

The CALA 2020 Proceedings Paper 2 - 1

General Sociolinguistics, Paper 1

**Metaphors of Turtle Dove Physical Characteristics
in a Javanese Community: A Preliminary Study**

I Dewa Putu Wijana

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

General Sociolinguistics

Metaphors of Turtle Dove Physical Characteristics in a Javanese Community: A Preliminary Study

I Dewa Putu Wijana^a

^a*Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia*

Abstract

The Turtle dove (Javanese: *perkutut*) is one of most popular pets of the Javanese people. Here, they aim to have high quality turtle doves, either in the way that it chirps or in the luck that it may bring. The selection process is quite complex and extensive, one method of which is to carefully observe the physical characteristics of the bird. Accordingly, the community of turtle dove fans and experts has become enriched with a variety of turtle dove registers (words, phrases, idioms, etc.), many of which are metaphorical.

This paper intends to study the metaphorical expressions used by the Javanese to compare the body characteristics of turtle doves with various natural and mythical realities surrounding the doves. The study will focus on how Javanese people associate the shapes of turtle dove body parts (the target domain) and natural objects used as a comparison (the source domain) for yielding metaphorical names of the turtle dove, either for obtaining a high quality sound or magical powers that the animal can bring to its owner.

Keywords: Turtle dove, metaphor, source domain, target domain, Java

Introduction

Most traditional Javanese people in the past believed in four precious entities during life: *Wisma* (house), *Turangga* (horse), *Curiga* (weapon) and *Kukila* (bird). In the current era, two of these four concepts, *Turangga* and *Kukila*, have been associatively changed to ‘vehicle’ and ‘radio or television.’ However, many modern Javanese people still raise turtle doves. For turtle dove lovers, this bird does not only entertain the owner with beautiful songs, but believe that its magical power can bring luck, wealth, and peace to its owners. Therefore, it is not surprising that turtle dove associations proliferate in many places in Java, and periodically hold turtle dove competitions, offering trophies and large sums of money as prizes. Turtle dove raising practices have a large associated vocabulary (words, idioms, expressions) which are connected to pet selection, in order to find high quality turtle doves.

This paper aims at describing the metaphorical expressions usually employed by the Javanese turtle dove communities for determining or predicting the quality of the turtle dove’s singing and the magical powers the bird may bring to its owners. These traditional metaphorical language elements have been known by turtle dove lovers for a long time, but have not yet inspired scholarly work. The study of these metaphors is highly significant in the Anthropological study of Java, and reveals important aspects of Javanese thought patterns within Javanese people’s heritage.

Despite that the Javanese language contains many stylistic categories, such as *paribasan* (proverbs), *pepindhhan* (metaphors), *sanepa* (oracle discourse), and *wangsalan* (rhyming metaphors), little if any serious scholarship has emerged on these language elements. The sparse studies emerging on the subject until the present date include those on Javanese idioms (Sujono 2003), *pepindhhan* (Setyari 2007) which is rather a study on Javanese metaphors comparing the beauty of Javanese woman body part with source domains such as animals, plants, fruits, and weight scaling instrument, *wangsalan* (Wijana 2015) and proverbs (Hendrokumoro 2017). Much more work has been conducted on Indonesian contexts and metaphors. Wahab (1990: 5), for example, studied various types of metaphorical expressions and perception spaces, as well as their role in tracing human ecology. He found that the terms ‘human’ and ‘being’ are respectively the most and least common terms among perception spaces used to construct metaphorical expressions. Wijana discusses metaphors in relation to colors (2015: 3-13), plant names (2016: 56-67), animal names (2018), and slang expressions (2016: 1-8).

However, this paper will focus on the use of metaphorical expressions relevant to the Javanese turtle dove with regards to the quality of its singing and how its magical powers may bring luck, wealth or misfortune to pet owners.

Theoretical Framework

Social and linguistic structures and practice can and frequently do influence one another (Wardaugh 1986: 10-11). Kovecses (2006: 374) notes that metaphorical expression consist of three basic elements; target domain of the speaker, source domain that the speaker uses to compare objects of talk, and grounding, that is, a similarity between the source target domains. This conceptual framework of this paper includes that human speakers are influenced by their cultural surrounding when searching for source domains during their use of metaphorical expressions.

Method

All data in this paper is drawn from *Katuranggan Perkutut*, that is, turtle dove physical characteristics, from the source *aryabf.blogspot.com*. Additional data is taken from interviews with turtle dove fans (*Kungmania*), sellers and farmers. The data is first classified into two categories, physical characteristics related to sound quality and physical characteristics related to magical power. Metaphorical expressions found in each category are classified based on physical characteristics or turtle dove body parts (the target domain) and compared to natural realities (the source domain), where the two are regarded as having similarities. Orthographical transcription is used for presenting the metaphorical data, with the exception of the maintenance of *o* for representing [ɔ] in order to avoid confusion with several dialectal elements.

Research findings

Metaphors in Relation to Sound Quality

Javanese people believe in the close relationship between the physical shape of turtle doves and the nicety of sound the bird will have. The physical characteristics include the shape of beak, head, body and tail. However, only three of these, that is, the beak, head and body shapes are often compared with natural phenomena so as to construct metaphorical expressions. As traditional Java was an agricultural society, its language was replete with terms referring to farming activities, land preparation, plant, crops and so forth.

A careful investigation of data collected evidences that source domains of the metaphorical expressions for turtle dove physical characteristics emanate from crops and house utensils. There are several types of source domain connected to beak shapes. Metaphors (1) to (5) refer to beak shapes of the turtle dove, where all metaphorical source domains items refer to plants.

- (1) Kepel + N > Ngepel 'beak shape like burahol fruit'
- (2) Gabah + N > Nggabah 'beak shape like unhulled rice'
- (3) Papah Gedang > Mapah Gedang 'beak shape like stem of banana leaf'
- (4) Lombok Gede > Ngelombok Gede 'beak shape like big chilly'
- (5) Lombok Rawit > Nglombok Rawit 'beak shape like small chilly'

Turtle dove body shape metaphors also mostly signify plants, as in (6), (7) and (8), whereas (9) signifies a house utensil.

- (6) Nongko Saglung 'body shape like a roll of jack fruit'
- (7) Bluluk + N > Mbluluk 'body shape like a small coconut fruit'
- (8) Jagung Klobot + N > Njagung Nglobot 'body shape like husked corn'
- (9) Wungkal Gerang + N > Mungkal Gerang 'body shape like a worn-down whetstone'

It is not different from the beak and body, source domains of metaphorical expressions regarding the head are also taken from agricultural properties. See (11) to (15):

- (10) Jambe nom + N > Njambe nom 'head shape like a young areca nut'
- (11) Beton nongko + N > Mbeton nongko 'head shape like a jack fruit seed'
- (12) Gobok + N > Nggobok 'head shape like a coin'
- (13) Bungkul Bawang + N > Mbungkul Bawang 'head shape like an onion tuber'
- (14) Takir kwalik + N > Nakir Kwalik 'head shape like an up side down banana leaf container'

Metaphors in Relation to Magical Power

For many Javanese turtle dove owners and growers, the bird is believed to possess magical powers that bring luck, wealth and peace to the owners. For these purposes, the Javanese language provides many metaphorical expressions which uniquely compare turtle dove physical characteristics to extralingual facets that resemble these characteristics. The metaphorical calls are classified into two categories; metaphorical items that relate to causing goodness and metaphorical items that relate to causing badness. Significant becomes the substantial difference between the source domains of metaphorical expressions related to sound quality and those related to magical power. Metaphors related to sound quality mostly compare the physical characteristics with plants and house utensils, but those related to magical power mostly compare the characteristics to humans and Hindu Gods, important people, luxurious buildings, puppet characters, and so forth. The physical characteristics which are usually compared are feathers, beaks, crests and claw color, as well as living and singing habits, rather than beak shapes, heads, bodies, and tails.

Metaphorical Items for the Agent of Goodness

There are several items which are metaphorical regarding the character of turtle doves believed to bring goodness, such as luck, health, charisma, and so forth. Some of these items together with physical characteristics and life habits are as follows:

- (15) Sri Mangepel: 'United beauty.' All claws are white. This type of bird is good to raise as it can bring luck.
- (16) Wisnu Wicitra: 'Skillful Wisnu.' Wisnu is one of the three powerful gods in Hindu religion whose task is to look after the life. This god is symbolized by black. As such, this type of bird is characterized by its black colored beak and legs. This bird is believed to ensure the owner's health.
- (17) Wisnumangenu: 'Walking wisnu.' This bird is covered in black skin, thus assigning the owners extremely good luck.

Metaphorical Calls for the Agent of Badness

Several types of turtle dove are believed by the Javanese people to bring bad luck for owners. These must be avoided. There are at least eight metaphorical citem for these avoidable bird types:

- (18) Durga Nguwuh: 'The Littering Durga.' Durga is the god of death in Hindu religious myth. The bird likes to sing at midnight. Owners will experience much disturbance, such as sickness, family trouble and lack of wealth.
- (19) Durga Ngerik: 'The singing Durga.' The bird sings continuously night and day. This bird will remove the owner's luck, and their family will quarrel continuously.
- (20) Wisnu Tinundung: 'The driven out Wisnu.' The bird has uneven blackish feathers. The owners will be reach their disires and goals with great difficulty.

Conclusion

Many Javanese traditional communities have significant interest in raising turtle doves. These farmers have two motives: To obtain fortune, and to negotiate magical power. To achieve these goals, Javanese turtle dove admirers and experts generally recognize linguistic expressions that are mostly metaphorical signifiers of characters of the birds, and that enable the farmers to select specific types of turtle dove. There are significant differences in metaphorical expressions concerning the target and source domains between those bords that have beautiful sound quality and those that bring magical power. The target and source domains for turtle dove quality of sound signify a corelative relation between beaks, heads, bodies and tail shapes and agricultural crops and household utensils. For seeking and avoiding magical power, the Javanese community compares similarities of the bird's physical characteristics (feather color, legs, singing and life habits, eye shapes, etc.) with Hindu Gods, community leaders, knights, buildings, traditional weapons, andn so forth.

References

- Hendrokumoro (2017). *Peribahasa Bahasa Jawa*. Tesis Doktor Program Studi Ilmu-ilmu Humaniora. Yogyakarta : Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Kovecses. Z. (2006). *Language, Mind, and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Setyari, A., D. (2007). *Penyandra Bentuk Tubuh Indah dalam Bahasa Jawa*. Yogyakarta. Tesis Program. Yogyakarta: Pascasarjana Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Sujono (2003). *Idiom Bahasa Jawa*. Tesis Pascasarjana. Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Wahab, A. (1990). Metafora sebagai Alat Pelacak Sistem Ekologi. *Pertemuan Linguistik Lembaga Bahasa Atma Jaya III*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Wardaugh, R. (1986). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- Wijana, I., D., P. (1995). Metaphors of Colors in Indonesian. *Humaniora*, 27. 1 February. Faculty of Cultural Sciences. Yogyakarta: Gadjah mada University. Pp.3-13.
- Wijana, I., D., P. (2015). Wangsalan dalam Bahasa Jawa. *Jati Diri Manusia Indonesia dala Pembentukan Karakter Bangsa*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press. pp. 111-126.
- Wijana, I., D., P. (2016). The Use of Metaphors in Indonesian Plant Names. *Language, Literature, and Society*. Yogyakarta: Sanatha Dharma University. pp. 56-67.
- Wijana, I., D., P. (2016). Source Domains of Indonesian Slangy Metaphorical Expressions. *The 4th Graduate Students Conference Proceeding*, Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University. pp. 1-8.
- Wijana, I., D., P. (2018). Metaphors of Animal Names in Indonesian. *Deskripsi Bahasa*. Volume I, No. 1. Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra. Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada. Pp. 1-7.