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### How is Meaning Constructed in Indonesian Expressions?

## (Bagaimanakah Makna Dikonstruksi dalam Ekspresi Bahasa Indonesia?)

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#### **Abstrak**

Makna diperoleh tidak hanya dari melabeli tetapi juga mengonstruksi. Dengan melabeli, makna diperoleh dari komponen semantis yang secara konvensional telah disepakati oleh penuturnya. Namun, dengan mengonstruksi, makna diperoleh dengan konseptualisasi yang terefleksikan dalam kata atau ungkapan lainnya. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan suatu bukti kreativitas manusia dalam mengonstruksi makna dalam bahasa Indonesia. Konseptualisasi terwujud dalam bentuk dasar kata, reduplikasi, afiksasi, dan bentuk pasif. Selain itu, konseptualisasi terbukti juga dalam pengalaman yang merasuk dalam tubuh serta proses tergabungnya berapa konsep untuk membentuk konsep baru. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa konseptualisasi terjadi ketika pengguna menjelaskan konsep abstrak dengan konsep konkret dan dengan konseptualisasi terjadi adanya perubahan makna karena adanya penambahan dan perluasan makna kata atau ungkapan.

Kata kunci: konseptualisasi, mengonstruksikan, makna, afiksasi

#### **Abstract**

Meaning can be derived from labelling and constructing. By labelling, meaning is derived from the semantic properties conventionally agreed by the users. However, by constructing, meaning is derived from conceptualization reflected in words or expressions. The aim of this paper is at showing how conceptualization can be an evidence of human creativity in meaning construction in Indonesian expressions. The analysis shows that a conceptualization process occurs when someone tries to explain a difficult or abstract concept using a concrete or an old concept to create a new one. The conceptualization can be identified in base forms/reduplication, affixation, and passive forms. It can also be reflected in the words representing embodied experience to build a new concept. In addition, it can also be seen in the blending of the concepts from different inputs to build a new concept. Through conceptualization, change of meaning, addition, and extension of the words can be inferred.

Keywords: blending, conceptualization, embodiment, meaning construction

#### INTRODUCTION

Conceptualization is a dynamic process in changing, adding, extending the existing meaning based on its labels or semantic properties that conventionally humans have. In changing the meaning, the users or speakers have different strategies. Sometimes, they use base/reduplication, affixation, or passivization. For example, meaning may change in the base forms if they have co-text which can trigger the changing of meaning.

Conceptualization supports meaning construction which differs from meaning labelling. Meaning labelling is like what Nida (1975) proposed in analyzing meaning through its components called semantic properties. According to Nida (1975), a word has some properties that can differentiate one word from another word. This paper is trying to discuss how conceptualization can show human creativity in constructing meaning. In this case, constructing meaning is a dynamic process happening in the mind. It happens when someone wants to say something s/he has an effort to select or choose and produce a suitable expression to the meaning s/he intends. The meaning intended can represent her or his motivation in using the expressions.

Actually, this paper has similar ideas with the article written by Urquidi (2015) in terms of its theory used, i.e. cognitive linguistics supported by blending theory. They also have the same basic concept on meaning construction through conceptualization. Both use written data taken from newspapers. However, there are some differences in terms of the language studied and the focus of the study. If Urquidi (2015) studies English and Spanish, I study Indonesian language. If Urquidi (2015) studies generic interfacingin a blend, and conditions of propagation and lexicalization, I study how conceptualization can be an evidence of human creativity in constructing meaning.

Conceptualization is a central issue in cognitive linguistics—a new branch in linguistics developed in mid 1980s (Janda 2010), especially in discussing conceptual metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2003), which is different from what metaphor Aristotle proposed. This study is pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson in proposing conceptual metaphors written in their book on *Metaphors We Live By* (2003). For Indonesian, the pioneer of metaphors is Wahab (1986) studying Javanese metaphors. However, Wahab (1986) does not purely use Lakoff and Johnson's theory on conceptual metaphors. He uses Ullman's theory in analysing the Javanese metaphors. In another paper, the writer studied conceptualization of metaphorical expressions in Indonesian written in Letters to the Editors in *Suara Merdeka* newspapers (Nirmala 2012). In the study, the writer can show forms, types, concepts, functions, and meanings of metaphorical expressions used in the letters to the editors. Another study done by the writer is related to Indonesian verbs (Nirmala 2014). In studying the verbs which contain conceptualization, she can find that the verbs can be considered as conceptualized verbs when they are metaphorical.

Similar study is conducted by Nirmala (2015), finding that there are several processes in meaning construction such as using proverbs, derivational forms. This research indicates different findings in terms of its focus. Another study dealing with conceptualization is done by Andarab and Mahmoudi (2015) who studied cultural conceptualizations in intercultural communication. Cultural conceptualizations, according to Sharifian in Andarab and Mahmoudi (2015), "[...] are conceptual structures such as schemas, categories, and metaphors that come into existence as a result of interactions between members of a cultural group." Andarab and Mahmoudi (2015) studied some expressions related to important Iranian cultural

schemas, such as 'expressing thankfulness,' 'making request' and 'complimenting,' and elaborates how the cultural schemas can cause cross-cultural misunderstanding when using English.

To discuss this topic, I used Fauconnier and Turner (1998) theory to support for explaining creativity. According to Fauconnier and Turner (1998) cited in Pereira, Francisco Câmara and Amílcar Cardoso (n.d.) creativity indicates creating something that has not existed before and making it appear. Language as a carrier (Evans and Green 2006) conveys meaning that can be perceived by the participants of the conversation.

In the interaction using verbal language, humans use their experience to come across meaning. Meaning which is literal may be extended into metaphorical or even literary. When there is meaning extention or addition, it can be inferred that the words used have more than one layer of meaning (Kittay 1987). It shows that speakers have an additional effort to convey more than the literal meaning. They may show their attitudes included in the words or expressions the speakers utter. This is a process in meaning construction.

As studied by Nirmala (2012), metaphorical expressions have three levels of meaning namely literal, metaphorical, and literary. The three levels of meaning can be identified by the hearer when interacting with the speaker using the language they both can understand each other. In this case, only those who have the same language system they make agreement on it can use it for communication and interaction. Sallabank (2010:50) supported that people can communicate each other if they have mutual comprehensibility; and the degree of the mutual comprehensibility can determine the success of the communication. The mutual comprehensibility is shown by the shared knowledge of the participants of the conversation.

Language can be categorized according to their referents, so there are words classified into among other things as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions (Gardenfors 2014:184-191). The meaning of the word is the concept which can be obtained from the word itself, while grammatical meaning can be obtained from the result of the combination of the words in the construction (Katamba 1993). If I look at what Gardenfors (2014:184-191) mentions concerning the word grouping, I can say that preposition can be categorized into derivational word due to its meaning change when it is combined with another word.

In their use, words are developing. There are words that did not exist in the past, but they can be found in human communication at present. For example, in the past, in Indonesian, there was no word such as *selfie* (taking your own picture with a digital camera or a camera of your gadget such as handphone or tablet), but at present you can find or even use it. In English, the word is derived from *self* and *photography* to become *selfie*. The word *selfie* is borrowed by Indonesian but has not been found in the KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia).

A derivational process can cause the changes of the form or the meaning of the word or both the form and meaning (Croft and Cruse 2004). To explain how conceptualization reflected in Indonesian words happens, I used embodiment theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1999). Besides, I used frame analysis proposed by Fauconnier (1997). These two theories support the theory of cognitive linguistics elaborated by Evans and Green (2006) mentioned before.

According to embodiment theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1999), since a word represents daily experiences stored in the mind, it can represent the experiences to build schemas. From the utterances produced, it can be inferred that they can represent what in the mind is. This is supported by Nirmala (2012:61) conducting research on metaphors; she said that metaphors can represent what human thinks, feels, and experiences as stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1999). Since words indicating conceptualization are called conceptualized words, they are the expressions which indicate the existence of conceptualization in the mind when they are uttered. The users may have purposes in using a certain expression instead of the other expressions. Nirmala (2012) said that metaphorical expressions show speaker's attitudes.

Based on the theory proposed by Fauconnier (1997), I can say that the experiences stored in the mind can build a schema which can construct a frame in the mind, and the frame will help the speaker adopt or adapt the old experience to the new one. Sometimes, there is a process of blending that can cause the change of the frame which exists (Kövecses 2015). According to Smagorinsky (no years of publication), in reading a text, someone constructs meaning when s/he is reading in order to understand the text. The experience they have stored in the mind will help him or her construct the meaning of the new text he or she is reading. I have different focus from what Smagorinsky (no years of publication) studied. This paper is dealing with the meaning construction happening in the production process of language. In other words, this paper is trying to complete the idea of meaning construction in language. Therefore, this article is advantageous to discuss.

#### **METHOD**

The corpus used is the metaphorical expressions found in the editorial pages of *Suara Merdeka* newspapers published in August 2013. Since this research is to show how conceptualization is reflected in Indonesian expressions, I investigated Indonesian expressions which are metaphorical. To investigate the conceptualization in the expressions, I used documentation or page-filing proposed by Crowley (2007), non-participant observation, and reflective-introspective methods proposed by Sudaryanto (1993, 2015). To analyze the data, I used referential, distributional, and reflective-introspective methods by Sudaryanto (2015), and inferential methods by Krippendorff (2004).

In inferential method, there are three techniques namely deductive, inductive, and abductive (Krippendorff, 2004). To analyze the data, I used abductive technique, that is the technique which is used to show the conceptualization process done by

blending the old experience with the new one. Based on the old experience, the speaker tries to connect it the new experience having the same force with the new one. Usually, the old experience is built through the use of the words referring to concrete entity which is blent with the new one which is abstract. The abductive technique is used by connecting different sources of experience to the new one. Besides, I used reflective-introspective technique proposed by Sudaryanto (1993), since I am the native speaker of the language I investigated, I can use my own embodied experience to infer what the users convey in using conceptualized words. The method can also help me verify what I have found from my investigation.

#### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Conceptualization as an evidence of human creativity can be inferred from the use of words or expressions which indicate a process of using an old experience which is simultaneously intergrated with a new one to construct a new word or expression. Another evidence can be seen in a process of blending of the two inputs. Embodied experience can also reflect a conceptualization process. Besides, the use of base/reduplication, affixation and passivization is the other evidence in human creativity.

Creativity can be seen from the changes of the meaning of a word. From its form, the base forms can be characterized from the derivational morphemes attached (Katamba 1993). They may be conceptualized if they are in a linguistic context or cotext, meaning that they are used in bigger constructions. Derivational forms are those derived from affixation, while passivization is based on the use of the verbs having passive meaning. The passivization is realized in passive sentences.

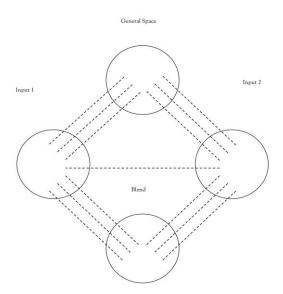


Figure 1: Conceptual Blending Theory by Fauconnier and Turner (1998) in Francisco Câmara Pereira and Amílcar Cardoso (n.d.).

The following is the diagram that shows one of the bases of conceptualization. It is proposed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (1998) on Conceptual Blending Theory. It shows that a conceptualization process happens when someone wants to produce a new concept called a blend, by using her/his input mental space 1 and 2 which are different but can be associated with.

Conceptualization can be illustrated in the following diagram exemplified by Evans and Green (2006:406) in Figure 2.

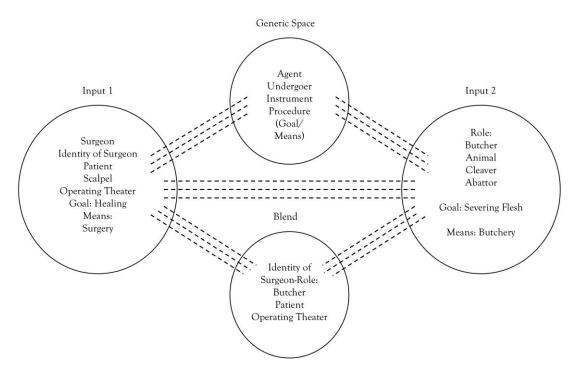


Figure 2. SURGEON as BUTCHER Blend (Evans and Green 2006:406)

Figure 2 shows how the quality of 'butcher' is blended with the quality of 'surgeon' that makes the quality of the surgeon is not good as expected. There is a tendency to be careless in operating the patient. To illustrate this diagram, I can show how input 1, i.e 'surgeon' considered as an old concept is blended with input 2, i.e. 'butcher' as a new concept. Both have their own identities, but when they are blended, there are some similarities identified that can make a conclusion describing how a quality of surgeon is.

#### Creativity in Using an Old Concept to Build a New Concept by Blending Process

A blending process is a dynamic process which happens in the mind when the speaker has stored a generic concept in the mind and tries to compare the concepts in two different inputs. After comparing and matching some similarities, the speaker is trying to blend them in order to create a new word indicating the blend of the concepts from the first and the second inputs. For example, the word *compang-camping* (torn) in

(1) Hukum yang compang-camping law which torn 'torn laws'

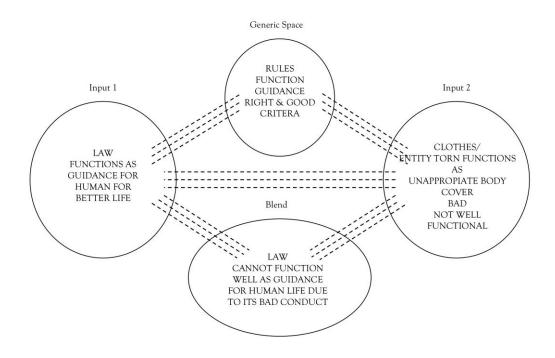


Figure 3. The Blend Derived from LAW IS TORN CLOTHES/ENTITY

From the example (1) *hukum yang compang-camping*, there is a blend indicating the concepts of law which can not function well due to its bad behavior of the law executors. From the figure, we can see an evidence how someone can find suitable concepts matched with the concept s/he intends to use.

Another example can also be seen from the following diagram (Figure 3). The word *menjerat* in

(2) Apakah kekuasaan memberi peluang untuk mengembangkan yang which give power opportunity developing what for Rudi? keinginan-keinginan menjerat manusia telah seperti have trapped human like Rudi want 'Does power giving opportunities for self-development tighten himself like Rudi – suspected corruptor?

From the example, I can infer that from the word *menjerat* (tighten) there is a metaphor POWER IS AN ENTITY WHICH CAN TIGHTEN SOMEBODY. From the metaphor, I can draw Figure 4 as follows.

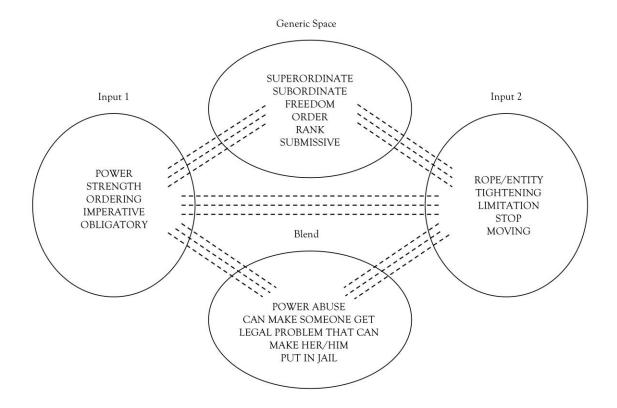


Figure 4. The Blend of Power Misconduct
Derived from a Metaphor POWER IS A ROPE/TIGHTENING ENTITY

From Figure 4 above, I can infer that finding the association between the concepts in input 1 and 2 can create a blend. From the blend, we can see how someone can choose or select the concepts of the second input as the target to those in the first one as the source. The result of the blending process of the first input *kekuasaan* (power) and the second input *tali/entitas yang bisa mengikat* (rope/entity tightening) is power abuse. Due to the power abuse someone can get a legal problem that can make her/him put in jail.

# Creativity in Creating Meaning Through Base Form, Affixation, and Passivization Like base forms, reduplication, passivization, and affixation especially derivational affixation may trigger conceptualization. The conceptualization can be identified from the change of the word forms or the extention of the meaning. Reduplication like *kantung-kantung* in

(3)	<i>Urbanisasi</i> Urbanization.	akan will	<i>melahirkan</i> give birth	kantung-kantung pouches	<i>kemiskinan,</i> poverty	
	 mengumuhkan make dirty		sudut-sudut	kota city		
	make unity		corners	City		
	'Urbanization	will o	create poverty p	ouches, littering the	city corners'	

can be inferred that there is conceptualization due to the meaning extention of the word *kantung-kantung*. The reduplication *kantung-kantung* in *kantung-kantung* kemiskinan will not be metaphorical when the word *kemiskinan* is substituted with the word *hem* (shirt). This is not metaphorical since the word *kantung-kantung* is conventionally agreed that it is a pocket of a shirt, trousers or pants for keeping something. Eyes can see physically the pockets referred to.

In the base form, conceptualization can be identified due to the word co-text. For example, the word *gaung* in

(4) gaung tujuan pariwisata di Jawa Tengah echoes goal tourism in Central Jawa 'the echo of the tourism destination in Central Java'

is a base form that changes its literal meaning to metaphorical one. The metaphorical force can be seen from its co-text *tujuan pariwisata di Jawa Tengah*. If the co-text is changed into (4a) *suara meriam* (artillery sound), the word *gaung* is not metaphorical, meaning that in the word there is no conceptualization process. What it has is literal meaning. From structural point of view, the word *gaung* in (4a)has semantic properties such as [+sound], [+audible], [+big], [+long distance], [+concrete), while the word *gaung* in (4) has the semantic properties such as [- sound], [-audible], [-big], [-long distance], [-concrete]. Since the word *gaung* in (4) is metaphorical, it can be stated that there is a conceptualization process triggered by its context. The conceptualization process is indicated by incongruency of the literal meaning and its context. The literal meaning refers to 'sound', while its context refers to 'tourism destination'.

The derivational affixes are attached to another morpheme or word either it is added in the front, in the middle, or in the rear of the unit attached. The front part is called prefixes, the middle is called infixes, and the rear or end part is called suffixes. The affixation process can be seen in the following examples. The word *panglima* (commander) in

(5) *menjadikan Hukum sebagai Panglima* make law tourism commander 'making law to be a commander'

can be categorized as a conceptualized expression since it refers to a concept associated with another concept. In this case, the word *panglima* is not conceptualized if it is combined with a word like *Jenderal Sudirman* (the general Sudirman) in a phrase Panglima Jenderal Sudirman which is conventionally agreed in the frame of status rank in Indonesian Army. The expression Panglima Jenderal Sudirman indicates that Sudirman has the highest rank in Indonesian Army and the commander. However, in this example (5), the word *panglima* is combined with the word *hukum* (law). Therefore, the expression *hukum sebagai panglima* is metaphorical, since there is a metaphor [+HUKUM ADALAH PANGLIMA ATAU KOMANDAN+ (LAW IS A COMMANDER)]. From the metaphor, there is a common ground

showing some concepts like 'everybody must obey the law', 'law has the highest rank and position', 'law is powerful.' If you see example

(6) Bersihkan Noda Mahkamah Institusi clean dirt court constitution 'Clean the spot of dirt of the Constitution Court'

you will agree that it is metaphorical since there is a word *noda* (spot of dirt) which has an extended meaning of a spot of dirt of a concrete object to an abstract one. In the concrete entity, we can see the spot that makes the entity dirty. However, when the spot is in an abstract entity, it is not visible. Therefore, it is metaphorical and contains conceptualization. From example (6), I can infer some concepts like 'the Constitution Court is not clean', 'there is something not preferred to', 'there must be an action to vanish.' Another example can be seen from the word *panggung* in

(7) ...sehingga Pangggung pemberantasan korupsi makin riuh... so Stage eradication corruption more noisy '...so the stage of corruption eradication will be noiser...'

The expression *pemberantasan korupsi* (corruption eradication) in the example is conceptualized as a dynamic live stage. In the expression (7), I can infer a metaphor [+PEMBERANTASAN KORUPSI ADALAH ENTITAS YANG DAPAT DITAMPILKAN DI PANGGUNG+ (CORRUPTION ERADICATION IS AN ENTITY WHICH CAN BE PERFORMED ON A STAGE]. From the metaphor, I can infer some concepts like 'corruption eradication can be performed', 'many people are watching', 'the ones who perform look cheerful', 'it is entertaining.'

Conceptualization reflected in passive sentences can be characterized from the affixes attached to the verbs. In Indonesian, the passive form can be categorized as a derivational process since there is a process of affixation and process of meaning change. I can see that the affixes indicating passivization are /di-/ and /ter-/. The prefix /ter-/ in the word terjungkirbalikkan in example

(8) *perlindungan bagi keamanan masyarakat terjungkirbalikkan* protection for safety society acrobatic 'protection of social safety is acrobatic'

and the word terguncangkan in

(9)	Bagaimana	tanggung jawab	negara	untuk memulihkan	keadaan
	How	responsibility	country	for recover	condition
	ini,	Ketika	keseimbangan	simbol-simbol	jaminan
	this	When	balance	symbols	assurance
	atas	hak-hak	masyarakat	terguncangkan.	
	for	Rights	society	shakened	
	/T T	- 1/	11 1111	. (1.) 1.0	1 (1

'How government's responsibility for recovering this condition when the balance of the assurance symbols of the social rights shakened'

As stated before, conceptualization can be seen in the base form, reduplication, affixation, and passivization. After discussing the forms of the conceptualized

words and how they are derived, I can present what conceptualized words indicate. They may indicate meaning change, concept construction from another concept, and cognitive function.

Conceptualized expressions indicate also cognitive forces of the words (Korta and Perry, 2011). Since the words contain more than what is labelled to them, they indicate that there is an additional meaning intended by the users. The additional meaning can be the cognitive functions conveyed, can be the changing status from being stable to being unstable, getting freedom to getting trapped, being good to being bad, and from being unpurchasable to being.

#### Creativity in Using Embodied Experience to Build a New Concept

Conceptualization can also happen when someone in producing words, s/he uses her/his embodied experience stored in the mind. The embodied experience can be identified in the words like *menggaungkan* (echoing) in

```
(10) menggaungkan Banjar
                              ke percaturan
                                                 destinasi
                                                                        profinsi (sic!)
                                                               wisata
     echoing
                     Banjar
                                                               tourism province
                              to constellation destination
     ini
                     sekaligus
                                          nasional
                     at the same time
     this
                                          national
      'echoing (making popular) Banjar City in both provincial or regional and
```

'echoing (making popular) Banjar City in both provincial or regional and national tourism destination constellation (chess game)'

The word *menggaungkan* may imply that it indicates that Banjar –one of the cities in Central Java is conceptualized as an entity which can echo or produce a big sound. The experience of hearing a big sound is stored in the mind and used it to represent a new concept of popularity. If the sound heard is very big, everybody will be able to hear it that can make it audible to anybody. In this case, the creativity is shown in associating a new concept to an old concept since both have the meaning of 'reaching big areas'. See the following semantic features of 'gaung' and 'terkenal.'

```
'gaung' (echoing) 'terkenal' (popular)
+sound -sound
+covering large areas +covering large areas
+many people can know
+many people can hear
+many people can know
```

From the semantic features of both concepts, we can see that both have the similarity in terms of the ability in covering or reaching large areas. In the word 'gaung', there is a concept that many people from different directions can hear and know because of big sound, while in the word 'terkenal', there is a concept that many people can know or maybe hear.

Embodied experiences can be classified in terms of which part of the body involves in getting the experience. Sometimes it involves a part of the body organs, but sometimes it involves the whole body organs. For example, the word terjungkalbalikkan (acrobatic) in

(11) ...perlindungan bagi keamanan masyarakat terjungkirbalikkan protection For safety society acrobatic 'social safety protection is acrobatic'

The word *terjungkalbalikkan* implies 'an acrobatic movement or a roller coaster movement' which can be either visually or bodily felt. This indicates that human creativity is shown by the use of the word *terjungkirbalikkan* to describe the action done in protecting the safety of the community. There is a conceptualization process happening in the mind when someone is associating the roller coaster movement with the act of protection. This implies how hard it is, if the protection must be done in any strategies, act, and efforts. To illustrate the movement, I will present the following picture.



Figure 5. A Picture of a Roller Coaster Indicating Acrobatic Movement

The picture shows that when you are in the roller coaster, you will feel the rolling process, your emotion, your heartbeat, and your energy. This indicates a concept of movement which involves the whole body organs. Someone can feel when s/he is in a roller coaster, how dizzy s/he is. If it is done many times, it will cause her/him headache.

Another embodied experience which involve the whole body experience can be seen in the word *terguncangkan* (moved violently) in

(12)ketika keseimbangan simbol-simbol jaminan atas hak-hak rights when balance symbols assurance up masyarakat terguncangkan society shakened 'the balance of the assuring of the human rights is unexpectedly moved violently'

When there is a storm and you are inside the house like what happens in the picture, what can you feel? Your eyes can see what movement is like. Besides all your body can feel it. The shaking or even shocking movement can be either visually or bodily

felt. The experience of shaking or shocking is conceptualized to associate the action of shaking on balancing the social right assurance.



Figure 6

The following example will show how a body organ is represented by metaphorical expressions that can be indicated in the examples like the word *kental* (thick) in

(13)	Nuansa	pembelaan	kepada	para	terdakwa	vs
	nuance	defence	to	all	suspect	vs
	penegakan	HAM	pun	kental	memperlihatkan	betapa
	enforcement	human rights	particle	thick	show	how
	kompleks	kasus	ini	dari	perspektif	psikososial
	complex	case	this	from	perspective	psycho-social
	dan	hukum				
	and	law				

'The nuance of the protection towards the suspect vs human rights enforcement impresses the <u>thickness</u> of how complex this case is from psycho-social and legal perspectives.'

From the word *kental* (thick) we can see that in the word there is a visual experience embodied in the mind. Our eyes can differenciate which object is thick and which one is thin. The ability in showing the difference is due to its embodied experience. The experience of witnessing is the basis of choosing the word to give a picture of the nuance of the protection.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, I can say that that mening is constructed in Indonesian expressions may indicate that conceptualization can be an evidence of human creativity in meaning construction due to its processes done by blending, using base / reduplication, using embodied experiences to build new concepts. Based on the analysis, common or conventionalized expressions tend to be conceptualized due to its co-text surrounding. The co-text, I mean here, is the word or expression surrounding the words studied. The words surrounding can be very influencial in showing how meaning is constructed. They can be considered as the factor causing conceptualization. The findings may highlight that Indonesian expressions reflecting

conceptualization may show that meaning is built in the process of using new expressions which are based on the existing words. This indicates that new expressions are constructed from the old expressions stored in the mind and can be the evidence of human creativity in using language.

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