



Conceptual Metaphor of “Quality” in Charles & Keith’s Marketing: A Cognitive Semantic Analysis

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Abstract. This research presents a cognitive semantics study in Charles & Keith's Instagram caption. It is conducted to observe the conceptual metaphors of “quality”, including each conceptual metaphor's types and image schema. The research used a qualitative method with a cognitive semantics approach. Moreover, conceptual metaphors are identified by examining the indirect relationships between two concepts that evoke implicit meanings. The mapping process demonstrates this phenomenon, which requires comparing two domains in particular expressions. Based on the analysis, there are 10 conceptual metaphors of “quality” classified into three types: 5 structural metaphors, 2 orientational metaphors, and 3 ontological metaphors. Moreover, 3 metaphors belong to the image schema of identity, 3 to the image schema of force, 2 to the image schema of space, and 2 to the image schema of existence. Generally, conceptual metaphors in captions as marketing tools employ concrete concepts that evoke ideal imagery, such as heaven and stars, to illustrate product benefits. Hence, they highlight the quality of products by portraying their excellence.

Keywords: *cognitive semantics; conceptual metaphors; Charles & Keith; Instagram caption*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini memaparkan studi semantik kognitif dalam takarir Instagram Charles & Keith. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengamati metafora konseptual “kualitas”, termasuk jenis dan skema citra dari setiap metafora konseptual. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan semantik kognitif. Lebih lanjut, metafora konseptual diidentifikasi dengan memeriksa hubungan tidak langsung antara dua konsep yang menunjukkan makna implisit. Adapun proses pemetaan menunjukkan fenomena ini, yang membutuhkan perbandingan dua domain dalam suatu ekspresi ungkapan. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, terdapat 10 metafora konseptual “kualitas” yang diklasifikasikan ke dalam tiga jenis: 5 metafora struktural, 2 metafora orientasional, dan 3 metafora ontologis. Selain itu, 3 metafora termasuk dalam skema citra identitas, 3 citra kekuatan, 2 citra ruang, dan 2 citra eksistensi. Umumnya, metafora konseptual dalam takarir sebagai alat pemasaran menggunakan konsep konkret yang membangkitkan citra ideal, seperti *heaven* dan *star*, untuk mengilustrasikan keunggulan produk. Hal tersebut digunakan untuk menonjolkan kualitas produk Charles & Keith melalui penggambaran keunggulan produk.

Kata Kunci: *semantik kongnitif; metafora konseptual; Charles & Keith; takarir Instagram*

Introduction

Social media has grown into significant communication and marketing media. Specifically, Instagram is currently one of the most prevalent social media sites. Numerous businesses utilize Instagram to promote their products and engage a broader audience. It might be regarded as such because Instagram's features enable users to share

a variety of written and visual content. Businesses can leverage Instagram's numerous features to give information about their brand's distinctive attributes, thereby attracting audience attention and instilling perceptions. As a result, their Instagram content can represent brand values or traits that are beneficial for numerous marketing goals (Lauren et al., 2022).

Charles & Keith is one of the brands that create engaging Instagram interactions under the username @charleskeithofficial. It is a well-known fashion company with a reputation for stylish designs and high quality, particularly in the footwear and accessories industries. The account currently has 2 million followers from various countries, demonstrating the brand's international appeal. In addition, this Singapore-based brand has grown its presence in numerous global markets, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the USA (Lim, 2023). Specifically, this account actively publishes pictures of their items with various worldwide artists serving as brand ambassadors, which enhances the visual of the brand's products. However, apart from the visually appealing images on Charles and Keith's Instagram account, another strength is equally essential and engaging, namely the use of conceptual metaphors in their captions. Here, the captions emphasize the worth of the product, which could enhance the customer's entire appearance. It is demonstrated through the use of verbs and nouns that are associated with other concepts, which certainly gives the readers imaginative meanings.

As an example, one of the captions used the phrase “the star of the show” in capturing their products. By reading this caption, the readers employ their cognitive abilities to interpret the phrase as a means to convey an abstract concept, particularly the product's prominent beauty. Briefly, there is a systematic conceptual relationship between the two concepts. In cognitive theory, it refers to the representation of one abstract and less familiar concept through another that is more familiar and perceptually accessible (Kravets et al., 2021). It aligns with the principle of conceptual metaphor theory that metaphors are not arbitrary but are rooted in our experiences of the surrounding reality (Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 2013). This phenomenon demonstrates that language is contextualized within our surroundings (Evans & Green, 2006).

By such understanding, conceptualization can be perceived as a meaning-construction process that employs linguistic units as stimuli for diverse conceptual operations. Meaning, specifically becomes the object examined in cognitive semantics. As stated by Saeed (2016), cognitive semanticists believe that the structure of reality as expressed in language is a creation of the human mind since humans lack access to a reality that is not subject to human categorization. Thus, cognitive semantics investigates meaning production, which is primarily conceptual. Moreover, metaphor is an important characteristic of cognitive semantics which becomes the central role in thought and language (Saeed, 2016). Specifically, Lakoff & Johnson (2003) elaborated that conceptual metaphors are the product of mental creation based on the analogy principle involving the conception of two domains, which are source domain and target domain. Moreover, the target domain is formed up of the immediate subject matter, and the source domain is where essential metaphorical reasoning occurs and where the source concepts employed in that reasoning are found. Therefore, there are cognitive mechanisms that transfer the experience (source domain) to other realms of experience (target domain) such that the second realm is understood from the first.

As a representation of the conceptual domain, the expression “time is money” exemplifies the metaphorical expression that occurs in contemporary English. In this metaphor, there are “time” as the source domain and “money” as the target domain. Specifically, ‘time’ is a precious commodity in Western culture that is used to achieve

particular purposes. People perceive time in the same way as they perceive money since they act as if time is a valuable commodity. As a result, constituent elements of 'money' relate to constituent elements of 'time' in a systematic way. Therefore, the elements in the target domain have existed and this metaphor arose as a result of preexisting analogies between the elements in the two domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). However, it must be noted that the concept of time in this metaphor is related to culture. Thus, it is not the fundamental reason for humans to comprehend it since there are cultures where this kind of concept does not exist.

Specifically, Lakoff & Johnson (2003) proposed three types of metaphors, namely structural metaphors, orientational metaphors, and ontological metaphors. In structural metaphor, the source domain includes a rather comprehensive structure for the target concept. In other words, the cognitive function of these metaphors is to allow speakers to understand target A through the structure of source B (Kövecses, 2010). Otherwise, ontological metaphors, as added by Kövecses (2010) give substantially less cognitive structure for target concepts than structural metaphors. Their cognitive responsibility appears to confer a new ontological status on general categories of abstract target concepts and to generate new abstract entities. Furthermore, another type of metaphor is the orientational metaphor, which arranges a full system of concepts in relation to one another rather than structuring one concept in terms of another. Moreover, orientational metaphors have something to do with spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, and central-peripheral (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). These concepts result from the fact that those spatial orientations have bodies that function as they do in human physical world.

In addition, Lakoff (1987) stated another theoretical construct in cognitive linguistics which embodies a conceptualization of experience, which is called image schema. They are schematic versions of domain representations and organize both human bodily and non-bodily experiences through metaphor (Croft & Cruse, 2004). Image schemas are relatively abstract representations derived from our everyday contact with and observation of the world around us. These experiences give rise to embodied representations, which serve as the foundation for conceptual structure (Evans & Green, 2006). Briefly, in cognitive linguistics, image schema is used to describe how language is reflected in the mind and how the mind impacts language use. It aids in the establishment of a link between abstract notions and physical reality, enabling humans to comprehend the meaning inherent in the language used, especially in metaphor. Specifically, Croft & Cruse (2004) proposed the image scheme category as presented below.

Table 1. The image scheme category proposed by Croft & Cruse (2004)

Space	Up-Down, Front-Back, Left-Right, Near-far, Center-Periphery, Contact
Scale	Path
Container	Containment, In-Out, Surface, Full-Empty, Content
Force	Balance, Counterforce, Compulsion, Restraint, Enablement, Blockage, Diversion, Attraction
Unity/Multiplicity	Merging, Collection, Splitting, Iteration, Part-Whole, Mass-Count, Link
Identity	Matching, Superimposition
Existence	Removal, Bounded Space, Cycle, Object, Process

Specifically, some scholars are interested in analyzing the conceptual metaphor in various objects from a cognitive semantics point of view. An analysis of conceptual

metaphors in COVID-19 Speeches of American President Joe Biden conducted by Abdel-Qader & Al-Khanji (2022) finds ontological metaphors with five types category of source domain, namely unity, object, person, spatial and war metaphor by employing Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Moreover, the dominance of unity metaphor in the speech reveals that Biden emphasizes the significance of unity as the strength to fight COVID-19. In general, the metaphors' significant purposes were simplification, persuasion, and emotional effect, which were applied as persuasive approaches in political speeches during the COVID-19 pandemic (Abdel-Qader & Al-Khanji, 2022).

Moreover, another study of conceptual metaphor was also conducted by Pratiwi et al. (2020) in different object. Specifically, the researchers employ the collection of poetry books written by Lang Leav entitled “Memories”, “Lullabies”, “Universe of Us”, and “Love and Misadventure”. Based on the analysis, it is found that the conceptual metaphor regarding love and life is dominant in the poetry. Moreover, based on the conceptual metaphor, this study finds that structural, orientational, and ontological metaphors are employed in the data. Furthermore, based on the categorization of image schema proposed by Croft & Cruse (2004), the researchers find identity, existence, container, and space image schema in the data (Pratiwi et al., 2020). The previous explanation triggered the researchers to analyze conceptual metaphors in different objects. Specifically, the researchers examine the conceptual metaphor of “quality” in Charles & Keith’s Instagram caption. In this study, the researchers analyze the types of conceptual metaphors employed in the caption. Furthermore, the image schemas involved in the metaphor are also observed. By doing this research, it is expected that further research would be able to further their studies of cognitive semantics as the utilization of metaphors for distinct objects is becoming increasingly complex.

Methods

Cognitive semantics was employed as the approach of this qualitative research. Qualitative researchers obtain data by analyzing documents, observing behavior, or interviewing persons. This method allows the researchers to utilize an instrument to capture data, but the researchers are the ones who acquire and analyze the information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In qualitative research, content analysis serves as a technique for data collection, as it generates reproducible findings from written or spoken material, transforming it into data that can be analyzed within its contextual (Krippendorff, 2004; Tavakoli, 2012).

In this research, the data were obtained from the Charles & Keith Instagram caption uploaded in January 2023 - June 2023. Each caption during this period was observed one by one to find the conceptual metaphor of quality. In this case, quality refers to the strengths of the product. There are 10 conceptual metaphors of quality are found. The data was derived through the characteristics of the conceptual metaphor, wherein less concrete notions are explained through more concrete notions. Three steps were conducted to analyze the data. First, the researcher determined the types of each metaphor based on Lakoff & Johnson's (2003) theory. Moreover, the source domain and target domain were examined. Furthermore, the image schema of the metaphors was classified into the category of image schema proposed by Croft & Cruse (2004).

Finding and Discussion

Based on the analysis, there are 10 conceptual metaphors of “quality” found in Charles & Keith's Instagram caption. Moreover, the researchers found three types of conceptual metaphors proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (2003). Specifically, structural metaphor dominates in this study, consisting of 5 metaphors. Followed by ontological metaphor, consisting of 3 metaphors. Then, followed by 2 orientational metaphors. Further explanations regarding each metaphor and its image schema are presented as follows.

Structural Metaphor

In structural metaphors, a concept is transferred by employing another concept based on systematic correlations from everyday experiences (Nur, 2019). Based on the analysis, there are five structural metaphors related to “quality” represented in the caption. Moreover, each metaphor contains a different image schema. Further explanation is represented below.

- (1) When paired with an all-white look, the yellow Vita square-toe slingback pumps are definitely **the star of the show**.
- (2) The stunning accessories from our Ramadan 2023 collection feature a show-stopping shine that will make them **the star of any festive outfit**.

These two excerpts specifically contain the same concept of ‘star’ as the source domain. In excerpt (1), the metaphor is exemplified by the expression ‘the yellow Vita square-toe slingback pumps are definitely the star of the show’. There is a concept transfer process from the product ‘the yellow Vita square-toe slingback pumps’ as the target domain into ‘the star of the show’ as source domain. Moreover, in excerpt (2), the target domain is represented by ‘the stunning accessories from our Ramadan 2023 collection’ and the source domain is ‘the star of any festive outfit’. These data are categorized as a structural metaphor since the concept of the product presented is similar to the concept of a star. Literally speaking, stars are celestial bodies that can generate their own energy and radiate light. Moreover, in everyday experience, the star is high in the sky and is perceived as above everything else. It is used in this context to denote something that highly outperforms others in terms of quality. This product, which resembles a star, stands for anything of the highest quality that is widely regarded as the best. Specifically, the conceptual similarities between the star and the product can be mapped as follows.

Table 2. Concept Similarities between target domain and source domain of Excerpts (1) & (2)

Target Domain: the product	Source Domain: the star
Products have distinctive aesthetics that set them apart from other products.	Stars have their own distinctive aesthetic that draws attention to the night sky.
Product has the best quality that reflects high prestige.	Stars are high in the sky.

The concepts shared by the source domain and target domain in the data indicate the image schema of identity, which includes matching. Therefore, in general, the caption demonstrates that the product has an excellent quality that can make it stand out among other similar products. Furthermore, there are also other metaphorical expressions in Charles & Keith’s Instagram caption that emphasize the quality of their product.

- (3) As seen on @highishe at Paris Fashion Week, the Petra shoulder bag and buckled d’Orsay platform pumps are **a match made in heaven** for creating a bold yet classic look.

In excerpt (3), the metaphor is exemplified by the expression ‘the Petra shoulder bag and buckled d’Orsay platform pumps are a match made in heaven’. There is a structural relationship used to transfer the concept of the product to the concept of ‘a match made in heaven’. Therefore, it could be seen that ‘the Petra shoulder bag and buckled d’Orsay platform pumps’ as the target domain is mapped into the concept of ‘a match made in heaven’ as the source domain. Specifically, in everyday experience, heaven is frequently portrayed as a place full of perfection that provides infinite satisfaction. Thus, in this context, the two products mentioned in the caption reflect the concept of perfection owned by heaven. Specifically, the conceptual similarities between heaven and the product can be mapped as follows.

Table 3. Concept Similarities between target domain and source domain of Excerpt (3)

Target Domain: the products	Source Domain: heaven
The combination of the two products contains harmonious beauty that can produce the desired style.	Heaven is a place full of magnificent beauty.
Both products create the perfect combination when worn by the customer.	Heaven is the ideal place because everything there is faultless.

The concepts contained by the source domain and target domain in the data indicate the image schema of identity, which includes matching. Therefore, in general, the caption portrayed that the combination of the Petra shoulder bag and buckled d’Orsay platform pumps delivers the impression that they produce an outstanding visual appeal. Furthermore, below is presented other metaphorical expressions found in the caption.

- (4) Promising all-day comfort that does not compromise on style, these eye-catching pink sports sandals for little girls **strike the perfect balance** between form and function.

In excerpt (4), the metaphor is exemplified by the expression ‘these eye-catching pink sports sandals for little girls strike the perfect balance between form and function’. Moreover, the target domain is presented by ‘these eye-catching pink sports sandals for little girls’ as the product and ‘strike the perfect balance’ denotes the source domain. Literally, ‘strike’ can be defined as a physical act of attacking someone or something with power. However, in this context, it describes the act of doing something in an effort to achieve a certain goal. Therefore, there is a certain concept possessed by the product that transferred to the source domain. The conceptual similarities between the product and the verb ‘strike’ can be mapped as follows.

Table 4. Concept Similarities between target domain and source domain of Excerpt (4)

Target Domain: the products	Source Domain: strike
Aims to achieve particular goals: the ideal balance between function and form.	The act of attacking particular objects.

Based on the concepts demonstrate by two domains, the caption describes that the product in the caption represents two essential components that must be included, namely a beautiful and comfortable design that makes it appropriate for the intended customer, namely little girls. In addition, the concepts shared by the source domain and target domain in the data indicate the image schema of force, which includes enablement. Furthermore, there is also another metaphorical expression that shares the same image schema. The explanation is described as follow.

- (5) **Steal the spotlight** wherever you go with these vibrantly coloured shoes, which are perfect for parties and celebrations.

In excerpt (5), the metaphorical expression is expressed by ‘steal the spotlight wherever you go with these vibrantly coloured shoes’. It can be seen that ‘steal the spotlight’ acts as the source domain, while ‘vibrantly coloured shoes’ acts as the target domain. Specifically, ‘steal’ refers to the act of taking something without approval. However, in this context, the product represented in the caption possessed visual appeal that may catch people's attention when they see it. The conceptual similarities between the product and the verb ‘steal’ can be mapped as follows.

Table 5. Concept Similarities between target domain and source domain of Excerpt (5)

Target Domain: the products	Source Domain: steal
contain colors that take the attention of others	get something without permission

Based on the table, it can be seen that both domains possessed particular object as the target, while the source domain ‘steal’ get something targeted from the process, the target domain get attention from its quality. Moreover, the concepts shared by the source domain and target domain in the data indicate the image schema of force, which includes enablement. Therefore, in general, the caption demonstrates that the use of this product places the customer in the center of attention in a variety of settings because of its vibrant color.

Oriental Metaphor

Oriental metaphors derive from fundamental human spatial orientations and have been utilized to articulate such orientations, including concepts like up-down, inside-out, and center-edge; thus, they are grounded in physical and cultural experiences rather than being arbitrary (Nursanti et al., 2024). Based on the analysis, there are two orientational metaphors related to “quality” represented in the caption. Moreover, the metaphor contains an image scheme of space. Further explanation is represented below.

- (6) Say yes in high style — the Michelle leather platform sandals feature a beautiful sheen that will make you **glow** from head to toe.

In excerpt (6), the metaphorical expression is characterized by the use of 'glow' as the source domain, moreover, the target domain is ‘you’. The word ‘glow’ can literally be defined as producing a constant yet dim light. However, in everyday experience, the concept of ‘glow’ portrays a state that has undergone a significant transformation. Here, the concept of the word 'glow' describes the state of being a good entity. Therefore, the word 'glow' in the excerpt illustrates the image schema of space, specifically the up-down

concept between the source and target domains based on the occurrence of an increasing state. As 'up' is basically oriented with a positive notion, 'glow' indicates a positive sense of improvement, not merely related to the literal concept of light. Thus, in general, the caption describes that by wearing the product 'Michelle leather platform sandals' the customer's overall appearance will improve.

- (7) Espadrille wedges are a summer classic that will take your vacation outfits **to the next level**.

In excerpt (7), the metaphorical expression in the data is characterized by the use of the noun phrase 'next level' as the source domain and 'your vacation outfits' acts as the target domain. Here, 'next level' is utilized to portray the significant transformation into a better notion, specifically in terms of customers' vacation outfits. This concept indicates the image schema of space, especially in the orientation of up-down. Thus, this metaphor demonstrates that customers' vacation attire will significantly improve by wearing espadrille wedges.

Ontological Metaphor

Ontological metaphors utilize language to employ another element or substance as a basis for understanding more abstract and complex concepts to investigate other concepts (Yu & Lee, 2024). Moreover, Kövecses (2010) further stated that personification can be employed as an ontological metaphor, in which nonhuman entities possess human characteristics. Based on the observation, there are three ontological metaphors related to "quality", which contains the image schema of force. Further explanation is represented below.

- (8) Available in a range of bold, spring-friendly colours, the cocoon curved top handle bag is simple yet striking — it will **bring a breath of fresh air** to your accessory collection.

Specifically, the metaphorical expression is exemplified by 'bring a breath of fresh air' as the source domain. Moreover, 'it' which refers to 'the cocoon curved top handle bag' acts as the target domain. The source domain in this data specifically portrays the human qualities, yet given to nonhuman entities, which is the product as the target domain. Furthermore, the source domain can be interpreted literally as the air that can provide a refreshing sensation. However, in this context, the product is portrayed as a distinct entity capable of contributing new nuances that enhance the look of customers' accessory collections. Furthermore, the concept expressed in this metaphor refers to the image schema of force, especially enablement, which portrays the ability of the target domain. Because the product comes in a range of colors, it offers a number of pleasant variants, similar to 'a breath of fresh air'. Furthermore, there are also other metaphorical expressions in Charles & Keith Instagram caption that emphasize the ability of the product that represent the concept of quality.

- (9) Now that summer is just around the corner, it is time to switch up your footwear rotation — let your **feet breathe** and show off those pedicures with CHARLES & KEITH's latest strappy sandals.

In excerpt (9), the metaphor is exemplified by the expression ‘let your feet breathe’. It can be seen that ‘feet’ acts as the target domain, while ‘breathe’ is the source domain. Specifically, the animate object's qualities of the verb ‘breath’ is given to an inanimate object, which is ‘feet’. According to the context of this caption, the product refers to the strappy sandals that do not cover the toes. Here, there are conceptual similarities drawn between 'feet' and 'animate objects'. The analogy derives from the fact that both objects require fresh air. Similar to the way animate objects require fresh air to breathe, the sufficient airflow is required in order to maintain feet clean and comfortable. In general, the metaphor compares the literal concept of breathing possessed by animate objects to the necessity for feet to obtain air. Furthermore, the concepts embodied by the source domain and target domain in the data indicate the image schema of existence, which includes process as the inanimate objects portrayed as an entity that did a particular process done by animate objects.

- (10) **Inject** a quirky and eye-catching element into your summer looks with the Judy Hopps interwoven knotted mules, which are available in zesty yellow and always-cool denim.

In the excerpt (9), the expression ‘inject a quirky and eye-catching element’ exemplified the metaphor. Moreover, ‘inject’ acts as the source domain and ‘a quirky and eye-catching element’ which refers to the product named the Judy Hopps interwoven knotted mules acts as the target domain. Specifically, the term inject describes the act of putting a liquid, such as a drug, into a person's body using a needle and syringe. However, in this caption, the concept of ‘inject’ refers to adding visually appealing elements, which is the product as a part of customers’ outfit. Thus, the image schema drawn from this metaphorical expression is existence, especially in the form of process.

Conclusion

The use of language to describe meaning mechanisms through the organization of human conceptual frameworks is made possible by conceptual metaphor, which conceptualizes one idea into another idea. Moreover, it is a component of literary language, as well as the common language. Based on the analysis, three types of conceptual metaphors are found in Charles & Keith's Instagram caption at different frequencies: there are 5 structural metaphors, 2 orientational metaphors, and 3 ontological metaphors. Moreover, there are four categories of image schema, namely 3 image schemas of identity (matching), 3 image schemas of force (enablement), 2 image schemas of space (up-down), and 2 image schemas of existence (process). They are employed to portray the concept of “quality” of the products mentioned in the caption. Moreover, the caption portrays Charles & Keith's products as similar to different concepts that are recognized by humans cognitive as an excellent entity in everyday experiences. It allows the potential buyers to identify the products' convenience and excellence. As we know, those are the crucial things that customers generally require. Furthermore, the use of conceptual metaphors in the caption relatively functions to improve the understanding of the product being described, so that its quality can be highlighted.

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