret them within their appropriate cultural context.

By combining the qualitative descriptive approach, in-depth analysis of data, and a solid theoretical foundation, this research aims to reveal the representation of duality in Malay worldviews through the use of binary opposition in meaning in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar."

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

While our analysis focuses on binary oppositions, it is crucial to consider the broader structural and thematic elements of pantun. The essence of pantun is encapsulated within its two core lines. When closely examined, these lines reveal specific elements that embody aesthetic value, emotional depth, and moral wisdom. The interplay between these components contributes to the pantun's effectiveness as a medium for cultural expression and guidance (Sampoerno, 2021). In the context of Tenas Effendy's 'Pantun Kelakar', this structural characteristic enhances the impact of our identified binary oppositions. For instance, in the pantun discussing a cleft-lipped wife, the contrasting perspectives are not merely presented as opposing views but are embedded within lines that carry aesthetic appeal and emotional resonance. The line "*Sedang menangis tertawa juga*" (Even while crying, she also laughs) not only establishes a binary opposition but does so in a way that evokes a vivid image and emotional response.

Similarly, in the pantun about having multiple wives, the moral wisdom is conveyed through aesthetically pleasing and emotionally charged lines. The phrase "*Bila tak adil seluar terburai*" (If not fair, trousers come undone)

combines a powerful visual metaphor with a moral lesson, exemplifying how pantun efficiently integrates multiple layers of meaning within its concise structure.

This structural efficiency of pantun, where aesthetic, emotional, and moral elements are compressed into two key lines, amplifies the impact of the binary oppositions. It allows for a nuanced exploration of complex themes within a compact form, making pantun an effective vehicle for transmitting cultural values and social commentary. Moreover, this characteristic of pantun aligns with what Effendy (2008) Describes the multifaceted role of pantun in Malay society. The ability to convey deep wisdom, social critique, and emotional truths within a brief, aesthetically pleasing format contributes to the pantun's enduring relevance and impact in Malay culture.

Binary Opposition in the Meaning of Cleft Lip (*Bibir Sumbing*)

The first pair of pantuns analyzed presents contrasting perspectives on the condition of having a wife with a cleft lip:

*Ada untungnya berair bening
Senang ditipis rasa perisa
Ada untungnya berbini sumbing
Sedang menangis tertawa juga
Ada malangnya berair bening
Kurang bersih berubah warnanya
Ada malangnya berbini sumbing
Orang bersedih awak tertawa
(Effendy, 2004)*

These pantuns exemplify the nuanced application of binary opposition in Malay literature. The structural contrast between "*untung*" (fortune) and "*malang*" (misfortune) aligns with Saussure's concept of binary opposition in structural linguistics, where meaning is created through contrast (Saussure, 2011). This approach allows for a multifaceted exploration of a single condition, encouraging readers to consider different perspectives.

In the first pantun, the phrase "*Sedang menangis tertawa juga*" (Even while crying, she also laughs) ingeniously uses the physical appearance of a cleft lip to create a metaphor for constant joy. This positive framing challenges conventional perceptions of physical differences, aligning with the Malay cultural tendency to find wisdom and gratitude in all situations. As (Braginsky, 2004) Notes: Malay pantun often serves as a manifestation of beauty imbued with profound symbolism, reflecting deep cultural values.

Conversely, the second pantun presents the contrasting view with "*Orang bersedih awak tertawa*" (When others are sad, you laugh), framing the same condition as a potential social impediment. This juxtaposition serves multiple functions within the context of Malay literature and culture. Firstly, it acts as a form of social commentary, subtly addressing societal attitudes towards physical differences. By presenting both positive and negative perspectives, the pantuns encourage a more nuanced understanding of such conditions, aligning with the didactic role of pantuns in Malay society as tools for moral and social education (Effendy, 2008). Malay pantun can also serve to shape and foster pure values in an individual, as it contains implicit meanings and can be utilized as a conduit for character education (Akbar, 2021).

Moreover, binary opposition in these pantuns reflects the Malay philosophical view of duality in life. The cleft lip becomes a symbol for broader concepts of perception and reality, illustrating how physical attributes can be interpreted differently based on perspective. This approach demonstrates how pantuns function not merely as entertainment but as carriers of deep cultural wisdom, a concept explored by Muhammad (2015). In his work on the symbolic and metaphorical nature of pantun.

To further illustrate the binary opposition in these pantuns, we can summarize the contrasting elements in the following table:

Table 1. Binary Opposition in the Representation of Cleft Lip in Tenas Effendy's Pantun

Aspect	Positive Framing	Negative Framing
Emotional State	Constant joy	Social disconnect
Social Interaction	Cheerful presence	Misunderstood reactions
Perception of Condition	Unique blessing	Physical impediment
Philosophical Implication	Finding joy in adversity	Challenges of being different

This table visually represents how the same physical condition is framed in opposing ways, highlighting the complexity of the Malay worldview as expressed through pantuns.

The analysis of these pantuns supports our hypothesis that binary opposition in Malay pantuns illustrates the duality inherent in the Malay philosophical outlook. This duality is not a simple dichotomy but a complex interplay of perspectives, encouraging readers to consider multiple viewpoints on a single issue. As Ding (2009) The use of binarism in Malay pantun reflects a deep-

seated cultural practice of finding balance and harmony in all aspects of life.

Furthermore, this examination reveals how pantuns function as a form of cultural expression and preservation. By encapsulating complex philosophical ideas in accessible, memorable forms, pantuns serve as vehicles for transmitting cultural wisdom across generations. The use of familiar metaphors and everyday scenarios makes these profound concepts relatable to a broad audience, contributing to the enduring popularity and relevance of pantuns in Malay culture (Harun, 2015).

These findings contribute to the broader understanding of Malay literature and culture, demonstrating how traditional poetic forms can be analyzed using modern literary theory to yield insights into cultural values and worldviews. The consistent use of binary opposition in Tenas Effendy's work reflects a deep-rooted cultural practice of finding balance and wisdom in all aspects of life, an essential aspect of Malay philosophy, as noted in our introduction.

Binary Opposition in the Meaning of Having Multiple Wives (*Beristri Banyak*)

The next pair of pantuns we analyze explores the concept of polygamy, a practice with complex cultural and religious implications in Malay society:

*Ada malangnya membeli ternak
 Besar kecil berak di lantai
 Ada malangnya berbini banyak
 Bila tak adil seluar terburai
 Ada untungnya membeli ternak
 Bila dilepas dapat mengekas
 Ada untungnya berbini banyak
 Selera lepas tekak pun puas
 (Effendy, 2004)*

These pantuns demonstrate a sophisticated use of binary opposition to present contrasting views on the practice of having multiple wives. The juxtaposition of "*malang*" (misfortune) and "*untung*" (fortune) about polygamy reflects the complex attitudes towards this practice in Malay culture.

In the first pantun, the phrase "*Bila tak adil seluar terburai*" (If not fair, trousers come undone) employs a vivid metaphor to illustrate the potential negative consequences of polygamy. This line suggests that failing to treat multiple wives fairly could lead to chaotic and potentially disastrous situations. As Mir-Hosseini (2006) Notes in her study of Islamic family law, the emphasis on

fairness in polygamous marriages is a crucial aspect of Islamic teachings on the subject.

Conversely, the second pantun presents a more positive perspective on polygamy. The line "*Selera lepas tekak pun puas*" (Appetite satisfied, throat content) uses culinary metaphors to imply that having multiple wives can lead to various experiences and satisfaction. This representation reflects what Zeitzen (2008) It is described as the more hedonistic view of polygamy sometimes found in traditional societies, focusing on personal gratification.

The use of binary opposition in these pantuns serves multiple purposes, reflecting the multifaceted nature of Malay literary traditions. Primarily, it acts as a cultural mirror, demonstrating the complex attitudes towards polygamy in Malay society by acknowledging both its challenges and perceived benefits. This duality in representation aligns with what Hussain (2005) describes the pantun's role in reflecting societal values and norms. Furthermore, by presenting both perspectives, the pantuns fulfill a didactic function, encouraging critical thinking about the responsibilities and potential consequences of polygamy. This aspect of moral instruction is a crucial feature of Malay pantuns, as noted by Effendy (2008) in his study of pantun's social functions. Lastly, the contrasting views serve as a form of subtle social commentary, highlighting polygamy's potential for both satisfaction and conflict. This nuanced approach to social critique through literature is characteristic of Malay literary traditions, as observed by Muhammad (2015) in his analysis of pantun's role in Malay society. Through these multiple layers of meaning, the pantuns demonstrate their capacity to engage with complex social issues in a culturally resonant manner.

To further illustrate the binary opposition in these pantuns, we can summarize the contrasting elements in the following table:

Table 2. Binary Opposition in the Representation of Having Multiple Wives in Tenas Effendy's Pantun

Aspect	Positive Framing	Negative Framing
Consequence	Satisfaction (<i>tekak pun puas</i>)	Chaos (<i>seluar terburai</i>)
Moral	Personal	Fairness and
Emphasis	pleasure	responsibility
Social	Variety of	Potential for
Implication	experiences	conflict
Metaphorical	Food (personal	Clothing
Domain	enjoyment)	(social order)

This table illustrates how the pantuns use different domains (clothing and food) to

metaphorically represent the contrasting aspects of polygamy, further emphasizing the binary opposition.

The analysis of these pantuns aligns with Ding's (2009) the observation is that Malay pantuns often employ binarism to explore complex social issues. In this case, the binary opposition presents a nuanced view of polygamy, encouraging readers to consider its potential benefits and drawbacks.

Moreover, the use of everyday metaphors (clothing and food) to discuss a complex social issue demonstrates what Awang (2002) describes the pantun's ability to make abstract concepts accessible to a broad audience. This technique allows the pantuns to serve as a vehicle for social discourse, enabling the discussion of sensitive topics in a culturally appropriate manner.

The binary opposition in these pantuns also reflects the Malay philosophical concept of balance, as discussed by Harun (2015). By presenting both positive and negative aspects of polygamy, the pantuns encourage a balanced view of the practice, rather than a simplistic endorsement or condemnation.

In conclusion, the analysis of these pantuns reveals how Tenas Effendy uses binary opposition to explore the complex issue of polygamy in Malay society. Through this literary device, the pantuns serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of cultural reflection, moral instruction, and social commentary, demonstrating the multifaceted role of pantuns in Malay literature and culture.

Binary Opposition in the Meaning of Having a Beautiful Wife (*Beristri Cantik*)

The concept of having a beautiful wife is explored through another pair of pantuns in Tenas Effendy's work:

*Ada untungnya membeli badik
Dipegang saja oranglah takut
Ada untungnya berbini cantik
Memandang saja kenyanglah perut
Ada malangnya membeli badik
Dipegang tajam ditusuk luka
Ada malangnya berbini cantik
Siang dan malam duduk berjaga*
(Effendy, 2004)

These pantuns present contrasting perspectives on the implications of having a beautiful wife, establishing a binary opposition between fortune (*untung*) and misfortune (*malang*). This dichotomy reflects Malay culture's complex attitudes toward physical beauty and its perceived impact on marital relationships.

In the first pantun, having a beautiful wife is portrayed positively. The line "*Memandang saja kenyanglah perut*" (Just looking at her satisfies the stomach) employs a metaphor of satiety to convey the idea that the mere sight of a beautiful wife can bring contentment and joy to her husband. This representation aligns with what Hussain (2005) describes the cultural association between physical beauty and marital happiness in traditional Malay society.

Conversely, the second pantun presents a negative perspective. The line "*Siang dan malam duduk berjaga*" (Day and night, sitting guard) suggests that having a beautiful wife requires constant vigilance, presumably to ward off potential suitors or threats. This portrayal reflects societal anxieties about infidelity and the perceived challenges of being married to a woman considered highly attractive by others. As Cho Min Sung and Mat Zaid bin Hussein (2020) note that such representations in Malay literature often reflect deeper societal concerns about marital fidelity and gender roles.

The binary opposition in these pantuns serves a multifaceted purpose, offering profound insights into Malay cultural attitudes, social dynamics, and moral values. By juxtaposing contrasting views on physical beauty within marriage, these verses reveal the complex and sometimes contradictory perspectives held in Malay society. On the one hand, they acknowledge the allure and perceived benefits of having a beautiful wife. At the same time, they highlight the potential challenges and anxieties that such beauty might introduce into a marital relationship. This duality functions as a subtle yet powerful social commentary, critiquing societal obsessions with physical appearance and prompting readers to consider the more profound implications of valuing beauty above other qualities in a spouse.

Moreover, these pantuns offer valuable insights into traditional Malay perspectives on gender roles and expectations within marriage. They touch upon themes of male possessiveness and concerns about female fidelity, reflecting deeply ingrained cultural attitudes about marital relationships. By presenting both the advantages and disadvantages of having a beautiful wife, the pantuns encourage a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in Malay society.

Perhaps most significantly, this use of binary opposition catalyzes moral reflection. By presenting readers with two contrasting viewpoints, the pantuns invite contemplation on the actual value of physical beauty in a marital relationship. They challenge the audience to look beyond superficial attributes and consider the

more substantial qualities that contribute to a harmonious and fulfilling marriage. These verses fulfill a crucial didactic function, encouraging critical thinking and promoting a more holistic understanding of marital happiness and compatibility in Malay culture.

This use of binary opposition aligns with what Braginsky (2004) describes the pantun's role in encapsulating complex cultural values and social norms in a concise, memorable format.

To further illustrate the binary opposition in these pantuns, we can summarize the contrasting elements in the following table:

Table 3. Binary Opposition in the Representation of Having a Beautiful Wife in Tenas Effendy's Pantun

Aspect	Positive Framing	Negative Framing
Emotional Impact	Contentment (<i>kenyanglah perut</i>)	Anxiety (<i>duduk berjaga</i>)
Marital Dynamic	Source of joy	Source of concern
Social Implication	Personal satisfaction	Potential threats from others
Time Frame	Momentary pleasure	Constant vigilance

This table illustrates how the pantuns use different aspects to represent the contrasting views on having a beautiful wife, emphasizing the binary opposition in the cultural perception of beauty in marriage.

The analysis of these pantuns demonstrates how Tenas Effendy employs binary opposition to explore the nuanced cultural attitudes towards physical beauty in marriage. By presenting positive and negative perspectives, the pantuns encourage a more critical examination of societal values and personal relationships, fulfilling the didactic function of traditional Malay literature described by Effendy (2008) in his study of pantun's social roles. In analyzing the pantun about having a beautiful wife, we can see elements of romanticism and humor that often appear in classical and contemporary Malay poetry. Salleh (2006) in his study of Malay world poetry asserts that these elements are distinctive features that enrich the Malay literary tradition.

Binary Opposition in the Meaning of Having a Mute Wife (*Beristri Bisu*)

The concept of having a mute wife is explored through another pair of pantuns in Tenas Effendy's work:

Ada untungnya membeli jambu
Bila besar rasanya sedap
Ada untungnya berbini bisu
Bila bertengkar tidak menjawab
Ada malangnya membeli pasu
Bila terbalik tentulah pecah
Ada malangnya berbini bisu
Bila berbisik tak tentu arah
 (Effendy, 2004)

These two pantuns present contrasting perspectives on the implications of having a mute wife, establishing a binary opposition between fortune (*untung*) and misfortune (*malang*). This dichotomy reflects the complex attitudes towards disability in Malay culture and its perceived impact on marital relationships.

In the first pantun, having a mute wife is portrayed positively. The line "*Bila bertengkar tidak menjawab*" (When arguing, she does not answer back) employs the wife's inability to speak as an advantage in marital disputes. This representation aligns with what Hussain (2005) describes the cultural value of harmony and conflict avoidance in traditional Malay society. The pantun suggests that the wife's muteness can prevent arguments from escalating, as she cannot verbally respond during disagreements.

Conversely, the second pantun presents a negative perspective. The line "*Bila berbisik tak tentu arah*" (When whispering, the direction is uncertain) suggests that the wife's muteness creates communication challenges, particularly in intimate or private moments. This portrayal reflects the importance of verbal communication in marital relationships and the potential difficulties that arise when this form of expression is unavailable.

The use of binary opposition in these pantuns serves multiple purposes, reflecting the multifaceted nature of Malay literary traditions. Primarily, it acts as a cultural mirror, demonstrating the complex attitudes towards disability in Malay society by acknowledging its challenges and perceived benefits. This duality in representation aligns with what Effendy (2008) describes the pantun's role in reflecting societal values and norms.

Furthermore, by presenting both perspectives, the pantuns fulfill a didactic function, encouraging critical thinking about the nature of communication in marriage and how couples can interact beyond the verbal exchange. This aspect of moral instruction is a crucial feature of Malay pantuns, as noted by Muhammad (2015) in his study of pantun's social roles.

Lastly, the contrasting views serve as subtle social commentary, highlighting the potential for finding unexpected blessings in what might initially be perceived as a disadvantage. This nuanced approach to disability and marital dynamics is characteristic of Malay literary traditions, as observed by Braginsky (2004) in his analysis of symbolic and metaphorical elements in Malay literature (Syam, 2022).

To further illustrate the binary opposition in these pantuns, we can summarize the contrasting elements in the following table:

Table 4. Binary Opposition in the Representation of Having a Mute Wife in Tenas Effendy's Pantun

Aspect	Positive Framing	Negative Framing
Conflict Resolution	Prevents escalation of arguments	Hinders effective communication
Intimate Communication	N/A	Challenges in private moments
Marital Dynamics	Promotes harmony through silence	Creates potential misunderstandings
Philosophical Implication	Finding unexpected blessings	Acknowledging communication challenges

This table illustrates how the pantuns use different aspects to represent the contrasting views on having a mute wife, emphasizing the binary opposition in the cultural perception of disability in marriage.

The analysis of these pantuns demonstrates how Tenas Effendy employs binary opposition to explore the nuanced cultural attitudes towards disability in marriage. By presenting both positive and negative perspectives, the pantuns encourage a more critical examination of societal values and personal relationships, fulfilling the didactic function of traditional Malay literature as described by Cho Min Sung and Mat Zaid bin Hussein (2020) in their study of pantun's cultural roles.

In conclusion, these pantuns reflect the Malay philosophical concept of finding wisdom and gratitude in all situations, as discussed by Harun (2015). By presenting contrasting meanings of having a mute wife, the pantuns offer insights into the Malay worldview, inviting readers to appreciate the complexities of marital relationships and the unexpected ways in which challenges can become blessings.

Binary Opposition in the Meaning of Having a Disabled Husband (*Bersuami Lumpuh*)

The concept of having a disabled husband is explored through another pair of pantuns in Tenas Effendy's work:

*Ada untungnya membeli suluh
Djilat api selalu menyala
Ada untungnya berlaki lumpuh
Dapat menjadi penunggu rumah
Ada malangnya membeli suluh
Diberi api cepat terbakar
Ada malangnya berlaki lumpuh
Dimaki bini tak dapat mengejar*
(Effendy, 2004)

These two pantuns present contrasting perspectives on the implications of having a disabled (specifically, paralyzed) husband, establishing a binary opposition between fortune (*untung*) and misfortune (*malang*). This dichotomy reflects the complex attitudes towards disability in Malay culture and its perceived impact on marital relationships.

In the first pantun, having a paralyzed husband is portrayed positively. The line "*Dapat menjadi penunggu rumah*" (Can become a house guardian) frames the husband's immobility as an advantage, suggesting that he can always be relied upon to watch over the home. This representation aligns with what Effendy (2008) describes the Malay cultural tendency to find wisdom and gratitude in all situations, even those typically perceived as unfortunate.

Conversely, the second pantun presents a negative perspective. The line "*Dimaki bini tak dapat mengejar*" (When scolded by the wife, cannot chase) suggests that the husband's paralysis creates an imbalance in the marital power dynamic, as he cannot physically respond to his wife's anger. This portrayal reflects societal expectations of male authority in traditional Malay marriages, as noted by Hussain (2005) in his study of Malay cultural values.

The use of binary opposition in these pantuns serves multiple purposes, reflecting the multifaceted nature of Malay literary traditions. Primarily, it acts as a cultural mirror, demonstrating the complex attitudes towards disability in Malay society by acknowledging its challenges and perceived benefits. This duality in representation aligns with what Muhammad (2015) describes the pantun's role in reflecting societal values and norms.

Furthermore, by presenting both perspectives, the pantuns fulfill a didactic function, encouraging critical thinking about the nature of

marital relationships and how couples can adapt to challenging circumstances. This aspect of moral instruction is a crucial feature of Malay pantuns, as noted by Braginsky (2004) in his analysis of symbolic and metaphorical elements in Malay literature.

Lastly, the contrasting views serve as a form of subtle social commentary, highlighting the potential for finding unexpected blessings in what might initially be perceived as a disadvantage while also acknowledging the real challenges that disability can bring to a marriage. This nuanced approach to disability and marital dynamics is characteristic of Malay literary traditions, as observed by Cho Min Sung and Mat Zaid bin Hussein (2020) in their study of pantun's cultural roles

To further illustrate the binary opposition in these pantuns, we can summarize the contrasting elements in the following table:

Table 5. Binary Opposition in the Representation of Having a Disabled Husband in Tenas Effendy's Pantun

Aspect	Positive Framing	Negative Framing
Role in the Household	Reliable house guardian	Unable to fulfill traditional male roles
Marital Power Dynamic	N/A	Shift in power balance favoring the wife
Contribution to Family	Constant presence at home	Limited physical capabilities
Philosophical Implication	Finding blessings in adversity	Acknowledging the challenges of disability

This table illustrates how the pantuns use different aspects to represent the contrasting views on having a disabled husband, emphasizing the binary opposition in the cultural perception of disability in marriage.

The analysis of these pantuns demonstrates how Tenas Effendy employs binary opposition to explore the nuanced cultural attitudes towards disability in marriage. By presenting both positive and negative perspectives, the pantuns encourage a more critical examination of societal values and personal relationships, fulfilling the didactic function of traditional Malay literature as described by Harun (2015) in his study of pantun's social functions.

In conclusion, these pantuns reflect the Malay philosophical concept of finding wisdom and balance in all situations. By presenting contrasting meanings of having a disabled husband, the

pantuns offer insights into the Malay worldview, inviting readers to appreciate the complexities of marital relationships and the unexpected ways challenges can become blessings.

Implications for Cultural Preservation and Youth Education

The analysis of binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's pantuns provides insights into the complexity of Malay literature and highlights the importance of preserving local wisdom in the face of globalization. There is a concerning trend of young generations showing less interest in their local cultural heritage, including traditional forms like pantun. This disengagement becomes more worrying considering the increasing attraction to global popular culture that often diverges from local values (Ngibadiyah, 2022).

However, as evidenced in our analysis of Effendy's pantuns, the local wisdom embedded in the pantun tradition holds profound relevance for character formation. The binary oppositions found in these pantuns demonstrate how traditional Malay literature can convey complex moral messages and a nuanced understanding of life. For instance, pantuns about having a beautiful wife or a disabled husband convey values such as loyalty, understanding, and acceptance through sophisticated binary structures.

Preserving local wisdom, including the pantun tradition, is crucial for shaping the character of younger generations by societal values. Pantuns, with their binary opposition structures, offer a unique way to understand life's complexities and teach wisdom in facing moral dilemmas. Moreover, understanding the binary structure in pantuns can be a means to develop critical thinking skills among youth, enhancing their ability to see multiple sides of an issue - a valuable skill in navigating the complexities of the modern world.

Therefore, this study on binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's pantuns contributes to the academic understanding of Malay literature and underscores the urgency of revitalizing interest in local wisdom among younger generations. This effort is essential to ensure that the cultural values embedded in the pantun tradition can continue to provide moral guidance and character formation for future generations while remaining relevant in an ever-changing global context.

CONCLUSION

This study has illuminated the intricate use of binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's "Pantun Kelakar," revealing a sophisticated literary technique that encapsulates the complexity of Malay cultural wisdom. Through careful analysis of

selected pantuns, we have demonstrated how this poetic form is a powerful vehicle for expressing the duality inherent in the Malay worldview.

The consistent application of binary opposition in Effendy's work reflects a deep-rooted cultural practice of finding balance and wisdom in all aspects of life, a fundamental tenet of Malay philosophy. Our research has shown that pantuns function not merely as entertainment but as multifaceted cultural artifacts that simultaneously serve as instruments of moral instruction, social commentary, and cultural preservation.

The juxtaposition of contrasting perspectives on physical appearance, disability, and marital dynamics provides a nuanced exploration of complex social issues, encouraging critical reflection and fostering a deeper understanding of Malay cultural values.

By employing everyday metaphors to convey abstract concepts, these pantuns make profound philosophical ideas accessible to a broad audience, thus playing a crucial role in the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge.

This study contributes to the broader understanding of Malay literature and culture, demonstrating how traditional poetic forms can be analyzed using modern literary theory to yield insights into cultural values and worldviews. The implications of this research extend beyond literary analysis, offering valuable insights into Malay cultural attitudes, social norms, and philosophical perspectives. By examining how binary oppositions are used to explore complex issues, we gain a deeper appreciation of the Malay approach to reconciling contrasting ideas and finding harmony in diversity.

This research enhances our understanding of Malay literary traditions and opens avenues for future studies exploring the evolution and adaptation of these literary devices in contemporary Malay literature. Ultimately, this analysis of binary oppositions in Tenas Effendy's work provides a valuable lens through which to view the rich tapestry of Malay cultural heritage, contributing to our understanding of this critical aspect of Southeast Asian literary and philosophical traditions.

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