

A STUDY OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN SEVERAL OF BARRACK OBAMA'S 2013 SPEECH AND REMARKS ON ECONOMIC CRISIS

(Studi tentang Teori Konseptual Metafora dalam Pidato dan Sambutan Barack Obama tahun 2013 akan Krisis Ekonomi)

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini digunakan mengungkap strategi Barack Obama yang banyak menggunakan metafora dalam pidato-pidato sambutannya. Dengan kata lain, penelitian ini membahas penggunaan metafora dalam beberapa pidato menggunakan teori konseptual metafora. Penelitian ini akan menerapkan teori konseptual metafora untuk menggambarkan, mengklasifikasikan dan menjelaskan wacana ekonomi, karena, ada banyak metafora dalam pidato politik Barack Obama yang menggunakan ekonomi sebagai target domainnya. Domain ini paling umum digunakan sumber domain yang meliputi bangunan, tanaman, perjalanan. Ketiga konsep metafora tersebut sering terlihat dan digunakan dalam pidato-pidato Obama. Teori konseptual metafora yang dikemukakan oleh George Lakoff dan teori perbandingan tentang metafora yang diusulkan oleh GA Miller adalah teori yang akan digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Kedua teori tersebut digunakan untuk menganalisis dan menginterpretasikan metafora-metafora dalam pidato-pidato Obama tersebut. Sebagai hasilnya, Barack Obama memang menggunakan banyak metafora dalam pidato dan sambutannya. Metafora-metafora tersebut berperan penting dalam pidato-pidato tersebut tidak hanya untuk tujuan artistik atau estetika namun sebagai sebuah ajakan bagi warga Amerika untuk memerangi krisis ekonomi yang sedang terjadi pada saat itu.

Kata Kunci: *Konseptual Metafora, ekonomi, pragmatik, Obama, pidato.*

Abstract

Revealing Barack Obama's strategies on the use of metaphorical expressions within his speech and remarks is the purpose of this research. This research discusses more about the use of metaphor in several transcripts of Obama's speech and remarks on economic crisis. This research attempts to apply the conceptual metaphor theory to describe, classify and explain in the field of economical discourse; because, there are many metaphorical expressions in Barack Obama's political speech addressed economy as their target domain. This domain most commonly used source domains include building, plants, journey. These three conceptual metaphors are frequently seen and used in Obama's political speech and remarks. The theory of conceptual metaphor proposed by George Lakoff and comparison theory on metaphor proposed by G.A. Miller are used in this research. Those two theories are used to analyze and interpret the metaphorical expressions in Obama's speech and remarks. As the result of this research Barack Obama uses many metaphorical expressions within his speeches and remarks. The metaphorical expressions play an important role in the speeches and remarks and are not just artistic or aesthetic purposes in Obama's speech and remarks on economic crisis.

Keywords: Conceptual Metaphor, economy, pragmatics, Obama, speech.

Introduction

Applied widely among language skills and strategies, most of people think that metaphor is either a device of poetic imagination or the rhetorical flourish (Lakoff, 1980a:453). They do not think that the concept within their thought and act is a metaphor. The metaphor is not merely in

the words we use; it is in our concept of an arguments or opinion. Kovecses notes that metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain (2002:4). By the condition, the conceptual metaphor consists two conceptual domains. They are source domain and target domain. In this case, one

domain is understood in terms of another which are often referred to as mappings.

Let us take on a case where elements of source domain are mapped into elements of the target domain. Here, the writer uses capital letters to show the conceptual metaphor and italics for the metaphorical expression. For instance THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS conceptual metaphor (Kovecses, 2002:5). When we use the sentence “*A foundation is a substance on which you build a structure.*”, the words *foundation* and *substance* indicate the elements of building. However, when we hear this sentence in an appropriate context, the constituent elements of building will be interpreted as the parts of the constituent elements of a theory. As students or as academicians, we always found the words *foundation* and *substance* within some theoretical books. Here, we can find that the constituent elements of building are known as the source domain and the THEORY is the target domain of those elements.

Furthermore, this research discusses more about the use of metaphor in some political speeches and remarks. In political sphere, Jeffery Scott Mio (1997:130) notes that dozens of political theorists have extolled the virtue of metaphors as effective persuasive devices or have demonized metaphors as manipulative tools of politicians. Politics is abstract, complicated and far from people's daily experience. Thus, by employing metaphors, politicians can make those abstract political concepts more concrete for people to understand and accept easily. Metaphors allow public to take the meaning of political events and feel a part of the process. People may not pay attention to all aspects of political evidence. Therefore, metaphor is needed to simplify those complexity in political discourse.

Moreover, Mio and Katz maintain that metaphors, for politicians, can persuade the public to follow the prescription suggested by their words or speech (1996:131). Therefore, it will be great significance to investigate the kinds of metaphors that are employed in their remarks or speeches. Here, this research chooses Barack Obama's remarks and speech about U.S.A economic crisis in 2013.

All people know that Barack Obama is the current President of United States. He is known as the first African American who hold the office. Since 2004, throughout his speech which was full of rethorics, he became the famous senator who was compared to Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy (Bernstein, 2007). By his speech which changed his profile, Obama joined the president election in 2008.

In 2008, Jay Newton-Small noted that Obama knows well the power of a great speech. Obama is also the best speechwriter. Quoted by Newton-Small, Axelrod states that “He is the best speechwriter in the group and he knows what he wants to say and he generally says it better than anybody else would.” (Newton-Small, 2008). Thus, I choose Obama's speech and remarks as the data in conducting a study on metaphor in political speech.

Using this research, I try to know Obama's strategies in using metaphorical expressions on his speech and remarks. Here, I also try to extend the knowledge on the use of metaphor in political field. In conducting this research, I use the theory of conceptual metaphor proposed by George

Lakoff; this research also uses comparison theory on metaphor proposed by G.A. Miller taken from Stephen C. Levinson's books. These theories are used to analyze and interpret the metaphorical expressions in Obama's speech and remarks.

This research attempts to apply the conceptual metaphor theory to describe, classify and explain in the field of economical discourse; because, there are many metaphorical expressions in Barack Obama's political speech addressed economy as their target domain. This domain most commonly used source domains include building, plants, journey (Kovecses, 2002:22). These three conceptual metaphors are frequently seen and used in Obama's political speech and remarks. Therefore, the study of metaphor on Barack Obama's speech and remarks is needed to interpret the metaphorical expressions in the field of pragmatics.

Research Methodology

This research applies a qualitative research. A qualitative research is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible (Blaxter et. al, 2006:64). Therefore, a qualitative is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in the form of sentences or texts, not numeric data. It focuses on exploring the ‘depth’ rather than ‘breadth’. Here, the data are Barack Obama's speech and remarks on economic crisis issues.

Since the object of analysis deals with the textual data, the bibliographical research is used as the strategy to conduct this research. Bibliography is the study of books as tangible object (Eaton, Without Year:44). It is used as a strategy to solve questions which cannot be answered without bibliographical knowledge.

The primary data in this research is transcripts of Barack Obama's speech and remarks on economic crisis. Those are taken from www.whitehouse.gov. Their titles are “*As Prepared for Delivery*”, “*A Balanced Approach to Growing the Economy in 2013*”, and “*Remarks by the President on Job for the Middle Class*”. Here, the researcher found that there are 77 metaphorical expressions in Barack Obama's speech and remarks. Those expressions are collected based on the target domain (*economy*).

Then, in order to interpret the metaphorical expressions, this research also needs the other data which are used as the context of situation to strengthen his assumption or interpretation on metaphorical expressions founded in Barack Obama's speech and remarks on economic crisis.

Result

There are 76 metaphorical expressions founded in those speech and remarks. Those metaphorical expressions are used to define the economical crisis happened in United States in the first semester of 2013. The conceptual metaphor, within the Obama's speech and remarks, bring on the ground of everyday experience. It make the economy discourse more explainable in term of social activities.

Out of the 76 metaphorical expressions identified, 12 were used to conceptualized the economy as a building, 17 as a plant, 47 as a journey. These findings, summarized in the table below, show that Obama used journey more than the other two as the source domain.

Journey is a domain which most people are familiar with. In a journey, there will be a traveler who marches toward a destination through certain routes on which there will be obstacle, landmarks and crossroads. Kovecses (2004:20) notes a *journey* in the terms of *movement* and *direction*. This source domain is associated with a direction and a change of location.

Afterwards, the other source domains related to economy is *plants*, it is a source domain of metaphor which describe many actions performed by them. Using this source domain means we have to aware of many actions that we perform in relation to plants. We also have to recognize many different stages of growth that plants go through. These conditions can also be found in the source domain *building*. For *building*, we have to aware of part of house and its parts, and the act of building (Kovecses, 2004:17). Thus, in the term of conceptual metaphor, these all source domains bring each own function to define the target domain (*Economy*).

Discussion

Here, in ECONOMY AS BUILDINGS, I provide 12 metaphorical expressions which use building as its source domain. I had classified those metaphorical expressions using the comparison theory of metaphor proposed by Miller. There are five of metaphorical expressions are classified as nominal metaphor. And, the rest are predicative metaphors. As the source domain related to the economy, building is conceptualized as construction that describe the economical condition and situation of United States.

This can be applied by the framework and the structure which are the most important parts for a building. In our knowledge, building has a groundwork and foundation on which a framework or structure stands above the ground. Therefore, it can be noted that these all words are metaphorically talked about corresponding concepts in the economic target domain founded within Obama speech and remarks; they are strengthen, to stabilize, reform, rebuilding, strong, to build, stronger, foundation, rebuilding, to lay.

These findings are generated by what we know about source domain building in terms of our real world knowledge. This world knowledge is conceptual. In order to bring the world knowledge of source domain building, I bring three questions on real world knowledge about building. They are (1) what entities does the source domain building have?; (2) what qualities does the source domain building have?; (3) what does the source domain do?

Here is the sample of the analysis of metaphorical expression which categorizes as a nominal metaphor. To analyze and understanding the nominal metpahors, the metaphorical expression of ECONOMY AS BUILDING have to be converted into simile *like* form. The form is BE (x,y) and the rule is .

BE (x,y) +> (SIM (F (x), G (y)))

Miller in Ortony (1993:383) noted that it is a construction of nominal form. This rule allows us to define what is *x* and *y* in an expression.

By the table 1 on the appendices, there are five nominal metaphor that bring the concepts of building to define economic situation of United States. For example, in metaphorical expressions number 4,

- 4) we can make meaningful progress on this issue while driving *strong economic growth*.

The metaphorical expression “*strong economic growth*” and “*our economy is stronger*” are a noun phrase which can be defined into a comparison between *economic condition* and *building*. The word *strong* or *stronger* is the property of *building* that is used to describe what is going on to the United States’ *economic condition*. In OXFORD dictionary, the word *strong* is an adjective which means having power to resist; not easily broken (Hornby, 1974:858).

Those two metaphorical expressions can be transformed into the BE (x,y), when F is *economic condition* and G is *building*.

- BE (*strong, strong*) +> (SIM (Economic condition (*strong*), Building (*strong*)))

Since the word ‘strong’ is an adjective, the formulation above can be decoded into

- Economic condition *is strong like* a building

The *like-form* is a simile form of those two metaphorical expressions above. This form means the United States’ economic condition is in a fine conditions.

Yet, as it is noted in chapter 2, United States’ economic conditions is in *Great Recession* since 2007. Congressional Budget Office, in February 5, 2013, noted that economic growth remains slow in 2013 and the GDP did not returns to its potential until 2017 (CBO.gov, 2013). They have to calm down in facing this crisis; because, the economic condition is still moving. Then, for the next sample of analysis is an analysis of predicative metaphor.

From the life experience people know that building have to be designed and constructed by people. Similarly, economic system also need designing. This knowledge about source domains of a building are adopted by Obama in his remarks and speech. The mapping of predicative metaphor are illustrated in the appendices. Here, I give one sample of ECONOMY AS BUILDING known as predicative metaphor;

1. Economists say we need to *stabilize our finances*.

These metaphor highlights the re-creation of a well-structured and stable or lasting complex system. Most of the examples mentioned above have to do with these three

interrelated aspects of buildings: construction, foundation and strength. As it is noted before, predicative metaphor is a predicative concept of building is expressed by a predicate phrase (verb, verb phrase, and predicative adjective) (Miller in Ortony, 1993:384). The formulation is

§ $G(x) \rightarrow () () \{SIM [F(x), G(y)]\}$

In order to interpret them, the metaphorical expressions above can be rendered into Miller's formulation on predicative metaphor. For example, in metaphorical expression number 1, I found that there is a predicate adjective "to stabilize". The word *stabilize* already belongs to building lexicon and it is used to describe United States' action to make their finance in a balance situation. Here is the application of Miller's formulation.

· $G(x) \rightarrow (F) (y) \{SIM [F(x), G(y)]\}$
 - to stabilize (our finance) $\rightarrow () () \{SIM [F (our finances), to stabilize (y)]\}$

As it is noted by Miller in Ortony (1993), in interpreting this comparison is to find appropriate values for the missing terms. The terms, which are filled to F and y, are *secure* and *building*.

Therefore, the formulation will become as follows;

- to stabilize (our finance) $\rightarrow () () \{SIM [to secure (our finances), to stabilize (building)]\}$

by this formulation, the metaphorical expressions "to stabilize our finances" can be produced into a simile like form;

- to secure our finance is like to stabilize a building.

Related to the context, this metaphorical expression shows that the government need to secure their financial situation; because they have to reach their goal (to reduce their deficit to \$4 trillion) (whitehouse.gov, 2013).

Through the metaphor, the building of economy is described as the building of a structure, that is realized the economic process and system in readers and listeners' minds. In the real condition, the building's foundation is the core to the stability of a building. This pattern of the metaphor is concreted in the conception of economy. That is why each country stresses on industries and infrastructure constructions.

For ECONOMY AS PLANTS, Generally, people know that plants are living organisms on earth. It refers to trees, flowers and vegetables. Many words from the source of the plant are also used to describe the development of economy. The commonly used items in Obama's remarks and speech are *growth*, *grow*, and *growing*.

Most of metaphorical expressions "ECONOMY AS PLANTS" in Obama's remarks and speech uses the word *grow* as their basic. These findings are generated by what we know about source domain *plants* in terms of our real world knowledge. In other words, the physical growth of the plant

is like the development of the economic system. To bring the knowledge of source domain *plants*, we can use three questions on real world knowledge about *plants* as it is stated before on the first subchapter. As the results, there are 17 metaphorical expressions. 7 of them are nominal metaphors and the others are categorized as predicative metaphors.

In sample number 3, the metaphorical expression "America's economic growth over the last few months" can be noted as an expression to show the development of U.S economic conditions in the beginning of 2013. The word 'growth', which is most notably related to the plants physical development, has been utilized to describe the economical condition.

Related to Miller's formulation on nominal metaphor, this expression can be decoded as follows;

- BE (development, growth) $\rightarrow (SIM (Economic condition (development), Plants (growth)))$

And it will produce a new simile like form of metaphor below;

- The development of economy is like the growth of plants

By this condition, the metaphorical expression "America's economic growth over the last few months" can be decoded by changing the word 'growth' into 'development'. Therefore, it can be read as "the development of America's economic condition over the last few months".

In fact, in the beginning of February 2013, U.S economic condition was softly growing up in the first half of 2013. BBVA Research notes that

Our in-house indicators assessing the most recent economic data suggest that we will see relatively soft growth in the first half of 2013 as consumers adjust to the expiring payroll tax cut and uncertainty lingers as Washington deals again with budget issues (BBVA Research, 2013:6) (huffingtonpost.com, 2013).

Related to the quotation above, the metaphorical expression number 3 actually shows that the development of U.S economic condition is still rising up.

Here, the interpretation of metaphorical expression "economic growth" in number 3 can also be applied into the metaphorical expression number 6. Therefore, the expression number 6 can be decoded as follows;

- They know that broad-based economic development requires a balanced approach to deficit reduction, ...

The expression above shows that the development of U.S economy condition needs an approach to reduce the deficit. The approach are spending cuts and revenue, and

doing fair share. It can be said that this expression is a response to the expression number 3.

All of the metaphorical expressions, in those Obama's speech and remarks are using the word 'grow' as their predicates. Hence, these all metaphorical expression can be formulated as Miller's notion on predicative metaphor.

Here is the application of Miller's formulation on expression number 1 "a way that grows our economy";

o $G(x) \rightarrow (F) (y) \{SIM [F(x), G(y)]\}$
 - grows (U.S Economy) \rightarrow) () $\{SIM [F$
 (U.S Economy), grows (y)]}

Yet, this formulation needs two appropriate values for the missing terms. Those two are *develop* for (F) and *plants* for (y). Therefore the formulation above will produce

- grows (U.S Economy) \rightarrow {SIM
 [develops (U.S Economy), grows
 (plants)]}

This can be reconstructed into simile like form as follows;

– a way that develops our economy *is*
like a way that grows a plants

Here, the metaphorical expression number 1 actually shows that U.S government have an approach to develop their economy in 2013.

At this point, ECONOMY AS PLANTS is the mapping of biological growth of plants that corresponds to the abstract development of the economic concepts and systems. All these abstract developments are derived metaphorically from the notion of physical growth of plants. Yet, by this all metaphorical expressions, it can be seen that U.S economic system and condition is still developing and can survive from bad conditions.

For the ECONOMY AS JOURNEY, Journey is a form of motion that involves the starting point, the step, movement and destination. It gives a knowledge to help people to understand the concept of economy. While, the economic activities can be comprehended as a motion of company, an organization or even a country onward to a destination. Here, I had classified the metaphorical expression that are related to this source domain (JOURNEY). There are 47 metaphorical expressions which are also categorized into two kinds of metaphor. They are 12 nominal metaphors and 35 predicative metaphors.

These all categories have used some parts or the properties of journey such as departure, path, destination, movement, and an obstacle. These all involve the knowledge of physical experience of a traveller who wants to start or end his/her journey. It is similar to the economic activities which develops from the beginning construction of economy system into to the destination or its target. Using these two subchapters below, I will discuss in further the discussion about ECONOMY AS A JOURNEY which are already used by Obama on his remarks and speech about US economic crisis in the first semester of 2013. the sample of analysis are described are as follows;

In metaphorical expression number 14, there is a word 'driver' that belongs to journey's lexicon. This word,

in the term of journey, is known as "a person" who drive to move is being equal to 'the cost of health care'. By this condition, the metaphorical expression number 14 can be formulated into;

- BE (*driver, the rising cost*) \rightarrow (SIM
 (element of economy (*the rising*
cost), journey's element (*driver*)))

And it produces a new simile like form of metaphor below;

-The rising cost in economy *is like* the
 driver in journey.

In order to reveal the meaning of metaphorical expression number 14, as the interpreter, we have to think what is the similarity between a driver to the cost.

In everyday experiences, a driver is a person whose job is to drive a car or vehicle. He/she brings the passenger into the end of their journey. Similarly to a driver, the rising cost of health care brings the economy condition into a long term debt. By these similar conceptions, it can be assumed that the cause of U.S long-term debt is the rising cost of health care for an aging population. As it is noted by Schoen et al (2013), the U.S. spends twice as much on health care per capita. This condition makes this cost is wasteful. Therefore, it can be assumed that Obama uses this metaphorical expression to show one of the causes of their economic crisis. It is the rising of health care for an aging people.

Then, for the analysis of predicative metaphor, the application of Miller's formulation is can be described as follows; the sample below is expression number 5 "to lower the cost of health";

o $G(x) \rightarrow (F) (y) \{SIM [F(x), G(y)]\}$
 - to lower (the cost of health care) \rightarrow
 {SIM [F (*the cost of health care*), to
 lower (y)]}

This formulation needs two values for the missing terms. Those two are *develop* for (F) and *plants* for (y). Therefore the formulation above will produce

- to lower (the cost of health care) \rightarrow {SIM
 [to reduce (*the cost of health care*), to
 lower (*movement*)]}

This can be reconstructed into simile like form as follows;

– to reduce the cost of health care is like to
 lower some thing.

Here, the metaphorical expression number 5 shows that the movement of U.S government is trying to reduce the costs of health care. As it is mentioned before, the cost of health care in U.S is one of aspects which brings the deficit more growing faster. Schoen et.al in their article notes that;

Health spending as a share of U.S
 gross domestic product has climbed
 steadily over the past century. Today

it constitutes 18 percents of GDP, up from 14 percent in 2000 and 5 percent in 1960, and we are well on our way to 21 percent by 2023, based on current projections. This increased dedication of economic resources to the health sector, however is not yielding commensurate value in terms of improving population health or patients experiences with care (Schoen et. al, 2013).

By this quotation, it can be noted that the cost of health care is one of the biggest expenditure in United States.

In other conditions, there is also a word which shows the direction in a journey. The word is 'down' which means *indicating the level or position from the high to the low* (Hornby, 1974:261). By this direction, it can be said that the metaphorical expression number 26 means *to control the cost into the lower position*. This also means that United States' government wants to invite their people to control the cost into the lowest position. This expression, related to the contextual situation, is an invitation for American to be involved in controlling the cost of economy in order to face the crisis.

Conclusion and Suggestion

In conclusion, Barack Obama mostly used a journey metaphor in order to address economic condition and situation. There are 47 of metaphorical expression which use journey as its source domain. The other source domain, such as building and plants, I only have collected 12 expressions for building and 17 expressions for plants.

By its total, the most kinds of metaphor, which are used in Obama's remarks and speech, are predicative metaphor. There are 52 expression known as predicative metaphors and 25 expression as nominal metaphor. These classification leads this research revealing the intended meaning of metaphorical expression in Obama's remarks and speech. The meaning can be found by linking the physical experiences of buildings, plants, and journey to our abstract experience of economy. By these findings, it can be concluded that Obama wants to show the on going progress of economic condition to face the crisis in the first semester of 2013. He did not intend to give the detail of his policy in creating a new approach that is shown by building metaphor. He only wants to invite his people to go hand in hand to face the economic crisis.

By interpreting, we find that these categories are naturally and systematically linked to our knowledge on the properties of each source domains are naturally mapped on the economic domain. Combined with the exemplified of Obama's remarks and speech on economic crisis, it can be found that the emergence and progress, the development, and the structure of economy is metaphorically conceptualized in the features of journey, plants, and buildings. We know that the concrete human physical concepts can be made use of understanding the abstract concepts. Thus, the economy, as an abstract field, can be

understood by those three conceptual metaphors. They are vocabulary lists of journey, buildings, and plants.

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