

A COMPARISON OF ANALOGICAL MAPPINGS IN IGBO AND CHINESE SHEEP IDIOMS

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Abstract

Research on idioms and cognition has revealed that cross-cultural perspectives and cultural models shape our thinking. Idioms reflect conceptual structure with high communicative and cross-cultural value. The current study undertakes a cross-cultural cognitive study of some sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese. A comparison of the analogical mapping of Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms is carried out to show how they share common conceptualization, while they reflect different cultural beliefs. The main aim is to explore the socio-cultural influences upon conceptual domain mapping characterizing the human behaviour is animal behaviour conceptual metaphor in the metaphoric use of animals in the idioms of the two languages and cultures. In order to achieve this aim, we refer to both the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Cultural Cognitive Theory (CCT). The data were extracted from a number of Sheep idioms both in Igbo and Chinese. The idioms were collected from books, internet sources, personal communication and intuitive knowledge. We compare the analogical mappings and the characterization of animals in the Sheep idioms involved in animal metaphors in the idioms of the two languages. The findings of the study show that analogical mappings vary in the two languages and cultures due to cultural influence. Also, culture-specific features shape the metaphoric use of animals in idioms. These results reveal that both CMT and CCT are adequate in the study of metaphoric idioms of Igbo and Chinese. Further researches requiring broader database and theories are recommended herewith to ascertain cross-cultural variation across languages and cultures.

Keywords: Analogical mapping, Idioms, cognition, metaphor, Igbo, Chinese

Introduction

Cognitive linguistics (CL) which emerged in the 1970s as an approach to linguistics stresses interaction between language and cognition. Since the emergence of cognitive linguistics as a discipline, a continuum between all sorts of cognition and language has been established. (Barcelona 2003 cited in Allah 2008). CL focuses on the relationship between language and the mind and attempts to explain the mental processes that underline the acquisition, storage, production and understanding of speech and writing. Some of the issues addressed within CL include characteristics of language such as metaphor and imagery; functional principles of language organization such as iconicity; their interface between syntax and semantics and the relationship between language and thought (Richard & Schmdt, 2002).

Until 1970s, the study of idioms/proverbs was not conducted from a cognitive point of view. The metaphorical nature of idioms/proverbs and their influence on the mental images in people's mind became a point of interest to researchers from the end of 20th century. All societies have idioms as part of their languages which they hand down to their children from generation to generation. They are used in everyday conversation and in all forms of human communication. The use of idioms/proverbs helps to strengthen arguments and express certain generalised ideas. While some certain situations which appear to be the same in different communities and cultures are represented with similar idiomatic expressions, some metaphorical idioms which are coloured with cultural-specific features generally impede successful communication between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. In idioms/proverbs, people see human concerns as the target domains to which isolated idioms/proverbs refer, these in essence, enable one to understand idioms/proverbs from unfamiliar cultures without difficulty. (Lakoff & Turner 1989, Lakoff 1993, 2008, Gibbs 1994).

Animal metaphors have been a great part of our language especially idioms. Such idioms have had the power to reflect both cognitive and cultural richness. Metaphorical understanding, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) occurs through a mapping across conceptual domains, that is, from a concrete source domain to an abstract target domain of experience. Our interaction with animals has given a significant place to them in our metaphorical thinking so that Kovecses (2002) cited in Johnson (2008) considers them as the extremely productive source of domains in our conceptual metaphors. Works on

metaphoric interpretation reveal that non-native speakers encounter difficulty in comprehending metaphors (Boers 2003, Littlemore & Low 2006). The outcome of the understanding of human in general and human behaviour in particular in terms of animal behaviour has generated the PEOPLE ARE ANIMAL metaphor. Studies reveal that the tendency to use animal to refer to human beings is universal. Notwithstanding, there is a high degree of culture-specificity in the pervasiveness of animal metaphors underlying the idioms on the one hand and the type of animal which is used to refer to a certain human trait on the other hand (Deigman 2003, Johnson 2008).

The current study on Igbo and Chinese metaphoric animal-related idioms is very timely as need for teaching/learning of Chinese increased through the introduction of Chinese studies at Nnamdi Azikiwe University by the establishment of Confucius Institute (CI) and the Department of Chinese Studies in 2009 and 2014/2015 academic sessions respectively. Since Igbo and Chinese belong to different language families, scholars have tried to highlight those areas that constitute learning difficulties to L₁ Igbo Chinese learners. From the existing literature, it is obvious that few cross-linguistic studies were conducted between different languages such as the present study. Hence the study will contribute to filling the gap in the literature on metaphoric animal-related idioms on the one hand, and enriching the cross-linguistic studies between languages like Igbo and Chinese on the other hand.

Sheep, ‘atūrū’ in Igbo culture is seen as depicting a fool, obedient and a good follower. The personality of sheep is that of a meek animal, usually very quiet and gentle, aloof from the world. They are known to esteem and listen to their leaders, because of their obedient character, sheep are among the most popular animals beloved by many households. This cultural worldview can be seen in the following Igbo proverbs;

- a. íyì n’ìgwè nà-ékpò átūrū āhụ ọkú.
Going in group keep the sheep warm. (good followership /unity)
- b. á ná-égbú èbùlè, íhú ánághíí à dí átūrū ímā.
When the ram is being killed, the sheep is never happy. (empathy and esteem for others).

Goat, Ram and Sheep, ‘羊 yáng’ are animals in ancient Chinese culture that symbolise good luck and auspiciousness. They are meek, gentle and affectionate. They have a long history of domestication in China and have become adorable companions of the Chinese since ancient times. The word ‘羊’ carries the cultural meanings of ‘善 shàn (kindness), ‘义 yì’ (loyalty), and ‘美 měi’ (beauty). Comparing a person to 羊 means that he/she is characterised as being ‘仁 rén’ (benevolent), 义 (loyal) and ‘德 dé’ (virtuous). (cf: Is 2015 The Year of the Ram, Sheep or Goat in e-Chinese learning.com). The animal’s filial piety is described in the Chinese classic ‘Three Character Classic’ as ‘羊初生，知跪乳 yáng chūshēng, zhīguìrǔ’ (to show its gratitude, the lamb kneels down before its mother to drink her milk), in such examples;

- a. 他性格温顺善良尽享一只小绵羊.tā xìnggé wēnshùn shànliáng, jùxiàng, yìzhī xiǎo miányáng – she is as gentle as a sheep.
- b. 羊有跪乳之恩人也要懂得知恩图报.Yáng yǒu guìrǔ zhī’èn, rén yě yào dǒngdé zhī’èn túbào – to show gratitude, rams kneel down to drink milk so people should also learn to be grateful.

From the above, the Chinese worldview about the word 羊 connotes positive traits such as peace, success and auspicious, co-operate better under leadership, modest, obedient among its negative meanings are; timid, docile, lack will-power,, weak, shy, like to depend on others, irresponsible etc.

According to Vogel (2016), ‘sheep is defined as someone who mindlessly follows anything and everything in the name of formal recognition; A waste of flesh and brain cells’. Sheep are a herd/flock animal. If one sheep moves, the entire flock is likely to do the same thing. They are regarded as dumb, only eat, drink and reproduce.

Smith (1979) on sheep has it thus; ‘sheep and lamb are used in the sacrificial offerings, they formed an important article of God, the wool was used for clothing, the spiritual meaning of sheep is its docility

and obedience. The origin of the domestic sheep is unknown. There are eleven wild species, the majority of which were found in Asia. They are among the first domesticated animals’.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to carry out an analogical mapping of Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms. Its specific objectives are to;

1. identify some of the metaphoric Igbo Sheep idioms
2. identify some of the metaphoric Chinese Sheep idioms.
3. establish the analogical mapping between animal characters and human attributes/behaviours in some selected Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms.

Research Questions

In order to provide answers to the objectives of the study, the following research questions are formulated to guide the study:

1. What are some of the metaphoric Igbo Sheep idioms?
2. What are some of the metaphoric Chinese Sheep idioms?
3. In what ways are animal characters mapped to human behaviours in some selected Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms?

Literature review

Theoretical Studies

The Substitution Theory

The substitution theory was propounded by Aristotle in 335B.C. Aristotle wrote about metaphor in his work on *‘Poetics’*. He regards metaphor as an ornament or decoration used in rhetorical or poetical language. According to Halliwell (1995:105), Aristotle defines metaphor as ‘the application of a word that belongs to another thing either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or by analogy’ He accordingly sees three directions of metaphorical transfer from hypernym to hyponym, from hyponym to hypernym or between two co- hyponyms. As example for an analogical metaphor he mentions ‘the day’s old age’ meaning ‘evening’ and vice versa, ‘the evening of life’ connoting ‘old age’. This metaphor shows that Aristotle implies a common ‘bi- directionality’ in this type of metaphor: the two elements of the metaphor are interchangeable and the metaphorical transfer works in both directions.

Substitution theory as the Aristotelian view of metaphor assumes a possible replacement of a metaphor by a paraphrase. A metaphor is seen as deviation from the ordinary language use and can therefore easily be exchanged by a literal statement reflecting the same meaning. Aristotle notes that, metaphor is based on objective similarity. Consequently, every metaphor implies a comparison and every comparison is an individual metaphor. The only difference he highlights, between metaphor and comparison is the presence or absence of an indicator of comparison e.g. ‘like’ or ‘as’ (cf. Ricoeur / Jungel 1974: 46- 47. Ricoeur 1986: 20- 27, Jakel 1997: 92).

The substitution theory has received criticism for being weak and insufficient, especially in the presentation of further metaphor theories. Even though the substitution theory is generally perceived as outdated and is indeed insufficient in various aspects. It is worth mentioning that it is important to the current study, as it signifies the beginning of theoretical dealings with the phenomenon of metaphor. That is, Aristotle recognizes its stylistic merits and provides us with the first systematic analysis of metaphor and its place in literature and the mimetic arts.

The Interaction Theory

Ivor A. Richards first established the notion of interaction theory of metaphor in 1936 and it was further developed in an explicit theory by Max Black (1955, 1977). The philosopher Max Black refines the interaction theory. He clearly distances himself from the substitution theory by stating that the metaphor is more than just decoration or a substitute for a comparison: rather, metaphorical expressions that are

capable of conveying aspects which cannot be transported in any other way and therefore have their “own distinctive capacities and achievements” (Black 1955:284).

Black’s terminology concerning metaphors changes in the course of his works: he distinguishes the principal or primary subject from the subsidiary or secondary subject. For example, in the metaphor “*man is a wolf*” the principal/primary subject “man” is “seen through” the subsidiary/secondary subject “wolf” (Black 1955:288). To understand this metaphor, the speaker has to be familiar with a “system of associated common places”, i.e. a set of standard beliefs which is common possession of the members of the same linguistic community. For instance, the metaphorical use of “wolf” evokes certain associations related to wolves. For this “system of associated common places” Black uses the term “implicative complex” in his later publications. The interaction process at work in metaphor is of the following nature:

- “(i) The presence of primary subject incites the hearer to select some of the secondary subject’s properties;
- (ii) Invites him to construct a parallel ‘implicative complex’ that can fit the primary subject; and
- (iii) Reciprocally induces parallel changes in the secondary subject.” (Black 1977: 442).

Interaction thus occurs between the two subjects of a metaphor. The primary subject (e.g. “man”), in other words “if to call a man a wolf is to put him in a special light, we must not forget that the metaphor makes the wolf seem more human than he otherwise would” (Black 1955: 290). Only if the speaker perceives the old and the new meaning of the metaphorical subjects together can the metaphor be successful.

Gilles and Turner (2000:133) describe metaphor and metonymy in a similar way: they argue that a “blended space” is created by the metaphorical subjects. In this “blend”, the meaning of metaphor can be understood, its meaning cannot be captured by considering source and target separately.

The interaction theory as developed by Richards and Black is on one hand positively evaluated, by Jäkel (1997: 102-103), because it pursues the cognitive or conceptual approach to metaphor and already formulates some aspects emphasized later by Lakoff and Johnson, e.g. the ubiquity of metaphor and the capability of metaphor to create reality. On the other hand, Jäkel criticizes the core of interaction theory by adhering to the view of Lakoff and Johnson who state that metaphorical mapping happens only in one direction.

After this time, research in what is now called metaphor studies began gaining swiftly to its present state. Unlike the followers of the Aristotelian view, Richards regards metaphor as generated by similarity as well as dissimilarity of the two elements of metaphor. In the theory established by Richards, metaphor is not merely a matter of words, but of thoughts. This marks an important step on the way to a conceptual metaphor theory (cf. Richards 1981:94,127). The proponents of interaction theory of metaphor holds that it is the only kind of metaphor that can be of any interest to philosophical discussion, because it is impossible to translate by means of literal paraphrase.

The generic way in which Richards (1981: 95) uses the term is evident in his basic definition of metaphor in the *Philosopher of Rhetoric*; ‘when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word or phrase whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction’. Richards (1981: 96) further offers his own technical terms to distinguish the ‘co-presents’ ‘the original idea and the borrowed one,’ what is really being said or thought of’ and what is compared to,’ ‘the underlying idea’ and ‘the imagined nature’, ‘the principal subject’ and ‘what it resembles’. The ‘ground’ is what they have in common and what activates the formation of a metaphor.

The Image Field Theory

The image field theory established by the German linguist and literary scholar Weinrich (1970, 1976) is in some points similar to the conceptual metaphor theory developed later by Lakoff and Johnson; this will become obvious in taking a closer look at Weinrich’s findings.

His prior assumptions are that metaphors are essential in thinking and writing and that they are not based on objectively perceivable similarities, but they create similarities. According to Weinrich, the elements of metaphor are “image fields”. He uses the term “image field” analogous to the expression “semantic field”: as a word is connected to a certain semantic field, a metaphor belongs to an image field. Metaphors combine two image fields, the image recipient field (corresponding to primary subject in Black’s terms) and the image donor field (secondary subject). Both fields have to be considered at the same time in order to understand a metaphor. This corresponds to the interaction theory (cf. Weinrich 1970: 42, 1976: 284).

Another important variable in Weinrich’s metaphor theory is the context of a metaphor. A word and its context compose a metaphor; therefore a sufficient part of a context has to be taken into account when looking at a metaphor, a “loincloth” of context is not enough (Weinrich 1976:312). The context of a metaphor reveals the tension between the ordinary meaning and the metaphorical meaning of a word. In the case of a metaphor, the reader’s expectations concerning the context are not fulfilled, which makes the metaphor identifiable. A metaphor can hence be defined as a word determined by its context in such a way that its meaning changes; a metaphor is a “word in a counter determined context” (ibid.: 320;cf. Weinrich 1970: 44-45).

In his image field theory Weinrich anticipates some elements of the conceptual theory of metaphor as developed by Lakoff and Johnson, e.g. the unidirectionality of metaphor, the idea of metaphor generating similarity and necessity of using metaphors in certain areas of communication. Furthermore, the notion of image fields corresponds to Lakoff’s and Johnson’s “conceptual metaphors”. Weinrich concludes that speakers favour metaphors which are integrated into an image field, just as Lakoff/Johnson state that a speech community easily accepts metaphors related to a conceptual metaphor. According to Jäkel (1997 132-137), Weinrich even discovered some points which ought to be added to the theory of Lakoff and Johnson, e.g. the notion of metaphor as a contextual phenomenon. He goes as far as labelling Weinrich’s approach a “European anticipation” of the theory of Lakoff and Johnson (ibid.:139). Despite their important functions as precursors on the way to the conceptual metaphor theory, Lakoff and Johnson neither value Weinrich’s image field theory nor Richards’ and Black’s interaction theory in their work.

2.2.4 The Conceptual Theory of Metaphor

The conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) was propounded by George Lakoff, a linguist and Mark, Johnson a philosopher in their book titled *‘In Metaphors We Live By’* (1980). The claims of the theory, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980:4) is that metaphor plays a central role in structuring human thoughts, as they posit; ‘...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’

Mapping

Mapping occurs between the source and target domains. This basic and essential process is aptly expressed by Kovecses through the analysis of the conceptual metaphor; ‘LOVE IS A JOURNEY’, here, the mapping are as follows; Lovers are travellers, Love relationship is a vehicle, progress made in relationship is distance covered and so on (cf: Kovecses 2006). Kövecses (2005:127) notes ‘mappings characterizing particular conceptual metaphors can change through time and can vary from culture to culture, and from subculture to subculture’. Relying on these two positions, domain /analogical mappings involved in a specific-level metaphors will be compared. These metaphors include human behaviour is sheep behaviour, The step followed in this comparative analysis of the source and target mappings in the Sheep idioms is as follows: we will show some of the ways sheep characters are mapped to human attributes. These will reveal the extent to which source and target domain mappings being used in the idioms of the two languages involve similar or different animal and human behaviours. We will also investigate the existence of any shared domain mappings and attempt to suggest an explanation for their occurrence.

Empirical Review

In an attempt to establish the relevance of the current study, some works related in one way or the other to the present study are reviewed.

Since Aristotle characterized proverbs as ‘fragments of an elder wisdom’ paremiology with respect to the ancient scholarly tradition has viewed proverbs as generationally-tested, experienced folk wisdom which provide insight into the value system of a speech community and into its worldview’ (Mieder 1997b: 410-416).

Before now, the use of Igbo and Chinese idioms/proverbs has remained a way of expression of feelings with little or no scholastic attachment to it. Zhao (2004) agrees thus; idioms are the direct reflections of people’s lives and thoughts and because of their ease of correlation, they thus become the most widespread and longest lasting saying... proverbs still demonstrate folk ideas to a considerable degree. Kanu (2014: 2) attests to this thus ‘The centrality of proverbs in Igbo-African oral tradition is manifested in the frequency of its use by Igbo in the conversation, speech, instructions, judgement, drama, arguments, storytelling, in fun making etc’.

Presently, idioms/proverbs have started to draw the attention of scholars and some research efforts are now directed to collating, assessing, segmenting, and documenting of proverbs. The earliest collection of idioms/proverbs can be traced as far as the 10th Century B.C; the Old Testament Bible attributes some 900 proverbs to King Solomon. The first person to engage more systematically in the collation and classification of proverbs was the Greek philosopher Aristotle.

The work of Onwudufor (2008:1-260) is a documentation of 861 Igbo proverbs whereas Nwadike (2009: 35-57) outlines 85 proverbs with English equivalent. He further separated the proverbs into specific themes with regards to different aspects of the lives of Igbo people.

Skara’s (1997) work is on comparative analysis of proverbs universals and specifics. It is a structural analysis of 300 (100 +100 +100) of proverbs chosen from three different languages; Italian, English and Croatian. The analysis is based on lexical, syntactic, semantic and stylistic levels. From the findings, it is evident that 90% of proverbs are used in different cultures are equivalent. That is, these languages share common characteristics and that they differ very little in their basic structure. This is due to universal tendencies which are present in all languages. It also notes that though members of different cultures live in the same world but they categorize it differently. Examples cited;

English: *the grass is greener on the other side of the fence.*(s: 100)

Korean: *the beans are larger in other’s pot.* (p:194)

Japanese: *A neighbour’s flowers are more beautiful.* (p: 194)

Turk: *a neighbour’s hen always looked as big as a goose.*(p:194)

Chinese: *It seems from this mountain that the other mountain is higher.*

(cf: Skara 1997: 370)

Skara’s {1997} work is related to the current study in that they study idioms/proverbs of different languages. Nevertheless, the difference lies on the approaches; Skara (1997) employs linguistic structural analysis on the proverbs of four languages while the current study is on comparative analysis of Igbo and Chinese proverbs.

Nwachukwu – Agbada’s (2002) looks at the pragmatic values that underlie the Igbo proverb performance. The aim is to establish the fact that Igbo proverb is one in which contextual variables inform its aesthetic and instructional functions. The findings reveal that the ‘user of the Igbo proverb must be conscious of the cultural, historical, religious, political and other context of use. Also, that in the Igbo context what is said is not as important as that hidden in *ude*, in grunts in un verbalized system of sounds replete in meaning’’ in the same vein, in his (1990) essay, *Origin, meaning, and value of Igbo historical proverb*. He analyses the historical significance of Igbo proverbs. The study avers that the proverb performer presupposes that the audience shares the same socio-historical knowledge with him in the sense that he will not need to explain the historical phenomena which informed the

conception and composition of the particular historical proverb (cf: Egbuta 2011). The works of Nwachukwu – Agbada (1990 & 2001) are related to the current study because they are both on idioms/proverbs. They however differ in their approaches. Whereas Nwachukwu –Agbada (1990 & 2001) are on the historical significance and the pragmatic values that undergird the Igbo proverbs respectively, the present study compares the Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms and investigates the analogical mapping of animal character in human behaviour and the socio- cultural specificities that bring about variations in the two cultures/languages under study.

Asiyanbola (2007) uses systemic structural and contrastive linguistics theory to identify eighteen (18) English-translated Yoruba proverbs about women. He identifies their inadequacies ‘as regard gender prejudice against the female race’. His findings reveal that fourteen (14) out of the eighteen (18) proverbs are gender-based while only four (4) are gender-neutral. Asiyanbola (2007) study is related to the present study because they are both on idioms/proverbs generally. However, they both differ in the sense that the work of Asiyanbola (2007) is on English translated Yoruba proverbs about women gender prejudice while the present study is on comparative analysis of Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms.

Jie (2008) notes that some conceptual metaphors are universal and the universality can be found at the generic level; animals have their own features and cultural connotations in different languages. He concludes that it is only when people are acquainted with the cultural conventions and long customs can they begin to understand the cultural differences in animal proverbs between the two languages. According to him, there are cases where a particular expression is in correspondence with meaning and culture as noted in the example below:

‘You may lead a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink’.

In Chinese, it also uses the same animal of “horse”. The proverb says, ‘you may be acting in the best interests of the horse by taking him to the trough, but if he doesn’t want to drink he is not going to’. This means that you can do your utmost to make a person share your views, yet there is a point beyond which he will not go. In this proverb, “a person who doesn’t want to accept others’ opinion” is understood in terms of “a horse that doesn’t want to drink”. The proverb applies to the conceptual metaphor of PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS.

METAPHOR

SOURCE -----TARGET

a horse ----- a person

Wachera (2012) uses a cognitive approach in the analysis of Kikuyu metaphorical proverbs on the portrayal of women. The Kikuyu community uses the metaphorical proverbs based on the physical features of a woman to explain the reason women should not be entrusted with heavy responsibilities, express their perception of beauty, and/or emphasize the brevity of youthfulness. Example from the proverbs:

Kīero nĩ ũimbo nĩ kīimbukaga
thigh be bubble; it deflates
“young today, old tomorrow”

The findings reveal that conceptualization of the source and the target domains in the above proverb involves metonymy, the use of a word to denote a concept other than its literal denotation. In this case, metonymy denotes a woman as the thigh, and through metonymy we understand the metaphorical aspect of thigh (a woman in her prime) as the bubble. It is therefore realized that the conceptual source domain is the bubble, and the target domain is the thigh. The characteristics of the source domain mapped onto the target domain are outlined as follows:

Source domain:

- bubble
- Cute when formed
- Temporal

target domain:

thigh (a woman in her prime)
beautiful and fleshy in her prime
short lifespan only in youth

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Sensitive to pressure | soft and tender in her prime |
| • Attractive to the eye | Admirable |

The thigh-as-bubble mapping shows a situation where thigh is being conceptualized as a bubble, where the characteristics of the source domain of bubble are mapped onto the target domain of thigh. So, in the Kikuyu community, the cognition has the implication that beauty and attractiveness is short lived, that the young cannot remain tender and youthful forever, that a young girl for example, must get married at the earliest opportune moment, or altogether forfeit a lifetime opportunity of ever getting a husband. Another example:

Mũtumia nĩ mūrurĩ

woman be *mūrurĩ*

All is not gold that glitters.

Mūrurĩ tree-as-woman mapping is the metaphor realized in this proverb. The conceptual source domain is the *mūrurĩ* tree while the target domain is the woman. The metaphorical sense in the proverb is the conceptualization of the woman as the *mūrurĩ* tree whose characteristics are mapped below:

Source domain: <i>mūrurĩ</i>	target domain: woman
• Tree	Body
• Poor timber	weak body
• Beautiful flowers	beautiful body
• Attractive red flowers	charming body

The Kikuyu perceive women as weak, very fragile, and lacking strength as the poor timber of *mūrurĩ* tree, though they are as charming as the beautiful red flowers of the tree. Unfulfilled expectations correspond to the non- gainful nature of the *mūrurĩ* tree as far as building a foundation is concerned. Its purpose is only decorative just as the kikuyu see the woman as only a decorative image. The works of Jie (2008) and Wachera (2012) above are related to the current study because they are based on proverbs cognition, conceptualization and mapping involving both the source and target domains. However they differ in their subject matters. While Jie (2008) and Wachera (2012) are on Chinese and English animal proverbs and Kikuyu metaphorical proverbs on the portrayal of women respectively, the present study compares Sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese.

Ching-yu's (2006) study uses Goddard's (1998) semantic molecules approach to examine the Corpora of Animal Expressions in Mandarin Chinese and German. The aim is to explore the semantic interaction and the cultural background within the form of society. The findings reveal that there is a connection and interaction among the molecules and animal names which serve as semantic contributors in distinct domains. Also animal expressions exhibit various mentalities in both societies. Ching-yu's (2006) study is similar to the current study because they discuss animal proverbs/expressions. They however differ in their approaches. While Ching-yu's (2006) study uses Goddard's (1998) semantic molecules to examine cat's expressions the current study uses Lakoff & Johnson (1980) CMT and its improved version CCT (in Kovecses 2005) to analyse Sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese.

Moreno (2010) study is on the contrastive sociolinguistic and cognitive study of English and Spanish proverbs. The findings show that proverbs have a common understanding schema of cognition, while they reflect different cultural behaviours. The conclusion here is that proverbs are a conceptual universal phenomenon with high communicative and cross- cultural values. In the contrasting study of the image schemata of Persian and Arabic proverbs, Pakruzhad & Naghizadeh (2016) aver that proverbs from the cultures of both languages under study have linguistic image. The global analyses of selected proverbs demonstrate that all the proverbs are general statements about living in experience which are very much present in both cultures and perceptual interaction.

Ubied's (2011) investigates the cognitive mechanisms that are employed in the comprehension and the use of animal proverbs in English based on their socio-cultural and pragmatic environments. It adopts cogni-pragmatic approach which leans on Cognitive Ideal Hypothesis (CIH) according to Honeck and Temple (1994). The findings reveals that animal proverbs share the same cognitive processing that is

based on the use of specific observations from human experience with animal and their world to make points which are general to instantiate generic ideals that are used in various situations. Also the application of CIH through the typological categorization of animal proverbs proves that language users follow some universal cognitive processes in the use and comprehension of the various messages expressed by these proverbs. The study concludes that the use of CIH in analysing animal proverbs can help in overcoming difficulties in experimental works on proverbs and studying proverbs as utterances. The work of Ubied (2011) is of interest to the current work because they both focus on animal proverbs. Notwithstanding, they differ in that the former adopts a cognitive – pragmatic approach to investigative animal proverbs in English while the present study employs CMT & CCT approaches to compare Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms.

The study of Rashidi & Ghaedi (2013) is on contrastive discourse analysis of Persian and English animal proverbs. They aim at the analysis of the discursual features of Persian and English proverbs relating to cat, dog, and donkey and the thematic classes they belong to. They adopt Bussman's (1995) model of Prototype alongside Schmitz's (1983) Isomorphism to full or lack of isomorphism between Persian and English proverbs relating to animals. The findings reveal among other things that animal proverbs in English proverbs show that society, economy, politics, prototypes are much more dominant than law, belief or religion prototypes as found in an Iranian context or themes on culture in general. Also the social prototype falls into thematic categories of behaviour, working, experience, performance and way of life. Furthermore, both cultures have a common working prototype collectively; in conclusion, the study observes that proverbs in both societies are treasures of wisdom. Also, as it concerns similarities (full isomorphism), has to do with linguistic universals. Since metaphor is universal, and a lot of concepts are similar in both languages, the similarities in animal proverbs can be explained away by this fact. Also, differences or lack of isomorphism are traced to differences in culture, beliefs and values of Persian and English speakers. Hence, translators have to be bicultural to understand and translate properly the heavy semantic load that is culture specific in some proverbs. The study of Rashidi & Ghaedi (2013) is similar to the present study because they both discuss animal proverbs. They however differ in that, while Rashidi & Ghaedi (2013) is on contrastive discourse analysis of English and Persian proverbs relating to dog and donkey, and the thematic classes they belong to. The current study compares Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms. The animal character is human behaviour and the socio – cultural specifics that bring about variations in the two cultures under study.

Liu's (2013) work is a comparative study of English and Chinese Animal Proverbs from the perspective of Metaphors. The study is carried out from 3 main aspects: the same animal produce the same association and metaphorical meaning; the same animal produce different emotions and associations; different animal produce the same association and metaphorical meaning. His findings show that animal proverbs are an important part of language, an indispensable element of culture. The comparison of the 3 types of animal proverbs shows the similarities and differences in living environment, language styles, religious beliefs, values, thinking mode and aesthetics of the two cultures. The researcher concludes that research has deepened the understanding of people in different cultures who exhibit similarities or differences of different cultures by employing similar or different proverbs. Understanding this phenomenon is helpful for us to promote communications and overcome language exchange barriers. The work of Liu (2013) is similar to the current work because the two are on animal idioms/proverbs, this notwithstanding, Liu (2013) compares English and Chinese animal proverbs while the current study compares Igbo and Chinese animal idioms. Again, while Liu's (2013) work set out to investigate three aspects; the same animal produce the same association and metaphor meaning, the same animal produce different emotions and associations, and different animals produce same association and metaphorical meanings. The current study sets out to establish the presence of the animal proverbs for both languages, investigate the conceptualization of human behaviour is animal behaviour and establish that the variations are brought about by socio- cultural specificities in both cultures.

Sameer's (2016) study is a comparison of English and Arabic proverbs on dogs and horses. The study uses elected model gathering approach of Lakoff & Turner (1989), and Hsieh's (2006) approach of semantic molecules. The focus is on a cognitive, social and pragmatic view in order to establish that metaphoric and metonymic –mappings are cognitive mechanism which yield sets of explication and

form the origin of implicature. The findings reveal that in both languages the proverbs have the same functions and refers to the same intended meaning. This implies the same mental mechanism, for metaphor and metonymy. Hence, it can be said that both dogs and horses have nearly the same semantic molecules in both languages. They indicate the same contents, that is, dogs' proverbs usually indicate something bad and scruffy while those containing horse expressions indicate something good and noble. Sameer's (2016) study and the present study are both on animal idioms. They however differ in that the former compares proverbs on dogs and horses in English and Arabic but the later compares sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese. Also the approaches differ; Sameer's (2016) study focuses on cognitive, social and pragmatic views while the current study uses CMT and CCT approaches.

Aderinto's (2014) study is on the social implications of some Nigerian proverbs on carefulness. The aim is explore the social features of the use of such proverbs on carefulness within the Yoruba and Igbo people's cultural terrain. Therefore, they focus on Yoruba and Igbo proverbs to express the need for the people to be careful in whatever they do in life. Examples of such proverbs are;

- (a) **Yoruba proverb:** *eni a bire kin rin l'oru*

Meaning: it is bad for someone well brought-up to walk in the night.

Interpretation: in the Yoruba culture, it is expected that one should avoid walking in the night, so as to avoid the dangers therein.

- (b) **Yoruba proverb:** *a kii fi ise igba ose ran omo eni.*

Meaning: it is not good to expose children to anything that is not good in all ramifications.

Interpretation: the Yoruba people are of the opinion that children are innocent, they are not to be exposed to certain things that may corrupt them.

- (a). **Igbo proverbs:** *Agadi nwaayi da ada ugbolo abua, o guo ihe o bu n'isi.*

Meaning: when an old woman falls twice, she counts the things she is carrying on her head.

Interpretation: the Igbo people believe that it is good for one to learn from experience.

- (b). **Igbo proverb:** *ukwu ka e ji acho ihe danyere na mmiri.*

Meaning: one should use leg to look for something that falls into the water.

Interpretation: the belief among the Igbo people is that one should not dabble into a venture without investigation. That is, look before you leap.

From the findings above, both the Yoruba and Igbo people of Nigeria are of the opinion that carefulness is very important for one to prolong his/her life and is an aspect of wisdom.

Belkhir (2014) carries out a contrastive cognitive study of some animal proverbs in English, French, Arabic, and Kabyle. The animals include; dog, ass, ox, and camel. The work employs CMT & CCT approaches. The findings show that conceptual mappings vary across the four languages and cultures due to cultural influences. The two works are related given that they both look at animal proverbs from cross- cultural and cognitive perspectives using the same approaches. They however differ in the numbers of languages and animals under study. Belkhir (2014) contrasts animal-related proverbs in four languages (English, French, anArabic and Kabyle). The present study compares Igbo and Chinese idioms on sheep.. They also differ in terms of the objectives employed.

Milicăn's (2019) research is on animal metaphors as revealed by a small Corpus of English and Romanian proverbs. The data includes six basic-level categories; bear, fox and wolf in superordinate category wild animal and dog, ox and pig of the superordinate category of domestic animals. The Corpus was gotten from three monolingual dictionaries and one multilingual dictionary. The Findings reveal that animal metaphors reveal the animal for human cognitive perspective where the conceptual mapping frames the animal domains as the source domains. The cognitive perspective reflects the human for animal, here the conceptual mapping frames the domain as the target domain. The research concludes that the figurativeness of the proverb is based on the semantic contrasts of the constituents rather than being acquired in a certain context. This he calls explicit figurativeness. Milicăn's (2019) research which is on animal proverbs shares something in common with the current study; in terms of the cognitive perspective. They however differ in that Milicăn (2019) compares English and Romanian proverbs on bear, fox and wolf, the current study compares Igbo and Chinese sheep idioms.

From the above reviews, it is obvious that no work, to the best of the researchers' knowledge has been done on a comparative study of Sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese, this is the gap the current study is out to fill.

Theoretical Framework

The theories adopted for this study are CMT from cognitive dimension and CCT from cross-cultural dimension. We employ the cognitive theory because it offers valuable insights into how metaphor works in cognition, in other words; it explains how the common mental mechanisms function in the process of metaphor understanding. The cross-cultural dimension is employed to show that conceptual metaphor is subject to change across different languages and cultures. And this change is caused by many factors which are social-cultural in nature. By so doing, it demonstrates that though the human behaviour is animal behaviour metaphor is common to different languages and cultures, it is also characterised by diversity as claimed in CCT. This reveals that both CMT and CCT cannot be ignored in the study of conceptual metaphor in Igbo and Chinese animal idioms.

Methodology

The data for the paper were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The intuitive knowledge of the researcher also came in handy for the Igbo Sheep idioms. Also, the Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms are presented, compared and analysed. This is done in order to achieve the linguistic and cognitive/cultural aspects in the two languages or cultures. To achieve this aim, two other methods of data analysis used includes; CMT's cognition device and CCT's cross-cultural cognitive apparatus. The CMT device is made up of the source domain, the target domain, experiential basis (embodiment), neural circuitry, mappings, entailments and blends. The comparison and analysis of the domain mappings and correlation of humans per animal type; the sheep, is done. The analogical mapping is presented representing the source domain and the target domain separated by the idioms involving the mappings. The source and target domains in each mapping corresponds respectively to the animal behaviour and human behaviour. The CCT's components are made up of similar components of the CMT with some other important components added to the CMT. These components have two dimension of analysis, they are (1) cross-cultural and (2) the within-culture dimension. Another aspect is how the idioms different characterization of the animal behaviour and human behaviour can lead to both undesirable and desirable traits in both cultures.

Associated with the first dimension are some of the factors that influence conceptual metaphors and lead to differences from language to language. These are graded into two broad types; (1) deferential experience and (2) different cognitive domains and interests. The study will only focus on some of those factors related to cross-cultural dimensions and relevant to the human behaviour is animal behaviour conceptual metaphor. The selected ones are (a) the natural physical environment (b) social history and (c) differential prototypes. In the first feature, we shall look at the geographical related fauna characterising Igbo and Chinese. How differences in this feature are obvious in metaphorical conceptualization and the conceptual mappings' structures. This is done with regard to sheep,. For the second factor, we shall investigate how possible differences in the social histories of the two different societies influence the structuring of conceptual domain mappings in the human behaviour is animal behaviour conceptual metaphor. That is, the impact of specific historical facts permanent personalities and events in each society upon mappings. Based on the third factor, we shall attempt to investigate in what way particular cultural experiences that people have with their animals influence the prototypical animal concepts used in the mappings of the human behaviour is animal behaviour conceptual metaphor.

DATA PRESENTATION & ANALYSIS

Account of Analogical Mapping in Sheep idioms

The following selected Sheep idioms in Igbo and Chinese are presented and analysed using analogical mapping.

Sheep idioms in Igbo:

1. Átúrū gā-épu m̀pì, ékwò gà- àká yā àká. If a sheep wants to grow horn, it must have a strong head.

2. Ábàlì mèrè átúrū ò dí yā kà ò nwèrè m̀pì ó jì àgá ògù. The night has made the ram to think that it has horn to go for a fight.
3. Átúrū sōgwārā ēwū. A sheep in the mist of goats.
4. Èbùlè siri nà nwòké nà-èrí n'údé. The ram said that a man does not cry but groans in the face of difficulty.
5. Íyì n'ìgwè nà-ékpò átúrū àhù ókú. Going in group keep the sheep warm.
6. Ò nà-àbù èbùlè láá āzū, ò bíá ògù. It is when the ram retreats that it comes for a fight.
7. Ónyé éhí óchá churù ósò, nà-àbù óhù èbùlè óchá ò wárá. Someone that has been chased by a white bull takes to his heels whenever he sees a white ram.
8. Díkē mēē íhé íkē, è wèrè èbùlè náá yā ākā. If a man performs an extraordinary feat, they will use a ram to reward him.
9. Ónyé nwērē òtù átúrū ánāghī àkpúkpū yā āmā. A person that has one sheep, does not take it to the field.
10. É tòò ónyé gbūrū èbùlè, ò hù āgū ò gbúó. When somebody is praised for slaughtering a ram, he is motivated to kill even a tiger.

Below is the analogical mapping of sheep proverbs in Igbo;

Source	Target
	Mapped
Átúrū	well equipped for accomplishment
Átúrū	improper personal assessment
Átúrū	blind association
Átúrū	persevering
Átúrū	unity
Átúrū	retreating to attack
Átúrū	panic at a little attack
Átúrū -	reward for hard work
Átúrū	being careful/cautious
Átúrū	motivation

From the source domain, *Átúrū* attributes in the Igbo idioms were mapped to the following characterisation of human in the target domain; *well equipped for accomplishment, improper personal assessment, blind association, persevering, unity, retreating to attack, panic at a little attack, reward for hard work, being careful/cautious and motivation.*

Sheep idioms in Chinese:

1. 亡羊补牢。Wáng yáng bú láo. Mend the fence after all the sheep are gone.
2. 羊质虎皮 Yáng zhì hǔ pí. Having the heart of a sheep in the skin of a tiger. (an impressive appearance with weak personality).
3. 披着羊皮的狼 pī zhe yáng pī de láng. A wolf in a sheep's clothing.
4. 羊落虎口。Yáng luò hǔ kǒu. sheep falling into the tiger's mouth.
5. 羊入虎口。Yáng rù hǔ kǒu. A lamb in a tiger's den.
6. 杀牛宰羊。Shà niú zǎi yáng. Slaughter the cattle and butcher the sheep.
7. 羊肠鸟道。Yáng cháng niǎo dào. Sheep intestine, bird path.
8. 羊肠小道。Yáng cháng xiǎo dào. Sheep intestine (narrow meandering footpath).
9. 如狼牧羊。Rú Láng mù yáng. Like a wolf shepherding sheep.
10. 挂羊头卖狗肉。guā yáng tóu mài gǒu ròu. To hang a sheep's head while selling a dog's meat.

Below is the analogical mapping of sheep idioms in Chinese;

Source	Mapped	Target
yáng 羊.....		belated action
yáng 羊.....		impressive but weak personality
yáng 羊.....		pretence
yáng 羊.....		falling prey
yáng 羊.....		treading dangerous ground
yáng 羊.....		big celebration
yáng 羊.....		difficult task
yáng 羊.....		difficult path
yáng 羊.....		oppressive official
yáng 羊.....		deceit

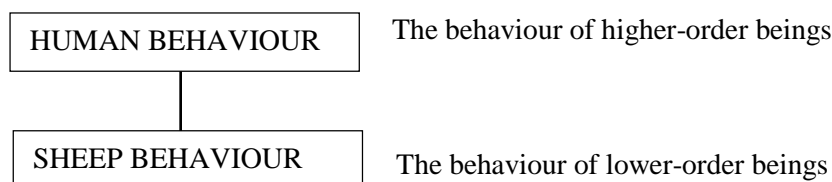
The analogical mapping of *yáng 羊* to the target domain were cognitively realised as human attributes thus; *belated action*, *impressive but weak personality*, *pretence*, *falling prey*, *treading dangerous ground*, *big celebration*, *difficult task*, *difficult path*, *oppressive official* and *deceit*. The use of dotted arrows / lines show that the target elements or domain were realised in the brain.

Discussion of Findings

The comparison of the human behaviour concepts involved in sheep idioms have shown the existence of some concepts found to be common to the two languages but their mappings involved in the idioms are different. For instance; *pretence*, *deceit/retreating* to attack, and *improper personal assessment/oppressive official*. In this case, the Sheep behaviours of lying/deceit, pretence, oppression are conceptualised in terms of human traits in both languages.

As regards the differences in use of human concepts, we discovered that the frequency in the use of human behaviour concepts in sheep idioms differs in the two languages This implies that in every socio-cultural environment, importance is given to different human behaviour concepts as revealed by the different frequencies of use and this influences the speakers' degree of conceptualisation of human behaviours in terms of sheep behaviours.

We can say that our investigation of the mappings in sheep idioms has revealed the existence of more differences than similarities in the two languages due to socio-cultural specificities. This sustains the claim that conceptual metaphors' domain mappings are subject to variations. This can be explained by the means of the Great Chain metaphor theory's device where human categorisation is applied on sheep categorisation through cross-domain mapping of human behaviour onto sheep behaviour as shown in the figure below:



Application of human categorisation upon sheep.

The Figure above shows how the characterisation of the behaviour of higher-order beings; that is, human beings is applied upon that of sheep that are lower-order beings, according to Mark (2008, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Kovecses (2002 and Belkhir (2014). In the Igbo and Chinese cultures, sheep behaviours are used figuratively to represent human behaviour

Conclusion

The study has been able to achieve its three objectives; to establish the presence of Sheep idioms in both Igbo and Chinese, and to identify the analogical mapping between animal characters and human attributes/behaviours in some selected Igbo and Chinese idioms.

The implications from the findings are

- Sheep idioms are ubiquitous in Igbo and Chinese.
- Domain mappings of human behaviour is animal behaviour conceptual metaphor is subject to socio-cultural specificities as evidenced in the animal-related idioms of the two languages and cultures.
- Metaphorical mapping across conceptual domains where the animals represent the source domain through which other human experiences are conceptualized as target domain.
- Analogical mapping between animal behaviour and human attributes in the selected Igbo and Chinese Sheep idioms.
- Some of the animal attributes which are used while applying idioms in communications have different semantic interpretations.
- Characterization of animal behaviour and human behaviour that yield both desirable and undesirable traits are based on cultural influence on the particular animal use.
- CMT and CCT can adequately account for those factors that bring about variation and different conceptualization of human behaviour in different languages and cultures.

Recommendation

The significance of this study is to contribute to raising teacher's and student's awareness on the cross-cultural differences in idioms /metaphors between the two languages and cultures, improving the teaching of Chinese and Igbo, and helping the students to cope with metaphoric idioms in an easy way. Moreover, this study is hoped to be a modest contribution to fill the academic gap in the area of metaphor in culture and cognition. It is to be noted that this study has cross-culturally and cognitively explored some Sheep-related idioms in two languages only and this has made the scope of the study limited. Also, we did not explore the human behaviour is animal behaviour in an extensive manner, as many of its aspects were left behind. However, it is hoped that this modest study has contributed to the expansion of knowledge about the topic under study and has provided a body of data for future research in the area. It is also hoped that since cross-cultural variation is a significant characteristic of conceptual metaphor, a future in-depth explanation can be conducted in it. We therefor wish to recommend this field of study for further investigation.

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