Metaphor of AMOK in traditional Malay text corpora: an analysis using the Hybrid Theory

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the metaphors of amok in the corpora of traditional Malay texts. The study utilizes the corpus data from the Malay Concordance Project (MCP). The selected works are Sejarah Melayu (Sulalat Al-Salatin), Hikayat Hang Tuah and Tuhfat Al-Nafis. Within this study, the metaphoric element of AMOK was analyzed using the Hybrid Theory by Tendahl (2009) which was later revised by Stöver (2010). The theory that hybridizes the pragmatic and cognitive linguistics approaches is supported by the Triple Processing model to produce a conceptual region that describes a lexical concept or meaning for words or phrases which are figurative or implicit in nature.

Keywords: metaphor, conceptual metaphor, conceptual region, amok, Hybrid Theory, text corpora

1. Introduction

Amok is a phenomenon typical of the Malay community. There are claims that the Malays as an ethnic group have the predisposition to go amok, resulting in the phenomenon to be an example of a culture-bound syndrome.
that is common to the Malays in Malaysia and Indonesia. Amok is also defined as “...an episode of sudden mass assault against people or objects usually by a single individual following a period of brooding that has traditionally been regarded as occurring especially in Malaysian culture but is now increasingly viewed as psychopathological behaviour occurring worldwide in numerous countries and cultures...(http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/amok).

Roff (1993), in his account of Frank Swettenham’s 32 long years of service (1872-1904) as a British colonial officer in British Malaya, also wrote about amok in the traditional Malay society back then. Frank claimed that there were negative traits among the Malays such as greed, superstition, extravagance, inclination to be in debts, incapability to settle their debts and calumny as a result of their tendency to pry. The Malays were also associated with amok. This was due to their habit of irritating people on a regular basis with surly remarks and the victims would avenge the inflicted pain with bloodshed. They would use a number of means for retribution which usually led to amok.

2. **AMUK: Psychology, Culture and Linguistics Perspective**

Previous research pertaining to the emotion or behaviour of amok has primarily been based on the psychological perspective. *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology* (2009: 30) defines amok as:

... a culture-bound syndrome originally in Malaysia but later also in Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Polynesia, Puerto Rico, and among the Navajo in North America, characterized by a period of hostile brooding, often precipitated by a perceived insult or affront, followed by an outburst of uncontrolled aggression directed at people and object in the vicinity (running amok) with *paranoid ideation and *automatism, followed by exhaustion and *amnesia for the violent behaviour. It is often interpreted in Western cultures as a *dissociative disorder. Also called amuck,...

Murphy (1973) in Tseng (2006) explored the history of amok in the Malaysian society. According to the author, between the 16th to the 18th century, individuals running amok were reacting to political violence. As a rule, people going amok would attack an identified target and they would not normally attack relatives or friends. The society back then regarded the person going amok as invincible. Nevertheless, during the 19th century, the nature and behaviour of amok had undergone changes. Amok was random and impetuous, followed by manslaughter and amnesia. Murphy (1973) noted that by the end of the 19th century, “the frequency of amok has declined; amok runners have much more frequently had a history of long-term psychosis, and amok has become a manifestation of psychoses rather than the act of a normal individual or the result of a dissociative reaction”. Martin (1999) believed that mythically amok is a random or unintentional behaviour as a result of “hantu belian”, the evil tiger spirit with supernatural power. The evil spirit would enter someone’s body and possess him to be violent and uncontrollable.

From the language and linguistics medium, Dellios (2008) found out that amok lexically is a loanword and has been incorporated into English. The borrowing dates back to the 16th century through translation work by the Portuguese. Dellios added that “…amok had gradually drifted from its original signification as a specialist fighting force of warriors. The term ‘run amok’ came to predominate, with the meaning of mindless killing by a frenzied individual”. During that time, amok was more of an act of combat and those involved were mostly under the influence of drugs viz. heroine or opium to feel physically stronger and fearless. Hazidi (2002) studied the aspect of lexical borrowing for amok from the Malay language into English using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) framework. The issue raised was inclined to the semantic aspect that the same word has the ability to produce different meanings especially in this case of language borrowing. His research discovered that when the lexical item amok was incorporated into English, the meaning of amok refers to a psychopathological behaviour under the influence of supernatural power. This concept contradicts the definition from the classical texts. Amok in the classical texts was portrayed as a planned act by a sane person who reacted to an order, target and time of action. This paper, thus, adds to the depth of knowledge about amok from the perspective of the
Malay language and linguistics. The focus is on the investigation of emotion metaphors of amok in the classical Malay texts using the Hybrid Theory.

3. Methodology

Data in this research were obtained directly from the Malay Concordance Project corpus database by accessing the lexical item amok from the selected classical Malay texts viz. *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Tuhfat Al-Nafis* and *Sejarah Melayu*. The corpora consisting emotion metaphors of amok were isolated from the raw corpora. As a result, there were only 22 corpus data with metaphors that were analyzed with the Hybrid Theory framework. All of the following are part of the corpora representing the emotion metaphors of amok.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample of Corpus Data</th>
<th>Ad Hoc</th>
<th>Image Schema</th>
<th>Conceptual Metaphor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SM 156:30</strong> ... &quot;Tahanlah amuk Hamzah akhir zaman ini!&quot; Maka laha ditempuhnya ke dalam rakyat Pasai yang seperti laut itu, habis pecah; barang yang bertemu habis dibunuhnya. (trans: SM 156:30... &quot;Resist this amok (Hamzah’s amok) at the end of the age!&quot; So he penetrated the throng of Pasai people, separating them; killing those in his way)</td>
<td>Narrowing</td>
<td>Linear order and Force</td>
<td>AMOK IS A RESULT OF RESISTANCE AND REACTING FORCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuah 324:2</strong> ..... maka segala orang itu pun habis lari tiada berketahuan perginnya. Maka Hang Kasturi pun terdiri di halaman itu dengan kerinya menantikan amok Si Jebat.. (trans: Tuah 324:2..... thus, all the people scattered and dispersed in different. And Hang Kasturi stood in the yard with his kris, waiting the amok by Jebat)</td>
<td>Narrowing</td>
<td>Linear order</td>
<td>AMOK IS WAITING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SM 190:28</strong> Maka dikeluari oleh orang Kelantan, lalu berperang, beramuk-amukan, terlalu sabur, rupa kilat cahaya senjata seperti kilat di langit, sabung-menyabung, gemeruh bunyi bahana tempik hulubalang, dan gemenring bunyi senjata (trans: SM 190:28 Out they came the Kelantanese and they fought, running on amok rapidly, the weapons shining like lightning in the sky, thunderous, deafening was the shrieks of the warlords, and the jingling of the weapons)</td>
<td>Broadening</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>AMOK IS FIRE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TN 448:19</strong> Adalah Lanun yang datang mengamuk itu kira-kira seratus orang banyaknya, maka apabila mati rajanya dan panglima-panglimanya maka larilah semuanya. (trans: TN 448:19. the pirates who went amok was about 100 in number, and when the king and admirals died they ran away)</td>
<td>Narrowing</td>
<td>Linear order</td>
<td>AMOK IS AN ENTITY THAT ARISES AND DISAPPEARS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuah 284:11</strong> Jika Laksamana dan segala hulubalang Melayu itu masuk mengamuk ke dalam negeri, serta ia membakar, siapakah dapat menentang matanya (trans: Tuah 284:11 If the Laksamana and all the Malay warlord penetrated and ran amok into the land, and he destroyed with fire, who can meet his eyes)</td>
<td>Narrowing</td>
<td>Vessel</td>
<td>THE BEHAVIOUR OF AMOK IS A VESSEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuah 257:3</strong> maka penjurit yang dua ratus itu pun kehijahan dilihat orang, mengamuk terlalu banyak seperti ribut datangnya, tiada berputusan datangnya (trans: Tuah 257:3. the 200 soldiers seemed by the people to run amok, vast in number like a hurricane)</td>
<td>Broadening</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>AMOK IS A RAPID ACT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study applies the Hybrid Theory for data analysis. The Hybrid Theory was proposed by Tendahl (2008) through his research *A Hybrid Theory of Metaphors: Relevance Theory and Cognitive Linguistics*. Stöver (2010) refined the theory with the introduction of the Triple Processing model that combines all the methods suggested by Tendahl (2008) but is arranged with two types of representations: 1) propositional representation via inferential processes and 2) imagistic-experiential representation via simulation. According to Stöver (2010): …this model has the advantage that it provides the logical precision of Relevance Theory, catering for psychologically plausible communication processes, while at the same time benefiting from cognitive-
linguistic insights concerning a holistic understanding of the world and how things relate to each other,…

Rozaimah and Nor Hashimah (2013) explained that the Triple Processing model includes three complementary processes viz. simulation, metarepresentational and inferential. The simulation process engaged with a literal interpretation of meaning. Discourse at this level is explicative in nature. The inferential process, on the other hand, involves implicative discourse. In order to understand a phrase meaning or a metaphorical lexical item, the simulation and inferential processes occur simultaneously which include the incorporation of ad hoc concept in the conception of the Relevance Theory and domain mapping based on the cognitive linguistics approach. Meanwhile, the metarepresentational process serves to provide input and information mediator to the inferential process, a process comprising a reader or listener’s imagistic experience to attain a communicated meaning i.e. an intelligible meaning. The communicated meaning is stored in the listener or speaker’s conceptual region and will be reprocessed as part of the experience, information, or encyclopaedic entry as well as the bodily experience.

4. Findings and Discussions

The traditional Malay texts are rich with numerous themes to represent the common phenomena in the traditional society back then. They seem to include themes related to emotions as inset within the text content. As a general rule, the variety of emotions in a classic text is not showcased but skillfully concealed with expressions or lexical items that lead to metaphoric representation of emotions. What is meant by metaphor? Za’ba (2003) defined metaphor as an old adage that expresses a meaning by designating it to an otherwise similar thing, creating a two-fold meaning. The Malay metaphors can be divided into several types such as ones that are created through comparison, analogy, idioms, proverbs, maxim, figurative speech and sarcasm, proverbs, simile, metonymy and personification. They are used to express an incredible meaning which is abstract (Hassan Ahmad, 2003). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claimed “…our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” which indicated that metaphor is a common conceptual system, the way of thinking and natural act. In general, metaphors are perceived as a tool to portray a poetic imagination which is rich with a rhetorical aspect. Kövecses (2000) claimed that metaphors are not only considered as a cognitive mechanism to understand an abstract entity, but they are also used to conceptualize emotion and experiences related to emotion.

The emotion of amok was extracted from the corpus of Sejarah Melayu (Sulalat Al-Salatin), Hikayat Hang Tuah and Tuhfat Al-Nafis as mechanism to reflect and manifest the conceptual region, mind and cognition of the ancient Malays. Amok among the Malays were influenced by the cognitive factor and physical and emotional experience such as oppression, vengeance, retribution, annoyance and rage. Undeniably, it occurred not without a reason and was certainly not random and arbitrary. In Hikayat Hang Tuah, Tuhfat Al-Nafis and Sejarah Melayu, there has been an implicit use of metaphors which requires an advanced interpretation to make sense of their meaning as is reflected in the following example:

(a) Tuah 145:7,, "Di mana orang mengamuk itu?" Maka Patih Gajah Mada itu pun berkata-kata orang mengamuk yang terlalu derasnya, bernyala-nyala seperti api, (trans: Tuah 145:7.., “Where is the man on amok?” Hence, Patih Gajah Mada retorted the man who ran amok was too quick like blazing fire)

The process of interpreting meaning will produce a conceptual region of emotion for amok to describe a lexical concept or meaning for the figurative or implicit word or phrases based on its use and lexical justification from the selected works. The process is conducted by incorporating an ad hoc concept in the conception of Relevance Theory, followed by the process of domain mapping based on the cognitive linguistics approach. Stöver (2010) argued that the incorporation of the ad hoc concept and domain mapping occur simultaneously. The ad hoc concept is the speaker’s thinking component that can be interpreted by the listener at a single moment which is specific and temporal in nature (Carston, 2002). This allows the narrowing or broadening of meaning to attain the best interpretation for a vague lexical item. Ad hoc is an essential concept in the Hybrid Theory. The incorporation of the ad hoc concept for data (a) involved the ad hoc of broadening. The broadening concept
focuses more on the form of metaphors, figures of speech and representation or non-literal discourse. The listener will codify the concept coded by the lexical items and attempt to search for specific logical and encyclopaedic traits. The listener considers this discourse a rough guide to arrive at the speaker’s intention. Consequently, the listener will base his/her choice on the acquired traits by eliminating irrelevant input in the context and receiving relevant input as a description of the speaker’s opinion.

Phrase (a) *the man who ran amok was too quick like blazing fire* is interpreted using the broadening ad hoc concept. This expression is a metaphoric expression which can hardly be interpreted without making sense of a prior context. Through the broadening ad hoc, assumption and implicative conclusions are able to be drawn to understand the metaphors. Out of the many generated assumptions, only one will be made the most relevant conclusion. Phrase (a) *the man who ran amok was too quick like blazing fire* can create an implicative conclusion as follows:

i) The nature or behaviour of someone running amok is heat.
ii) The nature or behaviour of someone running amok is perspiring heavily.
iii) The nature or behaviour of someone running amok is of indomitable and burning spirit.
iv) The nature or behaviour of someone running amok is panting.

The drawn assumption needs to be related to the nature of fire. In this context, the nature of fire which are smouldering, perilous as it grows and difficult to extinguish when it turns into blaze are related to the characteristics of a person who runs amok. Based on the context of discourse and cognitive environment, the nature of a person going amok are of indomitable spirit, powerful, and dare to take on anyone in his way. Thus, the third (iii) interpretation was chosen as the implicative conclusion i.e. the Malaccan and Kelantanese warlords have fought gallantly in battles and the behaviour of amok, fighting on the warzone which was hard to defeat. The metarepresentational process of (a) *the man who ran amok was too quick like blazing fire* involves domain mapping of the nature of fire included in the emotion domain of amok. The domain mapping has produced a metaphoric conception that AMOK IS FIRE. Metaphoric conception is a form of cognitive mechanism employed to appreciate an abstract entity through a concrete object. The concrete object will usually be used as a source domain to figure out an abstract domain known as the target domain. Thus, in this context FIRE is a concrete object and it is included in the source domain and AMOK is an abstract entity serving as a source domain. The OBJECT image schema is also created in the metarepresentational process as depicted in Figure 2.

Santibanez (2002) defined the OBJECT image schema as *experientially grounded in our everyday interaction with our own body and with other discrete entities in the world*. In other words, the OBJECT image schema is an experience or entity which has a connection with our physique and other entities in the world. Object is also something tangible and observable such as things or tools. Lakoff (1987) and Lakoff & Johnson (1980) presented the concept of image schema as gestalt experience that appears from sensorimotor activities as we manipulate objects, orientate ourselves in space and time as well as divert the focus of our perception for various purposes. The image schema is also an organization of experiences in the form of images and stored in the human mind and can be retrieved to understand or make sense of new concepts.

The discussion of data (b) involves the construction of the narrowing ad hoc concept. It allows the issue of ambiguity to be solved by targeting a specific lexical item and strengthen the concept codified by the lexical item. The relationship between the proposition form with the contextual set of assumptions allows the attainment of cognitive effects and some of these assumptions will be retrieved from the encyclopaedic entry of the narrowed concept. The displaying of the incorporation of narrowing ad hoc concept leads to a simpler process of meaning interpretation. The narrowing ad hoc is usually applied when the lexical item or expression is vague or if
it carries several inferences and the readers/listeners may choose or omit irrelevant assumptions to the contexts which will restrain the intended meaning.

(b) SM 156:30 ... Maka Tun Hamzah pun bertempik melambung-lambung dirinya, katanya, "Tahanlah amuk Hamzah akhir zaman ini!" Maka lalu ditempuhnya ke dalam rakyat Pasai yang seperti laut itu, habis pecah; barang yang bertemu habis dibunuhnya. Maka segala orang Melaka pun ...

(trans: SM 156:30 ... Thus, Tun Hamzah shrieked while tossing himself saying, “Resist this amok (Hamzah’s amok) at the end of the age!” So he penetrated the throng of Pasai people, separating them; killing those in his way. Thus, the Melaka people ...)

The example in data (b) i.e. phrase resist this amok (tahanlah amuk) is perceived as vague and implicit because it carries several references and can be interpreted as remaining firm, unbored, not tumbling down, strong, steadfast and firmly bearing challenges, et cetera. It is clear that the phrase resist (tahanlah) carries numerous inferences and as a reader or listener, an attempt to understand the phrase will lead to ambiguity of meaning. In the context above, data (b) refers to the act of willingness and ability to resist and react to the act of amok. Based on the narrowing ad hoc, the reader/listener will choose the most relevant inference in Zone C for the phrase resist this amok (tahanlah amuk)*. Thus, it will result in the intended meaning which is Tun Hamzah challenging the Pasai people to fight him i.e. resist and react to his amok. Thus, the meaning in L is omitted as indicated in Figure 3.

![Figure 3: Mapping of narrowing ad hoc concept for resist this amok (tahanlah amuk) phrase](image)

The ad hoc process of narrowing is a mental simulation that occurs simultaneously at the level of imagistic-experiential representations or at the level of metarepresentational process. At this level, the metaphoric conception is also created which involves the domain mapping process and the projection of image schema. Based on data (b), the metarepresentational process for the phrase resist this amok produces a metaphoric conception of AMOK IS THE RESULT OF RESISTANCE AND REACTING FORCE through domain mapping of BEHAVIOUR of willingness and ability to resist and react, which is aimed to the amok emotion domain. The phrase resist this amok has also profiled the image schema of the LINEAR ORDER and FORCE due to the fact that the lexical item resist (tahanlah) has conceptualized the activity with a source or reason and aim.

Based on data (b), Tun Hamzah had challenged the Pasai people to fight him and amok that was manifested seems to be the aim for the Pasai people to react or attack. The lexical item resist has also conceptualized the force schema through a person’s mental and cognitive experience. The image scheme of FORCE involves an interaction between the abstract and concrete entities. Some of the elements involved are the source and aim of force, direction and force power as well as the movement of source and aim. The image schema of LINEAR ORDER also contains the transmissive element and is connected to time for it carries an aim or direction. The image schema of the LINEAR ORDER and FORCE for the phrase resist this amok is displayed in Figure 4.
Figure 4 indicates that TR1 which is Tun Hamzah aimed to challenge the Pasai people (LM) to resist or react to the act of amok. TR2 refers to the act of amok which is an attack on the Pasai people. The arrow refers to the strength and force from Tun Hamzah’s amok. The term trajector (TR) and landmark (LM) were introduced by Langacker (1987) in his cognitive grammar. TR is the focal point and is usually of a supporting role in a profiled scenario. LM is the focus point and commonly becomes the supporting participant in a specific profiled scenario. Ungerer and Schamid (1996) stated that the trajector “...stands for the figure or most prominent element in any relational structure” whereas landmark refers to “…the other entity in a relation” (1996: 161). LM in Figure 5 is the description of the Pasai people who were Tun Hamzah’s aim. The sequence of Figure 5 is depicted by Tun Hamzah as the source, amok as a path or medium to achieve the aim and target, and the aim is the Pasai people.

After the display of the ad hoc process and domain mapping through the Triple Processing, another conceptual region for the emotion of amok can be created. The conceptual region is a point for an accumulation of word meanings connected from various elements such as domain, image scheme and metaphoric conception. The conceptual region is an outcome of the incorporation of broadening and narrowing ad hoc concept as well as the dual-domain mapping (source domain and target domain). Questions like, “How do we understand or explain the process involved in a person’s mind when they create abstract meaning and non-literal in nature especially metaphors” can be summarized in the conceptual region and eventually the comprehension of a certain word/lexis or phrase becomes clearer and can be easily interpreted. Tendahl (2008) stated that the conceptual region “…is usually too unspecified in order to call it the meaning of a word.” The conceptual region for the emotion of AMUK in the corpus data from three traditional Malay texts has been successfully produced through the metaphoric analysis and application of the Hybrid Theory as visualized in Figure 5 overleaf.

5. Conclusion

Metaphor is perceived beyond the notion of being the figures of speech, for it is also regarded as a way of thinking and a channel to express information, meaning or implicit messages. This proves that the ancient Malay community frequently used metaphors in their daily lives. Everything was expressed based on a collective experience gathered from the environment, custom, culture and way of life at that time. The incorporation of the Hybrid Theory in examining the metaphoric aspect can be regarded as current and scientific in the research field of metaphors specifically and the linguistics field in general.
Figure 5: Conceptual region for emotion of AMUK

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