
UNDERSTANDING CORRUPTORS' IMAGINATION CONCERNING MONEY THROUGH THEIR METAPHORS

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ABSTRACT

This study illustrates the imagination of corrupt politicians from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) about money through observing the metaphors they use to replace the word "money" when conducting cell phone conversations revealed in court. The discussion focuses on the metaphorical expressions of two PKS politicians, in the case of bribery by Commissioner of PT Cahaya Mas Perkasa, So Kok Seng, related to road reconstruction projects in Maluku and North Maluku in 2017. The Conceptual Metaphor theory is used to uncover the semantic fields of the metaphors they create. Thus, the corruptor's imagination can be revealed. It was found that through metaphors they think of money as a sacred object like the Holy Book.

Key Words: metaphors; imagination; corruptor; linguistics

ABSTRAK

Studi ini menganalisa imajinasi politisi korup dari Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) tentang uang dengan mengamati metafora yang mereka gunakan untuk mengganti kata "uang" ketika melakukan percakapan telepon seluler yang diungkapkan di pengadilan. Penelitian ini berfokus pada ekspresi metaforis dari dua politisi PKS, dalam kasus suap oleh Komisaris PT Cahaya Mas Perkasa, So Kok Seng, terkait dengan proyek rekonstruksi jalan di Maluku dan Maluku Utara pada tahun 2017. Teori Metafor Konseptual digunakan untuk mengungkap bidang semantik dari metafora yang mereka buat. Dengan demikian, imajinasi koruptor dapat terungkap. Melalui metafora mereka menganggap uang sebagai objek suci seperti Kitab Suci.

Kata Kunci: *metaphors; imagination; corruptor; linguistics*

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INTRODUCTION

In dictionary, imagination is often defined as the power to think (in dreams) or create images (paintings, composition, etc.) of events based on one's reality or experience (KBBI, 2007). Hence, imagination comes from the creative ability in the mind greatly influenced by what people face in their daily life. Meanwhile, in psychology, imagination is considered as an innate ability and process to create a partial or complete personal nature of the elements derived from the perception of the world being faced. Psychology makes imagination a more complex object of study. However, there is something to be noted that imagination is the result of mental synthesis. The imagination created by someone is the result of observing one's mind about something (Egan, 1992). Children, for example, often practice their imagination through fairy tales and fiction. When children develop their fantasies, they play on two levels: first, they use role play to realize what they have developed with their imagination, and at the second level they play once again with a situation that makes them believe by acting as if what they have developed is a reality.

However, imagination is not the monopoly of children. This is because humans always need new images that

they have not experienced before. However, this new imagination still needs help from a combination of previous experiences. Because corruptors are human, they must have certain imaginations. This corruptors' imagination is of course closely related with their view of money, which is why they cheat by dumping the law and the sense of justice.

The corruptors' imagination about money can be captured by observing the language they use. The linguistic relativity holds a hypothesis that the structure of language influences the speaker's perspective and cognition. This hypothesis became widely known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, or Whorfianism. When elaborated further, language is not merely an instrument for voicing ideas, but language itself is forming ideas, a kind of program and guidance for what its speakers do. In a more radical interpretation, language determines the mind, not merely influencing it (Knowles & Moon, 2006). Further, when someone has a choice, he uses metaphors to express what he thinks or how he feels something; to explain the uniqueness of an object; to express meaning more attractively or creatively. Through metaphors, concepts and meanings are lexicalized or expressed in words. In relation to discourse, the creation of metaphors is important because it functions to

explain, clarify, describe, evaluate, entertain, and express ideas (Knowles & Moon, 2006).

When talking about money, a number of corruptors revealed in court creatively create unique symbolic metaphors and language; some even made it difficult for the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) investigation team to track its target domain. This was once stated by the Chairman of the KPK Ethics Committee, Abdullah Hehamahua. Furthermore, he suggested that a corruption dictionary be written, which contained argots used by corruptors.

The present study aims to reveal the imagination of corruptors from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) through the use of their metaphors in relation to money by explaining the meaning behind the metaphors they created.

Literature Review

Simply stated, a metaphor can be said as a transfer of a conceptual unit to another conceptual unit. Traditionally, to prove an expression is metaphorical or not, Knowles and Moon (2006) require three elements that must be considered in order for identification to be acceptable, (1) *vehicle*, (2) *topic*, and (3) *ground*. Vehicle is an element of language that can be in the form of words, phrases or sentences that are

thought to contain metaphorical meanings. Topic is the desired meaning, in a sense not a denotative meaning. In other words, the word or phrase has changed from its basic meaning. A word, phrase or sentence falls into the category of metaphor when it changes meaning. This can be observed by looking at the context in an utterance. Meanwhile, ground is the relationship or the point of similarity between the basic meaning with the metaphorical meaning.

However, that is not enough for Danesi and Perron (1999). Based on Lakoff and Johnson's theory, they define metaphor as the ability of the human brain to transfer experience to abstraction through mapping the source realm of the target domain to produce abstract concepts. In short, every cognitive process that involves mapping from the source domain to the target domain is classified as a metaphor. Conversely, the cognitive processes that do not involve mapping from the source to the target domain cannot be classified as a metaphor. Looking at the function of metaphors in daily life, Danesi and Perron (1999) refer to humans as *homo metaphoricus*. Representation in the source domain is factual and truthful; on the contrary in the target domain, the representation is considered as a fiction.

According to Nida (1975), the domain is a field of cultural experiences realized by a group of related and explainable terms; explanatory in the domain is represented by a general component of the meaning of the term in the domain. Nida added that the domain can also be referred to as a semantic meaning. Based on this understanding, it can be explained that the domain is a group of terms, each of which contains the same general component so that the meaning is related. Thus, terms in a particular field can be entered into a certain domain.

Metaphor is the basic mapping of an experience in one domain to an experience in another domain. So, metaphorical expressions are language expressions (words, phrases, or sentences) which are outward manifestations across domains. Stern (2000) says that "metaphors are not linguistic expressions (or interpretations) but cross-domain mappings in the conceptual system". Thus, a metaphor is a cross-domain mapping in a conceptual system. This means that the metaphor works between two domains, the source domain and the target domain.

For Danesi and Perron (1999), the source domain is the *vehicle* (or the source of metaphorical concepts), while the target domain is the *topic*. They

agree with Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphorical theory that, in metaphors, abstract concepts are built systematically from concrete concepts through metaphorical reasoning. In this conceptual metaphor, general abstract concepts form the basis for specific abstract concepts. They make the example "the professor is a snake", which is a derivative of a more general concept, namely, people are animals.

Danesi and Perron (1999) also mentioned the image scheme theory which states that the source domain in the delivery of an abstract topic, at first, is not taken arbitrarily but is drawn from various experiences. The form of conceptual metaphors, therefore, is the result of the induction of experience. This causes metaphors to often produce aesthetic and synthesis effects, and this also results in easier to remember metaphorical utterances.

Lakoff and Johnson (in Danesi and Perron 1999) mention three types of image schemes. First the image scheme of the source domain involves mental orientation. For this reason, concepts are derived from the orientation of physical experience, for example high vs. low, front vs. back, far vs. near. For example, you may not think too far; You have to look back. The second type involves ontological thinking. It produces a conceptual metaphor in

which activities, emotions, ideas and others are associated with a substance: for example, the mind is a container as in the sentence "My life is full of sweet memories." The third type is the elaboration of the two previous types, which producing structural metaphors (structural metaphors). Structural metaphors expand the concept of orientation and ontological: for example, time is the source built from time is the source and time is the amount, as in "My Time is money."

According to Danesi and Perron (1999), metaphors form a strong outlook on life, because metaphors are easily understood. Metaphors make the way of thinking easier. Metaphors are automatic, easy, and are built on mutual agreement (community consensus). Metaphors are often even a clue to past cultures. In this regard, Danesi and Perron (1999) agree with Lakoff and Johnson about the cultural model in metaphors. In this cultural model, the target domain is associated with a number of source domains (orientational, ontological and structural).

Speakers choose their own perspective on something, including in producing metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) state that metaphorical concepts help one to focus on what is being paid attention to. Meanwhile, the

orientation of metaphor production is never arbitrary, but has a basis in one's experience. Therefore, they said that metaphors are structural. Hence, it can be said that revealing what is in someone's mind can be done by looking at the metaphors he or she creates.

METHOD

Research Method and Data Collection

This research is a qualitative study characterized by the use of verbal descriptions in presenting its findings, not numbers. Qualitative research is also useful for revealing details of certain phenomenon that is difficult to be revealed by quantitative research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The technique of data collection was conducted by the observation method, which is a way of obtaining data by observing the use of language. The use of the language can be oral or written. Furthermore, the technique used is a free and involved conversation, i.e. the researchers acted as observers. Hence, the researchers did not participate in determining the formation and appearance of prospective data. In this research, this technique was done through a study of transcripts of talks conducted by corruptors revealed in court reported by an online media. After that, the

researcher recorded the data (Mahsun, 2007).

Sources and Techniques of Data Processing

The data source of this research was the transcript of the conversation conducted by the corruptors revealed in court, obtained from the online media *Kompas.com* and *Detik.com*. The research question was answered through two stages of analysis, namely: identifying linguistic elements that contain metaphorical meaning and describing the conceptual relationship between the source and target domains in accordance with what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) expressed.

Conceptual metaphors see the 'mapping' and correspondence among the elements in the source and target domains (Knowles & Moon, 2006). In this way, the imagination of corruptors about money will be more clearly seen after unpacking the meaning fields of the metaphors they have created.

Limitation

This research is limited to metaphorical words or phrases related to money and its units. The discussion is focused on the metaphorical expressions of two PKS politicians, in the case of bribery by Commissioner of PT Cahaya Mas Perkasa, So Kok Seng

alias Aseng related to road reconstruction projects in Maluku and North Maluku in 2017. Because the analysis is limited to words related to money and its units, the quoted text will not be displayed in its entirety, without releasing the unanimity and unity of a text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In a corruption case involving two PKS politicians, Yudi Widian Adia (former deputy chairman of Commission V of the House of Representative, DPR) and Muhammad Kurniawan (member of the Bekasi City Regional People's Representative Council, DPRD), there is source domain of "juz", chapter in the Alquran. This case arose in the case of bribery by Commissioner of PT Cahaya Mas Perkasa, So Kok Seng alias Aseng related to road reconstruction projects in Maluku and North Maluku.

Yudi and Kurniawan use the word "juz" to replace the word "billion". This was revealed in the KPK indictment against Aseng on May 22, 2017. Initially Kurniawan reported handing over the commitment fee money from Aseng to Yudi, by sending a message saying, "Semalam sdh liqo dengan ASP ya (Last night, already liqo with ASP, didn't you)." *Liqo'* is Arabic word meaning 'meeting', commonly used among PKS

activists to refer their regular meeting as a regeneration process. Meanwhile, ASP is initial of a person. Then Yudi replied by saying, "Na'am, brp juz?" (Yes, how many "juz"?). *Na'am* itself is an Arabic word that means 'yes', often used among Islamic clerics. Then Kurniawan answered, "*sekitar 4 juz lebih campuran.*" (about 4 "juz" more, mixed). The money currency is mixed between rupiah and dollar.

For some people, the metaphor of "juz" to replace billion used by Yudi is quite intriguing. However, for those who understand that metaphors are closely related to the context and address of their creators, metaphors like this are common. Let's look at the target domain or abstract concept and the source domain (concrete concept)

Target Domain Billion	←	Source Domain Juz
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The association between money and Alquran in Yudi's mind is certainly cognitive, based on certain cultural practices or imaginations about the value of money in his life. For Yudi, money is as vital in life as the Scriptures for religious people.

As a cadre of religious-based parties, Yudi must be close with Alquran because PKS has a cadre pattern in the form of regular meetings (*liqo'*) every week. In some internal party administrators, a person is not

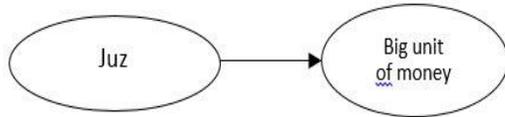
considered to be holistically religious (*kaffah*) before joining this *liqo'*, one of the main activities of which is to recite Alquran. This kind of ritual gives Yudi cognition about the importance of the function of the Scriptures in his daily life, which provides peace, tranquility and even can lead him to become a member of the House. Functions like this, by Yudi, are then transferred to money, so the word *juz* appears to replace billion.

Although there are other units in the Koran such as verse or *ayat* (consisting of 6236), *surah* (114), and *ruku'* (558), *juz* is the largest unit – the Koran consists of 30 *juz*. Yudi did not use verses or *surah* because he considered the billion unit is the largest number he could corrupt. He had not imagined that he would get black money in trillions rupiah.

In prototype theory, there is psychological evidence that a concept is considered more substantive than another concept. In this case, Saeed (1999) concluded that apples are more typical as fruit than coconut. In this case, for Yudi and Kurniawan and perhaps most Indonesians, *juz* is more substantive used to refer to a large unit, in this case "billion".

Mapping of the relationship between concrete concepts as source for the abstract metaphorical concept

above, will be clearer with the following diagram:



Through the unit of money metaphor made by Yudi, we can project how sacred money is to him. In Yudi and Kurniawan's imagination, money is parallel to its function with Aquran, which is a guideline for Muslims. Thus, money for Yudi can serve as a guide and way of life.

The imagination is not without basis, especially if we look at the facts at the trial. When asked by the KPK prosecutor about the metaphor, Kurniawan admitted that he spontaneously threw it. "Actually there is no special purpose, it just flows. There is no agreement about the word, just spontaneous," he said while testifying to the defendant So Kok Seng alias Aseng in the Corruption Court on Thursday, 8th June 2017.

Something that is expressed spontaneously is closely related to what the person has been struggling with. Because Yudi and Kurniawan are accustomed to recitation, what appears are words that are collocated or associated with it. If we map out how Yudi created the metaphor for the word "billion" affirmed by Kurniawan, the

results can be described as in the table below:

Structural Metaphor		
<i>Something sacred = Holy Book</i>		
Target	Source	Imagination
Domain	Domain	
Miliar	← Juz	= Alquran/Holy Book

The use of metaphor by Yudi and Kurniawan is of course not solely to obscure the content of talks from others—as politicians' cell phones are most likely to be tapped by the KPK. However, the metaphor is also intended as a justification for their behavior. Danesi and Peron's (1999) explanation about the relationship between the source domain and target domain can be concluded as follows:

Source Domain (Vehicle)	Target
• Factual and truthful	
• Drawn from various experiences (a clue to past cultures)	fiction
• Mental orientation	
• Ontological thinking	
• Structural	

Hence, by using the source domain "juz", the word "billion" becomes fiction, and then the bribery in the form of rupiah and dollars is fabricated because the factual one is "juz" which is part of the Alquran. Thus, receiving the "4 juz" can be justified.

In other cases, the use of metaphors as justifications can be seen in Indonesian society. For example, when

Indonesians give petty bribes, they will say, "ini uang rokoknya" (here's for buying cigarettes)", and so on. By using metaphors like this, corruptors feel relieved. So, at this stage, metaphor is not merely a style of language, but has changed its function as a pacifier for corrupt behavior. It is very natural to say that we cannot live without metaphors, which Lakoff and Johnson name as "metaphor we live by". Anders (2007) looks at this as anthropological legalization of corruption, which is common in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

What can be observed from the disclosure of the corruptor's imagination related to money is the uniformity of viewpoints that money which was made as a medium of exchange has turned into something very important, enjoyable and even sacred. With projections like this, it's not too surprising they are willing to do despicable behavior to realize what they want.

Every action is always driven by what is in someone's mind. Through uncovering the imagination of convicted corruption cases about money, there is a starting point that can be used to help eradicate corruption, namely by rectifying the perspective of the state apparatus about money. This

is a kind of contribution from linguistics to then be continued by other branches of knowledge.

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