

Semantic Contrastive Analysis of the Adjectives *Usui* and *Tipis* in Japanese and Indonesian

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Abstract

This study compares the semantic similarities and differences between the Japanese adjective *usui* and the Indonesian adjective *tipis*. Using a qualitative method based on Koyanagi's linguistic phenomena, data were collected from a Japanese language corpus such as nlb.ninjal.ac.jp from 1985 to 2005 and news articles in both Japanese and Indonesian (asahi.com, nhk.co.jp, jawapos.com, cnbcindonesia.com, antaranews.com and tribunnews.com from 2015 to 2024). The findings reveal seven shared meanings: (1) a short distance between two surfaces, (2) thin layers, (3) low gas density, (4) sparse hair or fur, (5) minimal impact or benefit, (6) subtle emotional expression, and (7) weak belief or confidence. Differences in semantic scope were also identified. *Usui* includes additional meanings such as (1) pale in color, (2) diluted, and (3) bland in taste or senses that not present in *tipis*. Conversely, *tipis* also conveys the meaning of (1) being easily irritated, which is not found in *usui*. Additionally, the study identifies instances of *icchi*, *ketsujou*, and *shinki*. These findings offer valuable insights that may benefit beginner to semi-advanced Japanese language learners and Japanese language teaching, particularly in the field of language education and semantic understanding.

Keywords: Semantics; Lexical meanings; Contrastive analysis; Adjectives; Japanese languages; Indonesian languages; *usui*; *tipis*

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1. Introduction

One of the word classes frequently used and studied in language practice is the adjective. Adjectives are one of the word classes in language (Kridalaksana, 2005). Adjectives exist to provide specific descriptions regarding something expressed by the noun in a sentence (Tasman et al., 2023). In many cases, adjectives in a language possess more than one meaning. This necessitates a clear understanding of both their differences and similarities, in terms of both

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meaning and grammar (Saputri et al., 2025). The multiplicity of meanings calls for adequate comprehension regarding the transfer from the first language (L1) to the second language (L2). The similarities between the first and second languages influence the ease of language acquisition, a phenomenon referred to as transfer (Dessari et al., 2023; Riyanti, 2020). Conversely, negative transfer, or differences between L1 and L2, may pose obstacles in the process of language learning (Ghaisani et al., 2023; Mutoharoh et al., 2018).

Adjectives often have multiple meanings, which can complicate the learning process. This challenge is experienced not only by students but also by instructors of the Japanese language (Sutedi & Widiyanti, 2016). Errors made by Japanese language learners often stem from misinterpretations between their first and second languages (Putri & Soepardjo, 2019). In a brief survey conducted among several Japanese language learners at a university in Yogyakarta, approximately 42% of students reported difficulty in using adjectives in sentences due to a lack of in-depth understanding of several adjectives.

From the previous studies, it can be concluded that adjectives constitute an important element in language. In language acquisition, difficulty may arise when a given word being learned is polysemous. One such polysemous word is *usui* in Japanese and *tipis* in Indonesian. The adjectives *usui* and *tipis* share several meanings but also exhibit differences. One example of the similarities and differences between *usui* and *tipis* is as follows.

- (1) 酢に引かれる分、焼き魚の塩よりわずかに強めで、置く時間は小さく身の薄いものは20~30分、大きくても1時間ほどです。(asahi.com, 2024)

Su ni hikareru bun, yakizakana no shio yori wazuka ni tsuyome de, oku jikan wa chiisaku mi no usui mono wa 20~30 pun, ōkikute mo 1 jikan hodo desu.

‘Because the vinegar will attract more salt, use a little more salt than you would for grilled fish. For small, thin fish, leave it for 20 to 30 minutes, and for large fish, leave it for about an hour.’

- (2) *InBook Air Pro+ hadir sebagai laptop tipis ringan dengan bobot diklaim hanya 1 kilogram.* (jawapos.com, 2024)

‘The InBook Air Pro+ is a thin, light laptop with a claimed weight of only 1 kilogram.’

- (3) アニータは薄いピンクのドレス姿。(asahi.com, 2024)

Anita wa usui pinku no doresu sugata.
Anita wore a pale pink dress.

Based on examples (1) and (2), it can be seen that the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* both refer to a small or narrow distance between opposing surfaces in an object. In these two examples, the Japanese adjective *usui* can be translated as *tipis* in Indonesian, and vice versa. However, example (3) shows that *usui* does not only mean “thin” but can also be used to indicate a pale or light color. The differences in usage between the two languages can make the context difficult to interpret (Sutedi et al., 2024). This is due to the lack of equivalence between L1 and L2 (Burhanudin & Sukmara, 2020), and such issues may present challenges for both teachers and learners in understanding and using the adjective *usui*. This is supported by Jingyi (2022), who

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states that adjectives are among the most frequently occurring words in reading textbooks. *Usui* is also a qualitative adjective that plays an important role in providing clear descriptions, a point supported by its 4,800 instances of usage in the BCCJW Corpus.

Previous studies have not yet specifically addressed a contrastive analysis between the Japanese adjective *usui* and the Indonesian adjective *tipis*. However, several earlier studies have examined similar topics. For instance, Backhouse (2006) investigated the differences in usage between the adjective *usui* and similar English vocabulary. The analysis revealed that, of ten indicators used, there were six points of similarity and four points of difference between the two languages. Furthermore, Melano et al. (2021) studied *koi* and *usui* in terms of their polysemy. The results indicated that, beyond their core meanings, both *koi* and *usui* also have several extended meanings. Nisa N. F. (2018) conducted a contrastive analysis of the Japanese adjective *wakai* and the Indonesian adjective *muda*, focusing on basic and extended meanings, as well as the relationships between the meanings of both adjectives. Additionally, Qiu (2015) examined a contrastive study of the Japanese and Chinese languages, specifically the adjectives *atsui-usui* and *hou-bó*. Finally, Trahutami (2021) explored the comparative meanings of the Japanese verb *tsukuru* and the Indonesian verb *membuat*. Previous research discussing the *usui* had been formulated by Melano et al. (2021) in the aspect of polysemic studies of *usui* while this research emphasizes on the perspective of contrastive analysis between *usui* and *tipis* based on semantic similarities.

A review of previous studies reveals a research gap that this study seeks to address, namely the lack of contrastive analysis between the Japanese adjective *usui* and the Indonesian adjective *tipis*. Few that had studied before that was similar to this topic are focused on mostly polysemic perspective or contrastive but to other languages but Bahasa Indonesia.

Therefore, this study focuses on examining the similarities and differences in the use of the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* in Japanese and Indonesian. This can be approached through a contrastive analysis study using a correspondence technique based on linguistic phenomena proposed by Koyanagi (2004), which include the phenomena of *icchi* (correspondence), *ketsujyo* (absence), *shinki* (novelty), *bunretsu* (splitting), and *yougou* (merging).

2. Methods

This study employs a contrastive analysis method. This method is used to compare the first language and the second language (Ara, 2021). The data used in this research are in the form of *jitsurei* (real-life examples) obtained from Japanese and Indonesian online sources, including asahi.com, nhk.or.jp, jawapos.com, cnbcindonesia.com, antaranews.com and tribunnews.com, all collected from the years 2015 to 2024. In addition, corpus data are sourced from Japanese online corpora such as nlb.ninjal.ac.jp gathered between 1985 to 2005. All data was focused on topics about quality of items, weather, social issues to politics.

In determining the meanings of the adjectives *usui* and *tipis*, to compile the meanings of the adjective *usui*, the following sources were used: *Gendai Keiyoushi Youhou Jiten* (Asada & Hida, 1991), *Meikyou Japanese Dictionary* (Kitahara, 2002), *Saiseido Kokugo Jiten* 8th Edition (Hidetoshi et al., 2021), and the study by Melano about polysemy in *koi* and *usui* (2021). Meanwhile, the meanings of the Indonesian adjective *tipis* were gathered from the Tesaurus

Bahasa Indonesia (Endarmoko, 2007) and the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 4th Edition (National Department of Education, 2008).

The collected data are then organized into data cards, which serve as instruments in this study. Subsequently, the sentences containing the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* will be compared to identify their similarities and differences. The data will then be categorized according to Koyanagi's (2004) theory, which includes the phenomena of *icchi* (correspondence), *ketsujou* (absence), *shinki* (novelty), *bunretsu* (splitting), and *yougou* (merging). Finally, conclusions will be drawn regarding which meanings are equivalent and which are not between the two languages.

3. Result and Discussion

This study identified seven similarities and four differences in meaning between the Japanese adjective *usui* and the Indonesian adjective *tipis*. This section presents several example sentences that illustrate the meanings of both adjectives.

3.1 Similarities between the Adjectives *Usui* and *Tipis*

The shared meanings between the Japanese adjective *usui* and the Indonesian adjective *tipis* include: (1) small distance between object surfaces, (2) thin layers, (3) low gas density, (4) sparsity (e.g., of hair), (5) low or insignificant impact, (6) faint emotions, and (7) weak trust. Below is an explanation of the similarities in usage for each of these meanings.

3.1.1. *Usui* vs. *Tipis* meaning 'a small distance between surfaces'

- (1) 薄くて柔らかいディスプレイが実現すると、壁一面がテレビになったり、紙のように丸めて持ち運んだりなど、コンテンツの新しい楽しみ方が広がります。(nhk.co.jp, 2022)

Usukute yawarakai disupurē ga jitsugen suru to, kabe ichimen ga terebi ni nattari, kami no yō ni marumete mochi hakondari nado, kontentsu no atarashii tanoshimikata ga hirogarimasu.

'When flexible and thin displays are realized, entire walls can become televisions or be rolled up like paper and carried, thus expanding new ways of enjoying content.'

- (2) Pabrik smartphone asal China Xiaomi merilis smartphone lipat Xiaomi MIX Fold 2 yang diklaim sebagai ponsel dengan layar paling tipis. (cnnindonesia.com, 2022)

'The Chinese smartphone manufacturer Xiaomi released the foldable smartphone Xiaomi MIX Fold 2, which is claimed to have the thinnest display.'

In example (1), the adjective *usui* modifies *disupurē* (display), functioning to describe a screen that is thin and flexible. The phrase *usukute yawarakai disupurē* can be translated as 'thin and flexible display'. This shows that *usui* refers to the very small distance between opposite surfaces of the screen, making it highly elastic and portable. Similarly, in example (2), the adjective *tipis* also describes the thinness and sleekness of a smartphone display. The context in both sentences is comparable, referring to the same physical characteristic. This aligns with Melano et al. (2021), who state that *usui/tipis* generally imply a lack of substance thinness is evident through touch or visual perception. According to Koyanagi (2004), this is a case of *icchi* (semantic equivalence), as both terms express the same concept in their respective languages.

3.1.2. *Usui* vs. *Tipis* meaning ‘less thick’

- (3) 「自分の主張をするのは、代金のとれる腕前になってからにしろ」しかたなく、薄い化粧をして店に出始めた。(asahi.com, 2023)
“Jibun no shuchō o suru no wa, daikin ga toreru udemae ni natte kara ni shiro.” Shikatanaku, usui keshō o shite mise ni dehajimeta.
“‘Make your case only when you’re skilled enough to be paid for it.’ Reluctantly, she started appearing at the store wearing light makeup.’
- (4) Untuk riasan sehari-hari, Aubry memilih tak menggunakannya terlalu tebal alias cukup dengan light make-up, yakni bedak tipis, perias alis, blush on dan lipstick. (antaranews.com, 2016)
‘For daily makeup, Aubry prefers not to use it thickly—just light make-up: thin powder, eyebrow makeup, blush, and lipstick.’

In example (3), the adjective *usui* modifies *keshō* (makeup), indicating that the makeup is light or not thick. This means that the character wore makeup that was lighter than usual. In example (4), the adjective *tipis* functions similarly to describe the thin application of powder, implying a makeup layer that is not too thick. Thus, both *usui* and *tipis* convey the same meaning something being not thick and can be considered equivalents. Therefore, following Koyanagi’s (2004) theory, these examples constitute an *icchi* phenomenon since the meanings align in both languages.

3.1.3. *Usui* vs. *Tipis* meaning ‘low gas density’

- (5) 大気が薄い高地は、宇宙から降り注ぐ素粒子の観測に適している。(nlb.ninjal.ac.jp, 2003)
Taiki ga usui kōchi wa, uchū kara furisosogu soryūshi no kansoku ni tekishite iru.
‘High-altitude regions with thin atmosphere are ideal for observing elementary particles from outer space.’
- (6) Sedangkan malam hari, cuaca di ibukota Provinsi Kepulauan Bangka Belitung itu akan didominasi awan tipis. (tribunnews.com, 2024)
‘Meanwhile, at night, the weather in the capital of the Bangka Belitung Islands will be dominated by thin clouds.’

In example (5), the adjective *usui* describes the atmosphere as thin, referring to its low gas concentration. The atmosphere consists of a layer of gases, so *taiki ga usui* implies that the atmosphere is less dense. Similarly, in example (6), *tipis* refers to the thinness of the clouds at night over the capital of Bangka Belitung Province. Since clouds are made of water vapor (gas), the thin clouds indicate a low gas density. According to the KBBI (2016), *awan tipis* refers to a less dense vapor cloud. Thus, *usui* and *tipis* both describe low gas concentration, forming an *icchi* phenomenon based on Koyanagi’s (2004) theory as their meanings correspond in both languages.

3.1.4. *Usui* vs. *Tipis* meaning ‘thin hair or sparse hair’

- (7) 私も経る年には耐えなければならぬですよ、コンスタンス」ワトソンは頭のはげた箇所に渡された薄い髪をなでた。(nlb.ninjal.ac.jp, 2003)
Watashi mo heru toshi ni wa taenakereba naranain desu yo, Konsutansu, "Watosun wa atama no hageka kasho ni watasareta usui kami o nadeta.

“I must also endure the advancing years, Constance,” said Watson as he stroked the thin hair covering his bald spot.’

- (8) *Pria itu juga mengenakan kaca mata hitam dan janggut tipis di wajahnya.* (antaranews.com, 2015)

‘The man also wore sunglasses and had a thin beard on his face.’

In example (7), the adjective *usui* indicates Watson’s thin or sparse hair that barely covers his bald head. In this context, *usui* denotes hair with low volume. Similarly, in example (8), *tipis* describes the man’s sparse facial hair, which refers to a beard that is not thick. Thus, both *usui* and *tipis* denote sparsity or low volume in hair. Based on this, *usui* and *tipis* correspond in meaning, constituting an *icchi* phenomenon as defined by Koyanagi (2004).

3.1.5. *Usui* vs. *Tipis* meaning ‘insignificant or minimal impact’

- (9) さらに行政事業レビューを活用し、効果の薄い事業はゼロベースで見直すとしています。(nhk.co.jp, 2024)

Sara ni gyōsei jigyō review o katsuyō shi, kōka no usui jigyō wa zero-bēsu de minaosu to shiteimasu.

‘They also plan to use administrative project reviews to re-evaluate projects with minimal impact from the ground up.’

- (10) *Kenaikan laba bersih yang cukup signifikan didapatkan dari pendapatan perseroan yang ternyata hanya tumbuh tipis...* (cnbcindonesia.com, 2024)

‘The significant increase in net profit resulted from the company’s revenue that, in fact, only increased slightly...’

In example (9), *usui* refers to projects with minimal or insignificant impact. Idiomatically, this means that the outcomes of the projects were minor. Likewise, in example (10), *tipis* refers to a marginal increase in revenue, indicating a slight or insignificant profit. Thus, both *usui* and *tipis* refer to minimal or insignificant gain or development. Therefore, these usages demonstrate an *icchi* phenomenon as defined by Koyanagi (2004), since the meanings in both languages align.

3.1.6. *Usui* vs *Tipis* Meaning ‘Faint Emotion’

- (11) 最終第5試合を左足をつりかけながら戦ったエースは、3位決定戦への意気込みを聞かれ、薄い笑いを浮かべた。(asahi.com, 2024)

Saishū dai 5 shiai o hidari ashi o tsuri kakena gara tatakatta ēsu wa, san'i kettei-sen e no ikigomi o kikare, usui warai o ukabeta.

‘The ace, who competed in the final fifth match while nearly cramping his left leg, responded to a question about his determination for the third-place match with a faint smile.’

- (12) *Saat ditangkap polisi, suami Cut Intan Nabila, Armor Toreador masih bisa tersenyum tipis.* (jawapos.com, 2024)

‘When arrested by the police, Cut Intan Nabila’s husband, Armor Toreador, was still able to offer a faint smile.’

In sentence (11), the adjective *usui* modifies the noun *warai* (smile/laughter), expressing a subtle or faint expression. This denotes a subdued emotion—an emotion that is not expressed excessively. In both examples, the emotional expression manifested is a “faint smile.” Lexically, a faint smile is defined as a weak or subdued smile, often lacking enthusiasm. Idiomatically, *usui warai* in (11) conveys resignation or a lack of spirit from the ace, who is physically exhausted and no longer fully committed to the match. Thus, *usui warai* indicates diminished or weary motivation. Similarly, in (12), the phrase ‘*tersenyum tipis*’ (faint smile) shows the emotional state of Cut Intan Nabila’s husband upon arrest. Therefore, based on Koyanagi’s (2004) theory, the usage of the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* represents a case of *icchi* phenomenon, in which both expressions in Japanese (L1) and Indonesian (L2) are semantically equivalent.

3.1.7. *Usui* vs *Tipis* Meaning ‘Weak Belief or Faith’

- (13) そうして狐に向い、「おまえたちは宗教心が薄いからわたしの生れ故郷である大事な大事な四国に住ませるわけには行かぬ、出てお行き」とおっしゃったのも弘法大師様なのだよ。(nlb.ninjal.ac.jp, 1985)

“*Sōshite kitsune ni mukai, ‘Omaetachi wa shūkyō-shin ga usui kara watashi no umare kokyō de aru daiji na daiji na Shikoku ni suwaseru wake ni wa ikan, dete oiki,’ to osshatta no mo Kōbō Daishi-sama na no da yo.*”

‘It was Kobo Daishi himself who turned to the fox and said, “Because your religious faith is weak, I cannot allow you to live in my precious birthplace, Shikoku. Leave at once.”’

- (14) *Dalam sambutannya, Johannes Rettob menyebut saat ini hampir tipis kepercayaan masyarakat terhadap pemerintah.* (tribunnews.com, 2024)

‘In his speech, Johannes Rettob stated that public trust in the government is now nearly depleted.’

In sentence (13), the adjective *usui* modifies the noun *shūkyō-shin* (religious faith), signifying weak or lacking faith. *Usui* in this context denotes a deficiency in something internal or abstract—in this case, religious belief. Similarly, in sentence (14), the adjective *tipis* describes the noun *kepercayaan* (trust), indicating a fragile or almost lost public confidence in the government. Here, *tipis* functions similarly to *usui*, conveying a diminished belief or trust. Therefore, according to Koyanagi’s (2004) theory, these two examples represent the *icchi* phenomenon, as both languages express the same semantic concept through corresponding adjectives.

3.2 Differences in Meaning between *Usui* and *Tipis*

This section discusses the semantic differences between the Japanese adjective *usui* and its Indonesian counterpart *tipis*. These differences can be classified into several senses: pale color, diluted solutions, and bland taste for *usui*, and being emotionally sensitive or easily offended for *tipis*. The following subsections elaborate on the distinctions in usage between these senses.

3.2.1. *Usui* vs *Tipis* in the Sense of ‘Pale/Light Color’

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- (15) 薄いピンクに緑と黒、ベージュに鮮やかなミントグリーン、随所に派手な蛍光色を織り交ぜるなど、色使いの巧みさが際立つ。(asahi.com, 2023)

Usui pinku ni midori to kuro, bēju ni azayaka na minto gurīn, zuisho ni hade na keikōshoku o orimazeru nado, irozukai no takumisa ga kiwadasu.

‘A pale pink is combined with green and black, beige with vibrant mint green, and bright neon colors are interspersed throughout. The skill in color usage is particularly striking.’

In example (15), the adjective *usui* modifies the loanword *pinku* (pink). The lexical meaning of *usui* in this context is a light or pale color. *Usui* is used when the visual consistency of a color is faint (Melano et al., 2021). In Indonesian, a pale or light color is described using the word *muda* (e.g., *merah muda* ‘light red’ or ‘pink’) and cannot be replaced with *tipis*. According to Koyanagi (2004), the linguistic phenomenon observed here is referred to as *ketsujou*, as the meaning in L1 does not correspond to the meaning in L2.

3.2.2. *Usui* vs *Tipis* in the Sense of 'Diluted'

- (16) 比較的薄い溶液を時間をかけてくわえるのは、酸化チタン表面にかたよって吸着されるのをふせぐためである。(nlb.ninjal.co.jp, 2005)

Hikakuteki usui yōeki o jikan o kakete kuwaeru no wa, sankachitan hyōmen ni katayotte shūchaku sareru no o fusegu tame de aru.

‘Adding a relatively diluted solution slowly is intended to prevent biased adsorption onto the titanium dioxide surface.’

In example (16), *usui* modifies *yōeki* (solution). The lexical meaning of *usui* here is 'diluted' or having a consistency that is more watery. In this context, *usui yōeki* (diluted solution) is used to prevent uneven absorption. In Indonesian, a watery or thin solution is described with the word *encer* and not with *tipis*. According to Koyanagi (2004), this is again a case of *ketsujou*, as the meaning in L1 does not align with that in L2.

Table 1. Similarities and differences between *usui* and *tipis*

| <i>Usui</i> | Meaning and Semantic Relationship | <i>Tipis</i> |
|----------------|---|----------------------|
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | The distance between two opposite surfaces is closer than the normal size. (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Not thick - (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Not dense - (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Not lush in terms of hair - (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Lack of income or result - (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Faint smile (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Lacking confidence in oneself or others (<i>icchi</i>) | <i>Tipis</i> |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Diluted liquid - (<i>ketsujou</i>) | - |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Bland - (<i>ketsujou</i>) | - |
| 薄い <i>Usui</i> | Light or pale color - (<i>ketsujou</i>) | - |
| - | Thin-skinned/Easily offended - (<i>shinki</i>) | <i>Tipis Telinga</i> |

3.2.3. *Usui* vs *Tipis* in the Sense of 'Bland'

- (17) 2016年にランチボックスに詰めて配送する「デリバリー方式」で給食を導入したが、「味が薄い」などの理由で食べ残しが続出。(asahi.com, 2024)

2016-nen ni ranchibokkusu ni tsumete haisō suru 'deribarī hōshiki' de kyūshoku o dōnyū shita ga, 'aji ga usui' nado no riyū de tabenokoshi ga shūshutsu.

'In 2016, school lunches were introduced through a delivery system where meals were packed in lunchboxes and delivered, but many were left uneaten for reasons such as "the taste is bland".'

In example (17), *usui* modifies *aji* (taste). The phrase *aji ga usui* conveys the idea of bland or lightly flavored food. In Japanese, *usui* is used to describe food that is lightly seasoned or lacks strong flavor, it is in line with the previous research from Melano (2021) in terms of usage of *usui* to convey blandness in taste. In Indonesian, such food is described as *hambar* and not with the adjective *tipis*. According to Koyanagi (2004), this represents another case of *ketsujou*, in which the meanings in the two languages are not in correspondence.

3.2.4. *Usui* vs *Tipis* in the Sense of 'Easily Offended'

- (18) *Mengingat bahwa Setya Novanto adalah seorang pejabat publik jadi seharusnya siap dari segala macam kritikan kepada dirinya. Tidak boleh panas hati dan tipis telinga.* (kumparan.com, 2017)

Remembering that Setya Novanto is a public official, he should be prepared for all kinds of criticism towards him. He should not be hot-tempered and thin-eared.

In example (18), the adjective *tipis* is used idiomatically in the Indonesian phrase *tipis telinga*, meaning someone who is emotionally sensitive or easily offended. It describes a person who cannot accept criticism and becomes upset easily. In Japanese, there is no equivalent expression using *usui* in this context. Based on Koyanagi's (2004) framework, this phenomenon is categorized as *shinki*, as the meaning in L2 (Indonesian) has no corresponding meaning in L1 (Japanese).

Based on the table above, there are seven shared meanings between the adjectives *usui* and *tipis*, including: a short or narrow distance between two opposing surfaces, a lack of thickness in layers, low density of gas consistency, sparse hair or fur, insignificant profit or impact, a faint smile, and weakness in confidence or influence. These shared meanings fall under a linguistic phenomenon known as *icchi*. In addition, the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* cannot be equated when describing pale colors, diluted liquid consistency, bland taste, or a person who is easily offended (thin-skinned). The differences in meaning between *usui* and *tipis* arise because these three meanings cannot be equivalently expressed in the other language. This indicates a phenomenon known as *ketsujou*. Meanwhile, one meaning that cannot be expressed in the source language indicates the presence of the *shinki* phenomenon.

4. Conclusions

The results of this study show that the adjectives *usui* and *tipis* exhibit seven overlapping semantic domains and four differences. The shared meanings include: (1) a short distance

between two opposing surfaces, (2) lack of thickness in a layer, (3) low density of gas consistency, (4) sparsity of hair or fur, (5) insignificant impact, (6) subtle emotion, and (7) weakness in confidence or influence. Conversely, *usui* differs from *tipis* in the following meanings: (8) pale or light in color, (9) bland, (10) diluted, and (11) thin-skinned (easily offended). Furthermore, by contrasting the two adjectives, three linguistic phenomena were identified: *icchi*, *ketsujou*, and *shinki*.

In conclusion, the findings of this study offer practical guidance for language teaching and contribute to theoretical insights in the field of contrastive semantics. This study focused on the contrastive analysis of *usui* and *tipis* using data sources from corpora and online newspapers, which limits the scope of the findings. For future research, it is recommended to explore more semantic similarities and differences using more diverse data sources, such as radio conversations, films, novels and magazines.

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