

## **From Abstract to Concrete: Associating the Users' Tweets on "Success"**

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### **Abstract:**

*By having Twitter for their interaction, users are demanded to express their idea in short-clear-easy to understand tweets. This condition pushes them to formulate every single word to conceptualize their idea as what happens to #success. They must build a tangible explanation of the idea of 'success' that is frequently determined by their life experience. This research is aiming to investigate how the users from the entire world associate their thinking about 'success'. This research used the descriptive qualitative method by having tweets as the main data gained from Twitter during 2018. The data were analysed by using domain analysis attached to Conceptual Metaphor in Cognitive Semantics approach. The discoveries of this investigation are success is book, success is building, success is degree, success is food, success is gift, success is iceberg, success is journey, success is product, success is profession, success is trade, and success is money.*

**Keywords:** *cognitive semantics, conceptual metaphor, success, twitter*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Since we are social creature, we cannot escape from interacting and communicating to each other (Antonova, 2014), at least to the closest person in our life. Basically, communication is just a tool for us to deliver our messages in which there are

meanings in them that we want our interlocutors to understand. Unfortunately, understanding meaning is not as easy as reading the messages because meaning can be interpreted into many things.

In communication, people use the variation of phrase even people use figurative languages such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, and so on. However, sometimes people do not realize that we use metaphor in expressing something in our daily communication because they think it only can be found in literary work (Kurniawati, Tallapessy, and Diana, 2014). Besides, people also do not recognize how to conceptualize their idea into utterances in context. They talk in the smallest concept through description, explanation, or narration. Even, the concept in their thought does not meet the understanding in their interlocutors' mind because often they lose the important thing in communication that is the context (Raffaelli & Katunar, 2016). This is why this research is conducted. Through the conceptual metaphor, the combination of concept and metaphor, the utterances will be easily understood by the interlocutors because it transposes the abstract thing in the mind to the concrete one that is tangible.

Success is subjective. Every person has the different standard to mean the success. Magically, every time people have farewell after a long-time-no-see meeting with old friends, they say "success for you". Even, they do not clarify what they mean by "success". That is the other reason why this research is conducted. It would be beneficial to describe the findings of this research in order to make people realise that "success" is not merely the goal of life, achievement, or other interpretation.

*The road to success is the road less travelled! It's an uphill battle. But it's worth it.*  
(from Twitter)

That example depicts the use of "success". The user would like to express the essence of "success". S/he analogises the value of "success" by the features of "the road", "battle", and "worth". The expectation is that the readers will easily understand what s/he means by the "success".

Regarding to the aforementioned research topic, a number of publications remain deeper investigation. Tur (2015) expresses his findings on the relation between LOVE and its conceptual metaphor gained from Twitter through #cintaadalah. Because the hashtag (#) has already stated the definition of LOVE expressed by people, it is directly correlated to the source domains. The same challenge has been chosen by Alzawaydeh and Alghazo (2018) who explores the essence of football in its conceptual metaphor through news headlines that the characters must be limited. some of their findings were analysed out of context. They simplified a certain feature of a game, such winning, as the only feature owned by football. The finding, for example, "Football is a Magic" is based on the data from news headline "Ozil and Sanchez come up trumps for Wenger" to the concept "Wining as playing a trick". Furthermore, Wijana (2016) concerns on the use of metaphor in plant names

in Indonesia related to the form, locus of metaphor, source domains, association between the target and the source domains, even the social factor beyond the association. The feature that must be point out is the analysis can show the identity and social cultural condition of the plant through naming system.

Based on the reason, the data of this research would be gained from Twitter, one of the most famous social media. Twitter is created 13 years ago by Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams (Kelly, 2019). Even though, this application has been used for a long time but it is still popular until now. People would rather to use it to share and shout their arguments, feeling, even creativity in managing words to be a beautiful quotation. In addition, Twitter has several excellences compared to other social media. One of them is Twitter has good search engine, which makes the researcher easy to get the data by using particular function, namely advanced search to obtain the specific data that researcher needs.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Association in Conceptual Metaphor**

Lakoff and Johnson have stated that metaphor is not viewed as characteristic of the language meaning. Metaphor is not only about thought, but also it expresses an action (Cserep, 2014). They underlined that metaphor is used in our everyday life.

“Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008, p.3).

They give more explanation that our conceptual system plays the central role in defining our everyday realities. The way people think, experience, and what people do in everyday live are matters of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008, p.8). Deignan (2016) and Li (2010) emphasize on the issue that they also give an example to clarify their concept by having the underlined words as the features of the concrete thing “war” they convey about “argument”.

ARGUMENT IS WAR

your claims are indenfisible

He attacked every weak point in my argument

His criticisms were right on target

I've never won an argument with him.

“Those examples not only talk about argument in terms of war. But also, it talks about the reality that sometimes we can win or lose arguments. In arguing with an opponent, we attack their positions and defend our own by stating our argument right on point” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008, p.5).

Theoretically, conceptual metaphor has two domains. The name of the two domains are source domain and target domain. The source domain is domain as a means to understand the target domain (a conceptual domain). They are the metaphorical linguistic expression, whereas target domain is conceptual domain that is understood by looking to the way of the source domain. So, the formula is “CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN ‘A’ IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN ‘B’” (Kovecses, 2010, p.4).

Technically, to understand the formula “A in terms of B”, we need to apply conceptual mappings to correspondence between source domain and target domain. The domain that is talked of metaphorically, ‘love’ in the example, is called as the target domain while the domain that provides the metaphor, ‘journey’ in the example, is called as the source domain. This mapping is beneficial for understanding the conceptual metaphor, and construe abstract domain (target) to more physical domain (source) (Kovecses, 2010, p.8).

<i>Source: JOURNEY</i>		<i>Target: LOVE</i>
The Travelers	⇒	The Lovers
The Vehicle	⇒	The love relationship itself
The Journey	⇒	Events in the relationship
The distance covered	⇒	The progress made
The obstacles encountered	⇒	The difficulties experienced
Decisions about which way to go	⇒	Choices about what to do
The destination of the Journey	⇒	The goal (s) of the relationship

(Kovecses, 2010, p.9)

## 2.2 Twitter

Twitter is one of the social networks. It is text-based social network which allows people to write anything on their post. Therefore, people can argue or share anything to cyber world through it. However, people only have 140 characters in length to post or tweets their idea on their post to their followers.

Taken from Twitter’s website, it has value that can be shared to all accounts in the world. The value is “We believe the open exchange of information have a positive impact to the world” ([https://about.twitter.com/en\\_us/values/twitter-for-good.html](https://about.twitter.com/en_us/values/twitter-for-good.html)). Their principle is also great that they dedicated their work through making twitter as a safe place to express freely ([https://about.twitter.com/en\\_us/safety.html](https://about.twitter.com/en_us/safety.html)).

This social network also enables people to read other people’s post, so it indirectly gives other people information, even the private information (feeling, emotion,

opinion, or daily activities of the users who wrote the post) for free. Twitter has some facilities that satisfy its users. It has some features such as; tweets, home or feed, notifications, messages, following, followers, retweets, pinned tweets, hashtags, etc (<https://www.shopify.com/guides/twitter/understanding-twitter-features>).

The special feature which is different to other social networks is advanced search (<https://twitter.com/search-advanced>). It facilitates people to search information specifically. Hashtag (#) also has big advantage to people in collecting the similar information. "Hashtags are the words or phrases that follow the (#) sign in a tweet. Hashtags are designed to track trending topics and organize subject matter" (<http://tweeternet.com/>).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research was applying the descriptive qualitative design. The description was put on as the way to describe language as it was and as the background to understand the language as the lingual unit (Sudaryanto, 1992, p.7). Meanwhile, the qualitative research was used as the means for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribing to a social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Therefore, this research design organized (1) the collecting data, (2) the interpretations from the data obtained, and (3) the reports of the data obtained (Creswell, 2014, p.75).

The research had tweets as the main data and used the secondary data source gained by sorting the tweets #success in Twitter finder during 2018, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018-31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. To organise the data, the domain analysis was needed. The data were read, classified, and interpreted to have general sense of the information and reflection of the overall meaning shared. The last step was validation. In this step, the peer-review and the theoretical validation were conducted to have the credible result for the conclusion.

### **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

From the data gained and filtered through the research method, 254 tweets on "success" are containing the conceptual metaphor. From the data, they can be categorised into 39 source domains representing target domains with at least 4 examples for each to support the analysis. Yet, 11 of them are the strongest findings to be discussed in this publication.

#### **4.1 Success is Book**

Book is a thing that contains story, note, or other information as a tool that we use to write or express something. In this association, the target is success and the source is book.

“Each new day is a blank page in the dairy of your life. The secret of #success is in turning that dairy into the best story you possibly can!”

The datum can be interpreted that dairy means the life of a person. Then, blank page here means new day. The expression “turning that dairy into the best story you possibly can!” means that a person or people can change their life as they want. Whether they want to be success or not, it depends on their choice and their effort to achieve it. All people can be successful. Being successful is simply by starting a new day through changing their selves, their habit to be better as they can.

“Success is a finished book, a stack of pages each of which is filled with words. If you reach that point, you have won a victory over yourself no less impressive than sailing single – handed around the world.”

That datum can be seen that “stack of pages each of which filled with words” means that they are events that have been through by the people who search for success. They have been doing many efforts from single little thing to many big things. They also have passed many challenges, threat, happiness, sadness, pain, and many obstacles. Once, they achieve their goal in their life, it means they are successful that they have been “finished their book”.

#### **4.2 Success is Building**

Building is a thing that people can see and touch. Moreover, it can be a place where people can take a rest and do many things inside. Building has many elements such as foundation, brick, door, wall, stairs, elevator, and many more. In this association, the target is success, and the source is building.

“Success is built brick by brick.”

Previously, it has been mentioned that one of the elements of success is brick. To build a building needs some bricks. Therefore, bricks here can be interpreted as events, specifically events that lead to success. Moreover, the phrase brick by brick means that to gain success need some process, some little actions that finally turns out into big things.

“Success is definitely not hiding in your comfort zone.”

The word zone in the example means an area, a place. Furthermore, the interpretation of the word zone can be used for a building, because building covers an area and a place. Then, the word comfort can be understood as pleasant feeling that make people do not want to move. The whole interpretation for this tweet is success cannot be reached if you just stay in your place, and not doing anything. If you want to be successful you should do something, chase your success with actions, and go out from your comfort zone.

### **4.3 Success is Degree**

The source is degree and the target is success. Degree is a level of something. In the association that success is degree can be interpreted that success has been measured how well you are. Based on the data that researcher obtained there are level, highest level, and how high that represent this association.

“The level of your #success is dependent on how much you are willing to #fail – just don’ fail doing the same thing repeatedly, because you can’t solve a problem with the same level of thinking that created it.”

The example above mentions “you cannot solve problem with the same level of thinking” represents that once you conquer the first level than you can turn to the next level which is hardest than before. So, if we still fail in the same thing repeatedly it means that we are not ready for the next thing that we are heading to which is sometimes more difficult than the previous one. Therefore, never give up, keep learning, fix the failures, and upgrade your level to face the next harder challenge in the future.

“Success is not how high you have climbed but how you make positive difference to the world. This is what leadership in the fight for injustice. All people of America, let’s be a successful for the American dream so our children can learn how to be successful.”

The phrase “how high” represents degree where success is to be measured. How high you have climbed means the achievement. It makes positive difference to the world means contribution to people and the world. The sentence “This is what leadership in the fight for injustice” means that the contribution gives benefit to people and defends injustice. Next, noun phrase “American dream” means belief that people in America can be successful. Therefore, the whole interpretation for the example is that success is measured by how you contribute to society and the world, not on how great your achievement for yourself. Your contribution to the society and the world gives prosperity to the world.

### **4.4 Success is Food**

Success that is associated to food means that the source is food and the target is success. Food is something that we can eat. Basically, some features that represent food are flavours (such as: sour, tasty, delicious, etc) recipe, ingredients, texture, etc. Then, from conceptual metaphor mappings, researcher obtains: proper desire being kept fresh, ingredients in the formula of success, and recipe of success. Therefore, those metaphorical expressions can be associated as food.

“The secret of success is proper desire being kept fresh!”

The phrase kept fresh can be associated to a fish that we have to keep it always fresh. It will be delicious to eat. However, this tweet means that success is desire

which remains new to achieve something. Hence, in achieving success we should have new spirit all day, because basically some people are usually on fire only in the beginning.

“One of the single most important ingredients in the formula of #success is knowing how to get along with people.”

The example mentions ingredients which is depicted to a food. Ingredients can be interpreted as something that you must prepare before you start to achieve success. Then, the word “formula” can be interpreted as how to achieve success. So, whole this datum means a clue to become successful. In conclusion, tip to become successful is knowing how to socialize and get along with people.

“Recipe of success. The #recipe of #success is to study while others are #sleeping, work while others are loafing, prepare while others are playing and dream while others are wishing.”

“recipe” in the example represents a food. Recipe is whole things in making something. It consists of preparation, and procedure. Therefore, formula can be interpreted as tip to become successful. The phrases “study while others are sleeping, work while others are loafing, prepare while others are playing and dream while others are wishing” mean that we should do something to gain success faster than other people do, work harder than people try. Moreover, we should have more actions, efforts, and dedications than other people do. To become successful, we should always learn in every condition, and give more efforts than others do to achieve the target.

#### **4.5 Success is Gift**

Success is a gift means that success is the result of doing something. The examples below reflect that the target is success and the source is a gift/reward.

“Empowering #success is a gift of freedom. It’s a foundation of strength on which to raw, plus the energy to #MakeDifference. It takes #courage, #confidence, clarity. Gain that, and more in this program designed for your success.”

Success is called as a gift or result. The example “empowering success is a gift of freedom” means that freedom to express or to conduct our passion will lead to success. The next phrase in the following sentence “it’s a foundation of strength” means that the gift is the base of strength. Then, “which is to raw” means it is first thing. Therefore, the whole meaning from the first and second sentences in the example is freedom to conduct our passion will lead to success, and it is the base and first thing that people should have before starting on the way to reach success. The next phrase “plus the energy” means in addition people should do actions in order to reach the target. Moreover, the next sentence adds “it takes #courage, #confidence, clarity”. Then, the phrase “gain that, and more in this program designed for your success” means gain all of it and join the program then success is yours. The

interpretation of this example can be the freedom to conduct our passion will lead to success, and it is the base and first thing that people should have before starting on the way to reach success. However, it needs actions to obtain success. Also, it needs courage, confidence, and clarity. If you have fulfilled all of those things, then success will be yours.

"#Success is a huge reward, no matter how small our task. It gives us a strong self – confidence, and a real – trust, and a lot of self – respect, and a lot of self – respect, and a pride."

The example above has the same pattern to identify the success and reward has the same role in defining the success. "a huge reward" is the phrase indicating the result of any effort the people do, "no matter how small our task". The form of reward as the result of being success is stated in the next phrases such as "strong self-confidence", "a real-trust", "a lot of self-respect", and "a pride".

#### **4.6 Success is Iceberg**

Iceberg is a large ice seen floating in the sea but actually it has the other part sinking in the sea that is, often, huge. So, iceberg here can be interpreted as what common people see are different to the reality. In case, people just look at how smart person is, and they just think that the person is smart because s/he is gifted a genius brain. It may be right. But, there is a probability people do not see that s/he learns more than common people do, studies when they are sleeping, reads many books than people do, and sacrifices more effort to achieve the goal than people do.

"#Success is an Iceberg: what people see vs what really happens."

The target is success and the source is iceberg. It can be interpreted that what people see and reality are totally different. Sometimes, people too early to say "great job!" or "well done!" to congratulate his/her achievements without knowing the effort behind it. They see the superficial form of the success. The other instance is Great Wall in China. People will say "What a wonderful wall!" and enjoy the scene. It was created by million people. It consumed much time, energy, idea, and many untold sacrifices to keep it standing until now.

"Success is an iceberg, there is a lot more that meets the eye when it come to making a successful game!."

The sentence "there is a lot more that meets the eye when it come to making a successful game!" emphasizes that behind the success, there is an untold story of success that people do not know. There are more obstacles s/he completed to gain the success than people hear them through the story.

"#success is an iceberg! Don't compare and contrast, instead plan how to get there and prepare for the hard work. It will take. Map your learning needs to plan how to get there and get excited about the learning acquisition."

Success is an iceberg can be interpreted as what we see opposites to the reality. The phrase “don’t compare and contrast, instead plan how to get there and prepare for the hard work” means that people have different steps. They have their own destiny, time zone, and different things in how to deal with the challenges that lead to success. It is better to avoid comparing your success to other people’s success, even the challenges they faced. It will be better if you just think of yourself how to be successful or be improved with hard work by having a map “Map your learning needs to plan how to get there and get excited about the learning acquisition”.

#### **4.7 Success is Journey**

Journey is an event on doing a trip. Success is a journey itself can be defined as success is a process. People will experience failures, and the way how they achieve their success. the source, journey, does not say directly related to the target, success. However, there are several features indicating success is journey. They are road to success, encounter along the way to success, on the horizon, journey, path to success, right direction, parking spaces, bump, detour, turns, straight, the way to success, and dead-ends.

“The road to success is never straight. But you can turn your mistake into learning paths!”

The example “road to success is never straight” can be interpreted that the process in achieving success is not easy. People have to pass many obstacles, challenges, threats, and tempting things that can ruin the way to success. The other correlating example “but you can turn your mistake into learning paths” means that we can make the failures into something that people can learn to fix that failures. Even, people may have the skill after solving the obstacles for the future.

“The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking spaces.”

“Success is a long, windy road in every direction with bumps, dead-ends, new friendships and little tastes of freedom along the way.”

Those examples explain the same tone about success. There will be challenges and threats on the way to success. “many tempting parking spaces” is the example of the threat the people have to face during their trip to their destination to put aside their fatigue, boredom, and pain. If they choose to park their car, the success will come to them in a long time or even will not come to them. Meanwhile, “long, windy road in every direction with bumps, dead-end” represent the challenges and the threats for the second example. The process in achieving success is not easy. People must pass the threats and challenges. During the process, people of course will find their true friend and satisfying feeling, “new friendships and little tastes of freedom along the way”.

#### **4.8 Success is Product**

Product is a thing that has been made. It can be called as result. Although often it is closely related to commercial matters, in this context, it will be signified as what people produce by their effort.

“#Success is not given but created by who works for it.”

“Your #Success is made by you.”

The target is success and the source is product. It is what people create, not what people get without any effort. They change a certain thing to be another one as what they plan to gain. Success will be the same. People must create any effort they can complete with measurement. They optimise any chance they have and of course they fight to have their achievements that with their heart. But if people do nothing for their goal, they will lose their aims. It can be said that the product is failed. Therefore, it depends on you, the people who have the dream to achieve.

“No handouts! Success is product of Hard work!”

This example clearly states that the success needs hard work and the expected results will follow. “No Pain, No Gain” is the expression appropriately describing the essence of the example above.

#### **4.9 Success is Profession**

Being successful does not always mean that people have been rich, have many luxurious vehicles, have beautiful houses, and have other wealth but often people will be successful when they have a certain profession such as teacher, head of village, preacher, doctor, or writer. They do not care for the money they have as the example below.

“Success is when your signature turns into Autograph.”

A signature is an identity owned by a certain people. “when your signature turns into Autograph” is talking about the role not the wealth. It means that your presence is important enough to the other people’s life or aims. The professions for this kind of role are government, society leader, motivator, or thinker. The people feel their pride raises by having your signature as their additional identity in the society as seen in the next example below.

“#Walmart My favourite store. Brought little gifts for my 3 sisters. Thinking of the most remarkable Sam Walton his philosophy I really admire uncommon achievers like him. your #success is determined by who you are admire.”

By admiring someone, the way of success will be guided by the person’s achievements the people admire, the idol. All effort they have will also focus on what the idol did in the past.

#### **4.10 Success is Trade**

Trade is an event that people doing transaction. It is about buy, rent, pay, and sell. There are some metaphorical expressions that include to the association of success is a trade.

“1.917 New Millionaires each day, 79 New Millionaires each Hour. Now go sleep for 8 hours and count how much you missed! #Success is possible if you follow the right trading strategy!”

That tweet represents trade from the phrase “trading strategy”. In this tweet time is interpreted as money. If you spend your precious time just for playing, sleeping, and doing unimportant thing, it means that you just waste your money for useless things. However, if you use it for doing positive things that can improve your ability, skill, and so on, it means that you buy good and useful things.

“#success is available to anyone willing to pay the price in advance and in full to have it. That price is paid in time, energy, and persistence.”

The success associates to a trade. In trade we should pay if we buy a thing. That is how success similar to trade in which people should pay for the time, energy and persistence to buy and having a success. You will get high quality of the things you buy expensively. So do the effort. The more you do your effort, the higher the achievement you will get.

“#Success is never owned. It is always rented...”

Words “rented” and “owned” indicate an event where people doing trade transaction. This tweet means that all people can have similar success. Success is never owned, means that people who are successful do not remain being success, they may be loser when they cannot keep up the good work. The position of success can be replaced by the people who are capable to have it.

#### **4.11 Success is Money**

Money is a symbol of wealth that most people keep struggling on getting it by any effort. Money is also able to speak up, even change, the social status, attitude, and life style of the owners. Some believe that their life is only about money.

“Very frequently I’m asked to give my definition of #success. I believe success is getting a reasonable number of the things #money will buy.”

The measurement of the people’s success is having much money so they can buy the things they want to have. Moreover, they are able to instruct other people to what they want to either destructive or constructive work.

“World is full of people: Who don’t know their calling. Or Don’t make money. Or touch a lot of lives with their passion but don’t make money. Or make a lot of

money by doing thing they don't like. #Success is to have a passion which improves people's live and make money." (Datum 203)

The tweet explains that success is when people satisfy themselves by following their passion. This is closely related to a job they would like to have. Recently, a paradigm to have a job related to passion is considered respectfully by the youth in this internet era. Everything is easier now and stimulates what was impossible to be possible to do. This is a part of satisfaction in their life. Meanwhile, the other part of the satisfaction is money. They do their preference in one side, they get money as well on the other side. It is like "kill two birds with one stone".

## **6. CONCLUSION**

By the limitation of characters in Twitter, Conceptual Metaphor plays an important role in picturing people's mind through appropriate words. People need not to have bulky vocabularies to express but efficient way to convey as depicted in #success. People have various imaginations about success related to their background of life that they express in various analogies. Consequently, the readers must think deeply to understand the messages they convey. Some of them are success is book, success is building, success is degree, success is food, success is gift, success is iceberg, success is journey, success is product, success is profession, success is trade, and success is money.

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