



Cognitive Process of Metaphorical Expression in the Javanese Plants

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Abstract. The process of producing utterances involves cognitive, physiological, and physical processes. This paper focuses on the cognitive process, specifically in generating metaphorical expressions, especially Javanese Plants. In this paper, the researchers will attempt to uncover how cognitive processes occur when someone produces metaphorical expressions of Javanese plants. The data used to explain the cognitive process are metaphorical expressions in the Javanese Plants. The data were randomly selected from the Javanese dictionary. The methods used are observation and intuition. For analysis, the researchers employ matching, distributional, and reflective-introspective methods. The analysis results show that the cognitive process of generating metaphorical expressions is carried out using an associative strategy, demonstrating the correspondence between the source and target domains.

Keywords: metaphor cognitive, association, target domain, source domain, Javanese plants.

1 INTRODUCTION

A growing body of literature recognizes the importance of linguistics, which is a process that includes three stages: psychological, physiological, and physical [1]. I explain these three processes by relating the understanding of mental image [2], semantic memory [3], and embodied experience [4]. The psychological process occurs when humans produce speech. Before producing a speech, he determines what he is going to say. After that, using his semantic memory [3], which contains concepts he gained from his life experiences [5] stored in the thinking, he uses the properties in the thinking to send commands to the speech apparatus to produce the speech as desired by the thinking. This process is called a physiological process, which is carried out by the thinking to send commands to speech organs to produce speech. The process of producing speech carried out by speech apparatus is a physical process that makes speech recognizable or heard by the ears of the speech partner or those who hear or listen. From the physical process occurs a physiological process that occurs in the listener's ear. After that, a psychological process occurs in the listener's thinking. Thus, there is a continuous process that indicates the existence of a circuit. Based on this illustration, it can be seen that language is an active process humans carry out when interacting with others and speaking. It is an active process of thinking they do not produce so that others can hear them. This happens when a person thinks about something or talks to himself.

In producing metaphorical expressions, one uses cognitive or psychological processes that will be explained in this paper. The researchers will explain how cognitive processes occur based on analyzing metaphorical expressions and using the introspective reflective method [6]. To support our explanation, The researchers will present Chomsky's view about the ability of human beings to produce speech [7]. Chomsky [7] stated that the most important part of human beings is the ability to produce and understand speech; with limited rules, humans can compose different sentences. The intended creativity lies in the ability to produce sentences that are different from each other, both from the form or type of sentences produced and different lexical elements. As an illustration, if we record the speech we produce in just 1 (one) minute, then we will be able to see that the speech we produce is not the same. Based on Chomsky's theory [7], the researchers argue that in producing metaphorical expressions, humans can use their creativity to choose and determine what concepts to choose and what conceptualization to do. In addition, The researchers will be able to explain how cognitive processes occur when metaphorical expressions are generated.

Creativity related to the use of metaphors is a phenomenon related to psychological semantic creativity, namely the ability to produce and understand a set of linguistic combinations that may be absurd [8]. Metaphorical expressions used by humans to explain a concept with another concept can be categorized as deviant because they have a meaning that exceeds the meaning that has become the agreement of the owner of the language. For example, '*Cèkèr kucing*' (*Uncaria tomentosa*) [9] means cat paws. Source language *cèkèr kucing* comes from Javanese *cèkèr* and *kucing*. Target domains *cèkèr kucing* are the thorns of the plant. Source domain *cèkèr kucing* is the function of a cat's paw. *Cèkèr kucing* does not refer to cats, but the long plants, spread leaves, thin, and have curved spines like claws that grow on their stems. Associations between

source and target domains *cèkèr kucing* is the shape of plant spines like cat claws that are long, curved, and sharp. This example indicates evidence of human creativity in producing metaphorical expressions.

With their creativity, humans can make a word have a meaning other than the agreed meaning. There is an additional meaning in the word. This additional meaning gives metaphorical expressions more than one level of meaning. According to Nirmala [10], there are three levels of meaning in metaphorical expressions, namely, literal, cognitive or metaphorical meaning, and literary. Nirmala's opinion complements the findings of Wijana and Nirmala, which states that metaphorical expressions contain two levels of meaning [11], [12]. Metaphorical expressions represent what humans feel, experience, and think. The question is how humans can produce and understand those expressions. What process occurs when a person produces a metaphorical expression?

Plants are deeply intertwined with human life, with many basic human needs relying heavily on them. People use plants for food, medicine to treat various illnesses, fresh air for breathing, and shelter, especially in early human history, to protect against sun and rain, among other uses. However, it is important to recognize that some plants are toxic and must be avoided due to their harmful substances. To coexist harmoniously with their environment, people need to be able to identify and differentiate between the various plants around them by assigning names. The practice of naming plants leads to the creation of new metaphors. The vast number of plant species, combined with the limited vocabulary available in any language, means that speakers must use existing words through cognitive or conceptual reasoning to name different plants.

This paper will show how cognitive processes occur in the use of metaphorical expressions in Javanese plants. What will be shown in this paper is how speakers conceptualize one concept with another. An associative strategy is carried out during the conceptualization process.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cognitive Processes Produce Metaphors

Regarding the cognitive process of producing metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson [5] stated that metaphors must be considered when associating a concept with another concept with language. This is also explained by Wijana and Parera [13], [14] that humans have mental lexicons and semantic memory activated when humans need it to produce speech. To be able to apply it, humans use associative strategies as proposed by Wijana and Parera [13], [14] with the hierarchical structure of their memories. According to Wijana and Parera [13], [14], semantic memory is the part of memory that contains words, concepts, and facts about the world. Wijana [15] provides illustrations using the concept of metaphors of turtle dove physical characteristics in a Javanese community. The turtle dove (Javanese: *perkutut*) is one of the most popular pets of the Javanese people. Javanese people aim to have high-quality turtle doves, either in the way they chirp or in the luck it may be. The selection process is quite complex and extensive, one method of which is to observe the bird's physical characteristics carefully. Accordingly, the community of turtle dove fins and experts has become enriched with a variety

of turtle dove registers many of which are metaphorical. With this description, according to Wijana [15], it can be seen how humans use their semantic memory by associating the characteristics or characteristics of one entity with another.

This is supported by Lakoff and Johnson [4] that the mind is permeated in experience, and is directly in perception, body movements, and physical and social experiences. In addition, the mind is also imaginative and does not exist in experience, even far beyond the direct reflection of external reality. Furthermore, it is said that imaginative capacity allows abstract thinking and using thinking outside of what is seen or felt. According to Lakoff and Johnson [4]; Wijana, Hendrokumoro, and Ma'shumah [16] psycholinguistic theories of metaphor understanding explain that metaphors are understood by comparing traits, showing analogies, or transferring perceived traits.

2.2 Conceptual Metaphors

The metaphor theory used as the basis for data analysis in this paper is the metaphor theory initiated by Lakoff and Johnson [4] which states that metaphors reflect what is experienced, felt, and thought that happens in the real life of humans. Metaphors are active in human thinking [17]. Arimi also supports this opinion [18] that language is a cognition activity and a special form of knowledge that supports linguistic competence. Metaphors are not only used to convey messages but are also used to think about something.

Lakoff and Johnson [5] assert that the concept of language is metaphorically neatly arranged, and the activities carried out are also well arranged. Thus, the language used is also well arranged, and the metaphors used in conceptualizing, as explained earlier, are called conceptual metaphors. Conceptual metaphors are dynamic, as they reflect what their users think, feel, and do, and are constantly changing according to different thoughts, feelings, and experiences in each culture. For example, Wijana's research in his article entitled "Metaphors of Orchid Names In Indonesian" shows that this study explores the metaphorical language used in naming orchids in Indonesia [19]. Analysis of data gathered through Google tracing reveals that many orchid names incorporate metaphors related to their "sub-species" and "characteristics." These metaphors appear in different forms, including single morphemes, multiple morphemes, and phrases. They often draw comparisons with various plant features, such as the shape and patterns of flower petals, the leaves, plant size, and roots. The metaphors are sourced from entities familiar to human experience, including animals, people, objects, plants, celestial bodies, and more. While many of these source domains are universal, some reflect specific cultural aspects and sociocultural realities.

2.3 Components of Conceptual Metaphor

Kovecses [17] states that conceptual metaphors reflect what people perceive, experience, and think about the world's reality. Everything experienced, perceived, and thought permeates a semantic memory that can be used at any time. To be able to use it, a person then activates that memory to be realized in verbal form that is used in communication. Therefore, metaphorical expressions are sometimes preferred over non-metaphorical expressions because metaphorical expressions contain content that is

prioritized, and considered, and the emotions in the expression are by what the user of the expression wants.

Metaphors have two components, namely, target and source. The source is a concept that is used as the basis for conceptualization, and the target is the concept from which the conceptualization is directed. Based on the explanation of Lakoff and Johnson [4] reinforced by Kovecses [17], the target is usually more abstract, and the source is more concrete. To understand the intention contained in the metaphor, it is found that the characteristics shared between the target and the source are found. By comparing the characteristics of the two, it will be found that the basis of a metaphor is used.

The selection of a certain source for a target is done because it is based on the experience that the body feels when experiencing the perceived condition. As previously explained, conceptual metaphor indicates a process that exists in the realm to explain an entity that is based on feelings, experiences, and thoughts about the reality that exists or that is imagined to exist, using other entities that are more concrete or can be visualized or felt by the body. This paper only takes three basic metaphor components: the source domain, the target domain, and the basis of metaphors or their associations. These three components are the basic components of conceptual metaphors. The domain of sources that have more concrete characteristics is the basis for explaining more abstract targets. According to Kovecses [17], similarity is not always the basis for showing the relationship between the target and the source. What is more prominent is the conceptualization that corresponds between the target and the source. This statement is supported by Nirmala [11], who states that metaphorical expressions are expressions that contain conceptualization, and the process of conceptualization represents the existence of additional meanings that make metaphorical expressions have literal and cognitive meaning. The metaphorical expression represents embodied experiences: the experience experienced by the body stored in the thinking.

3 METHODOLOGY

This methodology of research was qualitative. It was based on natural data. Additionally, the data collected directly from the research subject was exhaustive and complete and did not alter the data's shape or form. It was done to thoroughly carry out the purposes and advantages of qualitative research [20]–[22]. Furthermore, qualitative research is interpretive and related to cultural studies. The observation was chosen as the design to collect data in this current study, and it was recorded. In addition, the intuition method was also used as a companion to the provision of data.

Noor [23] argued that the intuitive method is often used by conceptual metaphor researchers, such as Kovecses [4] Johnson [5] Kovecses [17], namely by using the experience of researchers who have internalized within the researcher. What was used as a sample was the metaphorical expression of plants in the Javanese dictionary (*Bausastra Jawa*) [24]. In selecting samples, the researchers used two techniques, namely: random and purposive. The random technique was used to select the sources, while the purposive was employed to select metaphorical expressions. The data source was the

Javanese dictionary (*Bausastra Jawa*) [24]. The analysis method used was the referential method, which was used to show and compare the references or meanings contained in the source and target of the metaphorical expression being analyzed. The researchers also used the reflective-introspective method to show how cognitive processes occur to produce speech. In addition, The researchers used the abductive inference technique from Krippendorff [25] to show how the correspondence between the concept of source and the concept of target was formed, and found the basis of metaphor that determined the relationship between source and target.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As explained earlier, metaphorical expressions indicate a conceptualization process that occurs when explaining one concept with another. The conceptualization process in thinking is a cognitive process in producing metaphorical expressions. Based on the results of theoretical studies and data analysis, cognitive processes can be presented through the conceptualization between the source and the target in the metaphorical expression of Javanese plants.

4.1 Cognitive Processes in Metaphorical Expressions

The cognitive process referred to in this paper is the process of thinking that occurs when metaphorical expressions are produced. The process of thinking occurs when a person produces a metaphorical expression using the concept of an entity that has been stored in the thinking, which is imagined to correspond with another new entity [26]. Therefore, the metaphorical expressions studied in this paper show how the cognitive process is carried out. With the intuition of the researchers, who are also the speakers of the language being studied, the researchers can show how the conceptualization is done. When researchers who are also native speakers of the language being studied conduct research, their intuition often plays a significant role in shaping the analysis [6], [27], [28]. This can be proven using the referential, reflective-introspective, and abductive inference methods [29], [30]. Cognitive processes in metaphorical expressions can be shown through conceptualization based on bodily experiences, traits, characteristics, functions, and powers possessed by the source domain that corresponds to the target domain.

4.1.1 Conceptualization Based on Experiences Perceived by the Body

The conceptualization carried out by the speaker to show the correspondence between the concept of source and target can be seen based on the experience felt by the body that has been stored in the thinking. The senses can feel body experiences, including seeing, tasting, touching, hearing, and smelling. In addition, body experience can also refer to what the body feels as a whole. Consider the following example.

1) *Kayu lêgi (Glycyrrhiza glabra)*

Fig. 1. *Kayu lêgi (Glycyrrhiza glabra)* [31], [32]

Kayu lêgi (Glycyrrhiza glabra) or Licorice or sweet root, is one of the most useful medicinal plants. *Kayu legi* is a type of spice produced from the dry inner skin, which is very flavorful, sweet, and spicy. People used spices in sweetened baked foods and hot wine for medical purposes. Licorice is also traditionally used as a supplement for various diseases, mixed with honey. This herb can be beneficial for treating arthritis, skin, heart, and flatulence [32].

Kayu lêgi (Glycyrrhiza glabra) or Licorice is known for its natural sweetness and is often used as a sweetener in traditional and culinary medicine. Philosophically, this sweet taste symbolizes balance and enjoyment in life. Like *kayu lêgi* 'licorice' that can balance the bitterness in medicinal herbs, it taught that there is a need to find a balance between sweet and bitter experiences [33].

From example (1) above, it can be described that the cognitive process occurs when the word *lêgi* does not refer to the taste of sugar but is based on the taste produced by the bark of 'licorice' *Glycyrrhiza glabra*. The source of *kayu lêgi* 'licorice' is sugar, the target domain of *kayu lêgi* 'licorice' is bark. The association of the target and source domain is the flavor produced by the wood of 'licorice'.

4.1.2 Conceptualization Based on Characteristics

The conceptualization of the source concept that is used as the basis for showing the correspondence with the target concept can be shown through the characteristics possessed. The 'characteristics' referred to in this article are semantic features that can be markers visually proven or felt by the senses. The following example is used to show the conceptualization between the target concept and the source concept, which is based on both characteristics.

2) *Landêp (Barleria prionitis)*



Fig. 2. *Landêp (Barleria prionitis)* [34]

Landêp ‘Porcupine Flower’ (*Barleria prionitis*) is an Acanthaceae shrub. It is widely spread as an ornamental weed in naturalized populations worldwide. It is used not only as an ornamental but also as a hedge and extensively as a component of folk medicines. As a weed, it is regarded as problematic in many areas. The plant extract can also be used as a cosmetic ingredient to nourish the hair and scalp. The polyphenol content in *landêp* leaves is believed to kill bacteria that cause toothache [9] effectively.

Landêp ‘Porcupine Flower’ has sharp spines on its stems, which provide natural protection from external threats such as herbivorous animals. This philosophy symbolizes the importance of having defense and readiness in facing life's challenges. In human life, *landêp* ‘Porcupine Flower’ taught that sometimes having "thorns" or protection is necessary to protect ourselves and survive in difficulties [33].

Examples of the word plant (4) can be categorized as metaphorical because in that expression contains expressions that show the characteristics of the entity of something pointed. The spikes do not point to the knife, but the thorns of the *landêp* plant 'porcupine flower'. The source domain is sharp, and the target domain is the plant's thorns. The association of the target and source domains is the shape of a spike pointed like a needle to protect against predators that will damage the plant.

4.1.3 Conceptualization Based on Position

The correspondence between the concept of source and the concept of target can be shown by conceptualizing the concept of source based on the features of the position possessed by the two domains. As an example, consider the following sample.

3) *Gêdhang raja (Musa paradisiaca)*



Fig. 3. *Gêdhang raja (Musa paradisiaca)* [34]

Gêdhang raja 'banana' (*Musa paradisiaca*) is a shrub in the family *Musaceae*. *Musa paradisiaca* is the scientific name for the plantain, a type of banana widely cultivated and consumed in tropical regions worldwide [9]. While often confused with the sweet dessert bananas (typically *Musa acuminata* or *Musa × paradisiaca hybrids*), plantains are distinct in their starchier texture and higher starch content, making them a versatile staple food in many cultures.

Gêdhang raja 'banana' (*Musa paradisiaca*) is one of the fruits that must be brought in Javanese wedding gifts with a meaning that the public needs to know. Gardjito in Rosa [35] explains that wedding food is a sweet and sticky snack. That is why plantains are commonly used as wedding gifts. When compared to other types of bananas, plantain has the sweetest taste. *Gêdhang raja* 'banana' has the sweetest taste because the sugar content is the highest when scientifically peeled. In addition, *gêdhang raja* 'banana' It is a symbol of greatness and good hope. People send *gêdhang raja* 'banana' for purposes that require a symbol of greatness, sweetness, happiness, and good hope, therefore, Javanese wedding gifts must use *gêdhang raja* 'banana'[33].

Examples of the word plant (3) can be categorized as metaphorical because that expression contains expressions that show the position of banana taste. *Gêdhang raja* 'banana' derived from the word *gêdhang* 'banana' and *raja* 'king'. The word *raja* 'king' indicates a person who has a position of high power, even though the word *raja* 'king' means that the taste of bananas has the sweetest taste among other bananas. The source domain *gêdhang raja* is the position, while the target domain is sweetness. The association between the target and the source domain is the sweetest taste position among other bananas.

The conceptualization shows the correspondence between the old conventional expression and a new metaphorical expression. This indicates that metaphorical expressions are new expressions that the speaker cognitively creates. When used in society, the phrase has become public property.

4.1.4 Conceptualization Based on Function

Conceptualization can be done through function features to show the correspondence between the source and target concepts. 'Function' can be indicated through the usefulness of an entity. For example, what is the function of creeping vines for plants? One of its functions is to be a place for plants to grow. Consider the following example:

4) *Katéla rambat* (*Ipomoea batatas*)



Fig. 4. *Katéla rambat* (*Ipomoea batatas*) [36]

Katéla rambat (*Ipomoea batatas*) is a shrub in the family *Convolvulaceae*. *Ipomoea batatas*, commonly known as sweet potato, is a perennial, herbaceous vine in the family *Convolvulaceae*, native to the tropical regions of the Americas. The plant is cultivated widely for its edible tuberous roots, rich in starch, vitamins, and minerals. Sweet potatoes are a versatile crop, used in various dishes worldwide, and are valued for their nutritional content, particularly their high levels of beta-carotene (a precursor to vitamin A) [9].

Katéla rambat 'sweet potato' (*Ipomoea batatas*) can grow easily in a variety of soil conditions, even in less fertile soils. It reflects a philosophy of simplicity and adaptability. Vines show that something simple and easy to ignore can be a great source of strength and endurance [33].

Examples of the word plant (4) can be categorized as metaphorical because that expression contains expressions showing how the plant grows. *Katéla rambat* 'sweet potato' derived from the word *katéla* 'sweet potato' and *rambat* 'creeping'. Kata *rambat* 'creeping' indicates the plant *katéla* 'sweet potato' It lives by creeping or creeping, with a length that can reach several meters. The source domain *katéla rambat* is vines, while the target domain is how to grow plants. The association between the target domain and the source domain is plants that grow elongated by sticking their roots into the ground.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the cognitive process in metaphorical expressions is triggered by the conceptualization carried out to show the correspondence between the concepts of source and target. In other words, the cognitive process that occurs in producing metaphorical expressions is by conceptualizing the experiences felt by the body, the nature, characteristics, functions, and powers possessed by the source and those possessed by the target, to describe the events or experiences experienced, felt, and thought by humans that occur in society. The strategy used to conceptualize is an associative strategy, which is a strategy to revive semantic memory related to the experience felt by the body, the nature, characteristics, position, and function that the source has to compare with the target, which is a metaphorical component.

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