



Idioms with Animal Names in Russian and Chinese

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Abstract. With the development of the times, we have gradually entered the era of a community with a shared future for mankind. Since China and Russia are both big countries and friendly neighbors, in recent years there have been frequent cooperation and exchanges between countries in various aspects such as politics, economy, culture, tourism, history and customs, etc., which has made the two peoples feel more emotional. The relationship between China and Russia has heated up rapidly, and the relations between China and Russia have continued to be close and flourishing. As a cultural language tool and communication carrier, animal idioms have broad application prospects and practical significance in cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural exchanges between China and Russia.

However, the differences in cultural background between the two countries lead to differences in animal metaphors in idioms. The author found several representative animal idioms in Chinese and Russian idioms, compared them using methods such as comparative analysis, and analyzed the similarities and differences between the two from the aspects of natural geographical environment, history and culture. Analyze and finally find the reason for the difference.

By studying the similarities and differences of animal metaphors in idioms, it will help promote cultural exchanges between China and Russia, improve people's awareness and understanding of Chinese and Western cultures, and enhance friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Keywords: Chinese and Russian animal idioms; comparative analysis; cultural differences

1 Introduction

With the development of the times, we have gradually entered the era of a community with a shared future for mankind. Since China and Russia are both big countries and friendly neighbors, in recent years there have been frequent cooperation and exchanges between countries in various aspects such as politics, economy, culture, tourism, history and customs, etc., which has made the two peoples feel more emotional. Therefore, it is essential to conduct in-depth research on the language and culture of China and Russia. Idioms are the crystallization of language and culture accumulated in the long history of human development. They are a very distinctive type of words in language.

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The symbolic meaning and emotional color of Chinese and Russian animal idioms are closely related to the history, folk customs, daily life, geographical conditions, language and other cultural factors of the Chinese and Russian peoples.^[1] Through the study of Chinese and Russian animal idioms, we can enhance the accuracy of the use of idioms in communication between China and Russia, and deepen China and Russia's understanding of both sides' literature, history, and local customs.

2 Idiom

2.1 Definition of idiom

Chinese idiom definition.

According to historical records, the earliest term for idioms to be called "Cheng yan" appeared in the Eastern Han Dynasty, and then evolved into "Cheng ci" in the Six Dynasties period. In the Song Dynasty, it was called "Quan yu" and "idioms". It has been used since the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Scholars Zhao Yi and Qian Daxin in the Qing Dynasty specially collected and organized idioms, such as "waiting for the rabbit", "moving fast without a good step", etc. The modern scholar Wang Guowei conducted in-depth research and exposition on ancient idioms, pointing out that idioms are mostly complex language forms, and their meanings are different from the monolingual meanings at that time, and their meanings are derived from their inheritance.^[2]

Different dictionaries define idioms slightly differently. "Ci hai" believes that idioms are a type of idioms, which refer to concise and incisive fixed phrases or phrases that have been used for a long time. Scholars such as Huang Borong and Liao Xu dong regarded idioms as a fixed phrase with a long history, rich connotations and obvious written style in the "Modern Chinese" they edited.

Based on a comparison of idiom definitions in various dictionaries and research on literature, I define idioms as: fixed phrases or phrases formed under a certain historical and cultural background, usually consisting of four characters, with a unique linguistic form and cultural connotation.

Definition of Russian Idioms.

Russian idioms are fixed grammatical forms, contain special vocabulary and special syntactic structures, have stable word and sentence meanings, and are deeply rooted in Russian language and culture.

Russian linguist А.И.Молотков (1977) once pointed out: "In the Russian language academic community, there is still no unified understanding of what an idiom is, or what is an idiom unit of language (фразеологическая единица языка), because There is no consistent view on the scope of idioms."^[3]

Russian linguist Ушаков, Дмитрий Николаевич defined Russian idioms in his book "New Russian Language Dictionary", calling it "a fixed grammatical form, containing special vocabulary and special syntactic structures, with stable word meanings and sentences" meaning, can directly convey information, and is an important part of Russian language and culture."^[4]

3 Comparative analysis of Chinese and Russian animal idioms

3.1 Russian and Chinese animal idioms have similar meanings.

Dogs.

As an animal that has a close relationship with humans, the dog plays an extremely important role in human production and life. In the Chinese and Russian cultural traditions, people have different views and attitudes towards dogs.^[5] On the one hand, dogs are trusted by humans for their loyalty and quickness, and represent a positive image. For example:

1. The labor of dogs and horses(犬马之劳): it means to be willing to run around for the monarch like dogs and horses, indicating that one is willing to be driven by others and serve others.

2. Dog loyalty / dog fidelity(Собачья преданность /собачья верность) - This is the sincere affection, love and loyalty of an animal to its master.

On the other hand, the dog's greed and ferocity are disgusting to humans and represent a pejorative aspect. For example:

1. Wolf heart, dog lung(狼心狗肺): meaning to describe a heart as vicious and vicious as wolves and dogs.

2. Like a dog needs a fifth leg(КАК СОБАКЕ ПЯТАЯ НОГА нужен) -Not at all, not at all (need).

Roosters.

The rooster is a common animal that can be seen everywhere in our daily lives. In Chinese culture, the rooster is used to keep people safe and to ward off evil spirits.^[6] The rooster's crowing means that the sky is about to lighten, which can be likened to "going from darkness to light", and it is known as the "golden rooster" that brings good luck.

In Russian culture, the rooster is also a good-luck animal, as its crowing at dawn dispels the night, and it is customary for the rooster to be seen as a symbol of happiness and fertility in the hearth and home. Below are some idioms about rooster that are widely used in everyday life:

1. The Golden Rooster Announces the Dawn(金鸡报晓): The meaning of the Golden Rooster Announces the Dawn is that the rooster is crowing to tell people that the sky is about to dawn. It means that the darkness is coming to an end and the dawn will come soon.

2. Winking at the rooster(闻鸡起舞): the original meaning is to get up and dance the sword when hearing the rooster crowing, and later on, it is a metaphor for the spirit of the aspirants to be upwardly mobile and persevering.

3. Till the second cockerels(До вторых петухов) - Till deep into the night.

3.2 Russian and Chinese animal idioms have similar meanings.

Magpie.

The image and symbolism of the magpie is also very colorful in both Chinese and Russian cultures. In Chinese culture, the magpie has always been regarded as an auspicious bird, associated with good luck and happiness.^[7] In Chinese idioms, magpies also appear frequently, such as "meeting at the magpie bridge(鹊桥相会)" and "magpies laughing and doves dancing(鹊笑鸠舞)", all of which express the images of pleasure, happiness and harmony. In Russian culture, however, magpies have a very different image. Russians regard magpies as unlucky birds, believing that they bring bad luck, sadness and disaster. The Russian word *сорока* (magpie) has even become a pejorative term, used to refer to those who like to gossip and meddle in other people's affairs. In Russian literature, magpie is also often used to describe those who are greedy, vain, jealous and unfaithful. For example:

1. Magpie laughs and dove dances(鹊笑鸠舞): it means magpies shrieking and turtledoves dancing. In the olden days, it was used as a happy toast.

2. Fame and Magpie Rise(声名鹊起): It means a sudden upsurge of fame and a rapid increase in popularity.

3. A magpie on its tail brought(Сорока на хвосте принесла): refers to unverified and unreliable news, as well as secret sources of any information.

4. "Yaakov's magpie" said(Затвердила(заладила) сорока Якова): It refers to the annoying repetition of the same thing over and over again.

4 Reasons for similarities and differences in metaphorical animal names in Chinese and Russian idioms

We compared the animal idioms in the two Chinese and Russian languages, and we can find that in some cases they have similar meanings, such as dog and rooster. This shows that the two Chinese and Russian languages share the same cultural heritage in terms of animal metaphors, and it also reflects people's common perception of animal behavioral characteristics.^[8]

However, in some cases, the same animal has different meanings in both Chinese and Russian languages. For example, magpie. Through the comparative analysis of animal idioms in the two Chinese and Russian languages, we can deeply understand the differences and commonalities between the two cultures. These differences and similarities arise from the different history and culture, natural environment and other aspects of the two peoples.

4.1 Differences in the natural environment

China and Russia are two countries with unique natural environments, and this has had a huge impact on the culture and language of both countries. Throughout thousands of years of history, China has been a traditional farming nation. The ox is considered an important labor tool for daily work. As a result, there are many idioms related to cows

in Chinese culture, such as "sweating cows to fill a building(汗牛充栋)" and "playing the cow to the lute(对牛弹琴)".

In contrast, Russia is located in the north and east of Eurasia and has a vast terrain. Weather factors in Russia have a great impact on local industries and culture. For example, in cold winters, the fur of bears becomes an important material for warmth, and therefore, a number of idioms related to bears appear in Russian culture, such as "МЕДВЕДЬ НА УХО НАСТУПИЛ" "Медведь ухо отдал" "

Thus, it can be seen that the unique natural environments of the two countries make the animal metaphors used in the idioms of the two countries show their own distinctive differences.

4.2 Differences in historical traditions

Language is a product of the long-term development of mankind, which is widely used and passed on from generation to generation. As different countries have their own unique historical processes, the historical events and legendary figures produced therein have become an important part of their language and culture.

China has a long history of 5,000 years, and countless historical events and stories of classic characters have nurtured a large number of animal metaphors. For example, the phrase "Winking at the Cock and Dancing(闻鸡起舞)" was first mentioned in the Book of Jin - Zu Ti's Biography, which originally meant that when one hears a cock crowing, he gets up and dances with a sword, and was later used as a metaphor to describe the spirit of aspiring people who are motivated to strive for excellence and perseverance.

Russia, with its unique and rich cultural traditions and history, has also incorporated numerous animal metaphors into its language. A famous example is "Драть как Сидорову козу", an idiom originating from Russian folktales, which is used to describe the punishment or treatment of someone in a very harsh and cruel way. ^[9]

In short, due to the different historical and cultural backgrounds of China and Russia, their idioms reflect their respective cultural characteristics and ways of thinking.

5 Conclusion

Idioms reflect a nation's way of thinking and cultural characteristics, while animal-related idioms highlight the distinctive features and vividness of idioms.

Animal metaphors in idioms are very common in both Chinese and Russian languages, and they symbolize certain qualities of human nature or describe some things metaphorically.^[10] By studying animal metaphors in Chinese and Russian idioms, we can gain a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences in the natural environment, history and culture of the two countries, as well as the role these factors play in people's cognition and language use.

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