

Mentality Peculiarities in the Identifying Things with Animals in Chinese and Mongolian Languages

(on example of human behavioral expressions)

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Issue Details

Issue Title: 1(1)

Received: December 10, 2021

Accepted: March 12, 2022

Published: April 25, 2022

Pages: 37 - 43

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ASIAN STUDIES in Mongolia

Abstract

The patterns and dimensions of the nation's thinking about phenomena, events, and characteristics vary depending on the nation's traditional way of life, worldview, language, and culture.

In the course of our research, we selected more than 100 analogies that define human behavior toward animals and livestock and attempted to compare the differences in the mentality of Chinese and Mongolian nations to a lesser extent. For instance, it is common that Mongolians often liken the five kinds of livestock which are close to their life such as a stubborn person to a “дөргүй бух” meaning “a bull without a nose-ring”, a careless person to a “тошсон бух” meaning “a bull that has left the herd and spent the winter by oneself following the grass after its estrus”, and a gentle or obedient person to a “хонины морь” meaning “a horse that is ridden to herd sheep” whereas Chinese people often liken to worms, wild animals, lions, tigers, dragons and dogs such as a feeble or clumsy person to a /落水狗/ meaning “a dog hit by water”, a careless person to a /没头苍蝇/ meaning “decapitated fly” and a skinflint or greedy person /铁公鸡/ meaning “iron rooster”.

Keywords

analogy, Mongolians, Chinese, thinking or mentality, human behavior, animals, livestock

Depending on the traditional way of life, point of view, language, and culture of each nation, their perceptions about things and characteristics, type of mentality. These are expressed through the language of the nations. Therefore, the researchers believe “Language is an integral part of the culture of any nation, so by understanding the content of the language, it is possible to enter into the imagery of the culture-language, the way of seeing the world, and to recognize and understand the peculiarities of their way of thinking”. Then, in the language of any nation, the analogy of the language is the main tool that enriches the content of the language with new concepts and new names. Although comparative studies in this area are rare, many specialized studies have studied the similarities of words in their respective languages in terms of linguistics, vocabulary, and literary tools. For example, J.Bat-Ireedui's “Mongolian Identical Dictionary”, J.Bayansan's “Culture, Language, National Mentality”, G.Akim's “Concise Dictionary of Mongolian Idioms”, D.Byambadorj's “Semantic Studies of Mongolian Language” are very important study for us, as it provides an in-depth study of the stable vocabulary of the Mongolian language, including the analogies of the Mongolian language. In the case of the Chinese language, similar comparisons between Chinese and Mongolian languages have been made very rare. However, scholars such as 宗廷虎 /Zong Ting Hu/, 陈望道 /Chen Wang Dao/, 张宗正 /Zhang Zong Zhen/, 刘大为 /Liu Da Wei/ have studied Chinese idioms from a linguistic and lexical point of

view and have published several dictionaries. Researchers have identified the analogy in both languages as follows. For example, researcher J.Bayansan said, "The basis of any analogies or comparison is based on a method of comparing two things. Such comparisons are related to the mental act of connecting one thing to another. This act of linking is the process of identifying or analogizing two similar things that are being compared by discovering that they have something in common or a project, or that there is some connection between them"¹, researcher J.Bat-Ireedui said, "Identity is an expression of the results of human cognition, understanding, thinking, and the results of thinking, and it varies from nation to nation due to differences in the environment, nature, traditions, customs, culture, and history of each nation."², Researcher B. Byambadorj described it as "Analogy is a method of stating something similar to another to highlight one of the features of a phenomenon."³

Based on that we can conclude that synonyms of the Chinese and Mongolian languages have the following peculiarities:

1. Synonyms emphasize one of the features of things and the meanings abstractly more deeply.
2. In the process of comparing two things creates new concepts and new dimensions.
3. Identity of any language is national, so it can be an expression of the language, culture, and mentality of the nation.

From ancient times, the two nations, Mongolia and China, have existed together and valued their worldview, traditional way of life, and language and culture. In other words, Mongolians prefer a nomadic way of life, while the Chinese have a settled way of life, and led their lives on agriculture. In this sense, there is a big difference between the language, culture, and mentality of the Mongolian and Chinese nations.

This study is a part of a comprehensive study on "Peculiarities of Chinese and Mongolian Identical Thinking" that we are proposing as follows. These include:

"Peculiarities of Chinese and Mongolian Identical Thinking" (on example of human behavioral expressions)		
Mentality peculiarities in the identifying things with animals in chinese and mongolian languages	Mentality peculiarities in the identifying things with plants in chinese and mongolian languages	Mentality peculiarities in the identifying things with natural evidences in chinese and mongolian languages

During the research work, more than 100 examples of Mongolian and Chinese human behavior were compared with animal behavior and attitudes and were selected and compared as follows to find out how Mongolian and Chinese mental patterns and dimensions are expressed. (By the way, this time we did not pay much attention to the principle of balancing the translation when translating Chinese idioms and phrases.)

1. *The likeness of diligence, honesty, and helpfulness:*

The Mongols identified the hardworking characteristics as "like a camel without a hump, like an ant, as a hardworking bee," the honesty and diligence to "like a horse and a dog, like a watchdog,"

¹ J. Bayansan. Culture, language, and the mentality of the nations. Ulaanbaatar, NUM printing factory, 2016, Page-58

² J. Bat-Ireedui. Mongolian language synonyms and idioms, UB, "Munkhiin useg" Publishing, 2012. Pahge-1

³ 3.B.Byambadorj, Mongolian language stylistics. UB, 2014. Page-224

while the Chinese identified the hardworking characteristics with "old cow" (老黄牛), helpfulness is identified with "goat that bears the guilt of others" (替罪羊) and "a male cow" (孺子牛).

This shows that Mongolians do not have a strong and supportive animal like a camel when they carry their goods during movement from one place to another place, while for a Chinese person the most hardworking animal is identified with a cow that plows the land.

In addition, Mongolians often identify dogs with human beings as positive companions in their life, while Chinese often identify them with negative ones. For example, a weak one is identified as a "dog hit in the water" (落水狗), a bad one is like an "a pig and a dog" (猪狗不如), a bad one is like a "wolf's heart and dog's lungs" (狼心狗肺), and a one that supports the bad one is called "one thigh of a bad dog" / 狗腿子 / and so on. is.

2. Joyful, alert, quick-witted, and free-spirited:

This kind of analogy is often found in the Mongolian language. A joyful, fast, and happy one is identified as "a blue kid jumping on a luggage", "like a deer", "like a walking bird", "like a swallow", "like a hurrying rabbit", "like an only gazelle", "like an antelope about to jump", "like a steppe antelope", a free and happy one is identified "like a puppy that is escaped from a rope", "like a horse without a leading rope", "like a camel without its leading rope". Chinese people identified a joyful, fast, and happy one as "like a monkey" /猴子一样/, "like a baby monkey" /小猢猻/, an energetic one is identified as "like a live dragon, a tiger" /猴子一样生龙活虎/, a lucky one is identified as "fish fell through the net" /漏网之鱼/. The dragon and the tiger are the positive and negative symbols of metonymy for Chinese people, the tiger, and the dragon are the symbols of happy and strong people. From this, we can say that in some cases the Mongolians identified as very undisciplined and a hurrying people with a monkey which may be influenced by the Chinese mentality.

3. A combination of beauty, strength, arrogance, uniqueness, and contentment.

In the course of the research, this type of identification is common in the Mongolian language, and there are many examples of character identification rather than identification of human behavior. For example, beautiful and arrogant elegance is identified as follows "like a mountain deer, like a swan, like a wild deer, like a golden heron, like a collar, like an autumn goat, like a parrot, like a peacock."

As a Chinese person, he refrains from equating human beauty with animals and prefers to equate it with flowers and plants, so such examples are very rare. But arrogance and beauty are identified with "like a dragon in the crowd" (人中之龙), arrogance is identified with "as a hen out of a flock" (鹤立鸡群), and majesty is identified with "like a magnificent dragon and a fierce tiger" (龙精虎猛). This shows that Mongolians consider majestic steppe animals in their virgin nature (deer, swan, female antelope, etc.) as a measure of "beautiful, pure, and transparent" when Chinese consider flowers, leaves, and grass to be beautiful, and it represents a difference of their mentality between the two nations.

4. Equivalent to energetic, courageous, strong, resourceful, experienced, talented, and prudent:

The Mongols identified their energy, bravery, and strength with "mountain eagles, mighty elephants, male blackbirds, mighty brown bears, mighty falcons," and an experienced one was

identified with "a wolf that has been wounded seven times". The Chinese, energy, bravery, and strength are identified as "tigers descending from the mountains" (下山虎), energetic, courageous, and strong one is identified as "the back of a tiger, the waist of a bear"/虎背熊腰/, an experienced one is identified as "an old horse that knows its way home" /识途老马/, a gifted and prudent person is identified as "precious horse, a good donkey" (宝马良驹), and a leader is identified as "like a leader of lots of deer" /领头雁/.

According to the traditional Mongolian mentality, the symbol of energy, courage, and strength is a good horse and four strong animals: lion, tiger, dragon, and a legendary bird). Wolf-like mentality can be seen only in the culture of the Mongolians. Studies have shown that in the Chinese mentality, the lion is more a symbol of aggression and ferocity than a symbol of strength.

5. Identify fear, panic, and frustration:

In Mongolian, fear, and panic are described as "like a lark that sees the shadow of aloin, like a dog with a tail in the back, like a stray gazelle, like a frightened rabbit, like a rabbit stuck in a bush, like a mouse that saw a snake, like a stray puppy, like a squirrel that watered, like a rabbit that saw a fox, like a puppy that was scolded. The Chinese call it "a tortoise hidden in armor" (缩头乌龟), "a mouse holding it's head" (抱头鼠窜), "like a bird chased by an arrow" (惊弓之鸟), and "courage like a mouse" (胆小如鼠), "fish with dried gills"(曝腮之鱼), and "trapped turtle" (瓮中之鳖).

From the above, it can be seen that larvae, rabbits, puppies, squirrels, mice, turtles, and other small and weak animals have become common standards in both languages for weakness and fear.

6. Identification of sadness, misery, abandonment, doubt, confusion, weakness, disharmony, filth, and inferiority:

For Mongolians, poorness is identified as "like a a leash, like a guard horse, like an orphaned calf, like a kid, like a deer with an arrow, like a deer with a broken horn, like a baby camel with a tear, like a puppet around a stake, like a puppy, like an old dog." The abandoned is described as "tick thrown in the ashes," the weak and ugly one is described as "dead eagle, like sheep in the rain, like a crow in the rain, like sheep that throw its baby sheep, like an eagle shop by a gun, like an eagle that have cut its wing, like male cattle/goat, like a cattle that have lifted, like an eagle with an only wing, like an old camel, like a wounded eagle, like a tired horse/camel, like a worm, like a a beaten puppy, like a pig, like a cockroach, like a sick mouse, like a tired donkey". In Chinese language when a person is abandoned and left alone, it is identified as "like a dog left from its owner" /丧家之犬/, "lonely person, like a wild duck that lives alone" /单鹤寡鳧/, unexperienced person is described as "a frog lying in the bottom of a well"/井底蛙/, a weak one is described "Like a dog that has been hit by water"/落水狗/, a stupid one is described "a fly that has cut its head"/没头苍蝇/, an ugly one is described as "like a dog and a pig" /猪狗不如/, an awkward one is described as "like a cat with three legs" /三脚猫/.

7. Greed, anger, shamelessness, and the likeness of lies:

Mongolians often accept wolves, tigers, lions, mad dogs, and raging bulls as cruel and shameless. For example, anger is described as "hungry wolves, marmots, eagles in search of prey, hungry wolves staring into the city, like a rooster, like a wolf holding a lamb, like a fierce lion, like a roe deer, like a stallion, like a fox, like a woman, like a female tiger, like a raging bull, like a venomous snake, like a biting dog. "

The Chinese people call cruel people “like a beast in a cloak” /衣冠禽兽/, “like a wolf in sheep's skin”/披着羊皮的狼/, dangerous people “like a horse that threatens the herd” /害群之马/, false people as “like paper tiger” /纸老虎/, “like a dragon that changes its color”/变色龙/, “a tiger with a smile on its face or a yellow one, and a red one that changes its true face looking at others”/笑面虎/, describe the conspiracy “a dog leading the foxes”/狐群狗党/, describe shamefulness “like a crane that cannot dance” /不舞之鹤/, “stunned dog” /癞皮狗/, describe ugly one as “like a wandering rat” /过街老鼠/, describe greedy people as “greedy like a pig, aggressive like a snake” /封豕长蛇/, “greedy cat” /小馋猫/, describe indecisive and ignorant rudeness “crawling worms” /小爬虫、糊涂虫/, describe greedy people as “like a hungry tiger attacking its prey” /饿虎扑食/, “like a tiger staring into the eyes of a wolf” /虎视眈眈/, describe bully people “ground snake” /地头蛇/.

8. Identification of cunning, stubborn, stingy, greedy, lazy, complicated, vain, light-hearted, unruly, unstable, ignorant:

The Mongolians called cunning, deceitful, and vain people as “like a fox, like a harp magpie, like a horse without a helmet”, lightly and false people “like a butterfly on a pole”, unstable people “like worm-eaten camels /goats and drill worms”, people who cannot lead himself “A hungry horse, a raging bull, a raging bear”, stubborn people “all the bulls”, like a yak that tightens its pedals, like a hedgehog, like a bull's neck, like a biting dog”, lazy and complicated people “like a crawling frog, like a horse with a bridle, like a raven, like a saddled horse, like a stray camel, like a mare, like the rest of the yellow, like the squirrel, like the vicious dog, like a fly-cow, like a tick, like a mosquito”, fool and stupid people “like a vulture, like a goose lost in the fog”. For Chinese people, they describe the people with cunning tricks “old fox /老狐狸/, cunning people “glass cat”/琉璃猫/, user exploiter “parasites”/寄生虫/, greedy cruelty “Iron rooster”/铁公鸡/, “It's like licking a horse's ass” /马屁精/, “like an inseparable worm” /跟屁虫/, without his own opinion “like a worm that repeats the sound from its mouth.” /应声虫/ carelessness /马大哈/, the clumsy rudeness is “like a crooked toad” /癞蛤蟆/, “as if united with the same flock” (with negative value) or “like raccoons in one bush” /一丘之貉/.

In this study, we selected more than 200 analogies that describe human behavior in animals and herds and tried to make a small comparison of the differences in the mentality of Chinese and Mongolian peoples. For example, Mongolians often identify a stubborn person as a “stupid bull”, a stupid person “stupid bull”, a gentle person as a “sheep horse”, and so on. They used their 5 types of livestock to identify the people with different things. For Chinese people it is common to identify greedy people with worms, wild animals, lions, tigers, dragons, and dogs as “dog hit in the water” /落水狗/, “The fly that cut off his head” /没头苍蝇/, “iron rooster”/铁公鸡/. These can be summarized below:

1. There are many similar expressions in Mongolian and a few expressions in Chinese that use the knowledge of distinguishing the behavior of animals and herds as a standard for expressing the characteristics of human behavior and inner state. This seems to be a clear representation of the nomadic culture of Mongolians, who live closer to the wildlife and nature. (See the table below)

In the Mongolian language	In the Chinese language
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<p>5 heads of livestock: camels, horses, cattle, sheep, goats, bulls, goats, baby camels, a two-year-old camel, a father camel</p> <p>Other animals: dogs, pigs, rabbits, ants, ibex, eagles, swallows, larks, lynxes, magpies, swans, geese, cranes, parrots, peacocks, roe deer, hares, deer, female mountain deer, lions, tigers, wolves, bears, magpies, worms, snakes, orphaned calves, bees, lizards, crows, mice, cockroaches, mites, ticks, foxes, mosquitoes, donkeys, hedgehogs, cats, puppies, etc.</p>	<p>5 heads of livestock: cattle, goats, horses</p> <p>Other animals: lions, tigers, bears, dragons, wolves, dogs, pigs, donkeys, cranes, geese, ducks, swans, monkeys, baby monkeys, mice, turtles, fish, frogs, toads, flies, snakes, worms, cats, raccoon, chicken, etc.</p>
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2. In Mongolian, the analogy involving 5 types of livestock is the majority, while in Chinese, the analogy involving lions, tigers, wolves, and dogs is more common. This is a clear indication of the differences in mentality between the Mongolian and Chinese people depending on their intellectual and economic, and it approves that they have different values of identity.

3. For Mongolians, have very little in common with human behavior with the cold-blooded animals such as fish, snakes, raccoons, turtles, worms, and flies, as well as rodents and reptiles. It was observed that the Chinese did not pay much attention to the similarity of human behavior with sheep, camels, and bulls, as well as with grazing animals.

4. The Chinese often identify them with animals such as frogs, cranes, snakes, and foxes. We believe that this is closely related to China's historical events, religious practices, and celebrations.

5. This time, we did not pay much attention to the principle of balancing the translation when we translate this type of Chinese idiom into Mongolian. However, to accurately translate the synonyms of any language, it is important to “brainstorm” through the language of the nation, and further research is needed in this area.

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