Analysis of Rock Metaphor as Image of God in The Book of Psalm

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Abstract - Metaphor is a linguistic form usually used in literature genre, especially poem or lyric of songs. The meaning of metaphor is contradictory to its literal form, therefore, it needs to be analyzed to construct the meaning. This way is very important to translate metaphors properly rather than literally. The Book of Psalm is a part of The Bible consisting of poems, prayers, song, hymns and praises in which metaphors are frequently used. One of them is *rock metaphor* to describe an image of God. The purpose of this article to construct meaning of *rock metaphor* in Psalm by adopting mapping method and providing cultural and historical background.

Keywords: *metaphor, psalm, rock* and *God*

1. INTRODUCTION

In translation practice, metaphor is an object considered to have a high degree of difficulty and even untranslatability can be inevitable. Besides the cultural aspects that also determine the formation of meaning, from the perspective of cognitive linguistics, metaphor is seen as part of the conceptualization process that occurs in the realm of cognition (Lakoff & Johnson: 1980)[1]. Metaphor is not just a linguistic problem in a narrow sense, but a language phenomenon that originates from human cognitive activity in an effort to understand reality. Therefore, to find meaning (semantic) of metaphor at the lexical level as expressed through language, an analysis with conceptual metaphor theory is needed.   In this research, the phenomena are metaphors that function to image God in the translation text of the Psalms with Indonesian as Target Language. The mapping method is used as an analytical tool for *rock metaphors* appearing in the Psalms.
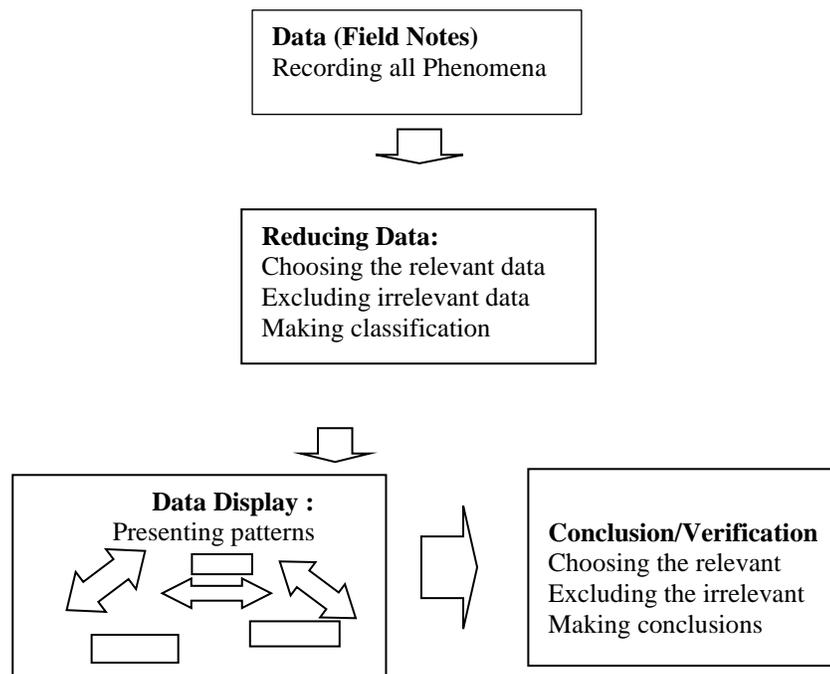
The Psalms are written expressions regarding the human experience of a transcendent God. To convey this kind of deep spiritual experience through language, the psalmist uses metaphorical forms to describe what or who God is like. This article aims to construct the meaning of *rock metaphor* in Psalm using mapping method and highlighted by cultural and geographical background.

2. METHOD

This research is descriptive-qualitative-interpretative in nature by involving in-depth and thorough investigation of qualitative data in the form of translations of religious metaphors in the Book of Psalm.. The main activity is collecting qualitative data, describing and then interpreting it. According to Sudaryanto (2002)[10] this type of research can also be categorized as an embedded case study because the units of translation, focus, and problems to be studied have been determined before the researcher goes into the field to explore the problem. The researcher will try to make abstractions on the basis of data that has been collected and classified through the data collection process and during the work process in the field.

2.1 Research Design

Therefore, qualitative research may be called as inductive process or grounded theory designed as follows (Sugiono 2004:94)[11] :

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┌────────────────────────────┐
│ Data (Field Notes)         │
│ Recording all Phenomena    │
└────────────────────────────┘
             ⇓
┌────────────────────────────┐
│ Reducing Data:             │
│ Choosing the relevant data │
│ Excluding irrelevant data  │
│ Making classification      │
└────────────────────────────┘
             ⇓
┌────────────────────────────┐      ┌────────────────────────────┐
│ Data Display :             │      │ Conclusion/Verification    │
│ Presenting patterns        │  ⇒   │ Choosing the relevant      │
│                            │      │ Excluding the irrelevant   │
│                            │      │ Making conclusions         │
└────────────────────────────┘      └────────────────────────────┘
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2.2 Data Collection Instrument

Rock in Source Language (English) is translated into Target Language (Bahasa Indonesia) as *gunung batu, bukit batu, or batu karang*. They refer to the same word, *rock*. Here are some verses using rock metaphor in Psalm as the data:

Mzm.18:3: Ya TUHAN *bukit batuku, kubu pertahananku* dan penyelamatku

Mzm.18:32: Dan siapakah *gunung batu* selain Allah kita?

Mzm.27:5: Ia mengangkat aku ke atas *gunung batu*

Mzm.28:1: Ya TUHAN *gunung batuku*

Mzm.31:3: Jadilah bagiku *gunung batu tempat perlindungan*, *kubu pertahanan* untuk menyelamatkan aku

Mzm. 31:4: Karena Engkaulah *batu karangku dan perlindunganku*

Mzm.62:3: Hanya Dialah *gunung batuku* dan keselamatanku,*kota bentengku* aku takkan goyah.

Mzm.73:26:Dagingku dan hatiku habis lenyap, tetapi Elohim adalah *batu karang* dan bagianku untuk selama-lamanya.

Mzm.78:35:Mereka teringat bahwa Allah adalah *gunung batu* mereka.

Mzm.94:22:Allahku adalah *gunung batu perlindunganku.*

Mzm.95:1:Bersorak-soraklah bagi *gunung batu* keselamatan kita.

Mzm.144:1:Terpujilah TUHAN, *gunung batuku.*

2.3 Data Analysis

Here mapping method adopted to analyze rock metaphor:

	Source Domain: Rock	**Target Domain: God**
Characteristic:	-Strong	Reliable
	-Remoted, hidden, safe place.	Safe place for refuge
Function:	To hide and find safe place from enemy pursue	Giving safe refuge

Rocks have characteristics that are solid, hard, and stable so they can't be shaken. This kind of rock hill also has a cave or a part that into which can be used as a safe hiding place and shelter from enemy attacks or bad weather in hot desert areas such as in the Palestinian area. In such a geographical context, the psalmist uses the characteristics and function of the rock as a source area to image the God he encounters in his life experiences.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The conceptualization of God as a place of refuge (rock) comes from real experience in connection with the use of sacred hills and caves as a place of refuge or refuge (Basson, 2005:12)[12]. Cognitively, the psalmist uses this concrete experience to understand and conceptualize abstract spiritual experience of God. In this way, a metaphor is created to image God as a place of refuge giving a sense of security from threats from enemies or bad weather.

According to Hill (1997:793)[13], the use of *rock* as Resource Domain places more emphasis on hardness so that it wants to convey the idea of stability and immovability.

The characteristics of this Source Domain are mapped to the Target Domain, namely God as the unshakable foundation of life, and a refuge providing a reliable guarantee of security. Sometimes rock is used for defense forts utilizing caves on the slopes of ravines that are difficult for pursuers (enemies) to reach, but easy to defend so that fighters or rebels use them as safe places of defense and refuge (Pariera 2008:242)[14]. This kind of fort is also used by people who is being chased by the king's forces even though his guilt has not been proven. For example, King David once experienced this kind of situation as recorded in the Book of 2 Samuel 22:4-5 as follows:

> Then David left there and fled to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his family heard about it, they went there and got him. Also gather to him everyone who is in difficulty, everyone who is being chased by the rivals, everyone who has a broken heart, then he will be their leader. Along with him were about four hundred people.

As a psalmist, David's real experience of hiding and surviving to save himself in a cave as a fortress became Source Domain in conceptualizing God as a safe refuge as emphasized in "David's Song of Thanks" (Ps 18:3):

> O LORD, my rocky hill, my stronghold and my savior,
>
> My God, my rock, my refuge, my shield,
>
> the horn of my salvation, my fortified city!

4. CONCLUSION

Based on discussion above, *rock* as Source Domain is used to describe the characteristics of God as Target Domain. The psalmist wants to convey meaning or message through rock metaphor that God is reliable to whom people may get a safe and truthful refuge, especially those are in troubles and difficulties. Using metaphor, it is easier to understand an abstract reality like God due to the use of common language or literal words as Source Domain.

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