

An Analysis of Metaphors in Daily Life

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Abstract: Metaphor is the psychological behavior, linguistic behavior and cultural behavior of perceiving, experiencing, imagining, understanding and talking about such things under the hint of other things. Metaphor can make things vivid and tangible and also make profound and abstract truth be expressed more simply and concretely. In daily life, sometimes words can not be understood according to their literal meaning, but need to be combined with people's perception of the objective world to understand the real intention of the speaker to express. This linguistic phenomenon is called metaphorical view in cognitive linguistics. Metaphor is an indispensable part in both Chinese and English. People often use proverbs containing metaphors to express their meanings, and popular online expressions also often contain metaphors. However, some metaphors have already been integrated into daily life and are easy to be overlooked. This paper will analyze the metaphor phenomena and essences in daily life from the aspects of network popular terms, proverbs, teleplay and so on.

Keywords: Metaphor, Popular network term, Proverb, Advertisement, Harry Potter.

1. Introduction

Metaphor is a rhetorical device that uses one word or expression to replace another to provide intuitive analogy. Metaphor is utilitarian when a phenomenon to be described can not be described in terms related to daily experience. For example, in science popularization, it is necessary to explain science phenomena in a language that can be understood by the general public. Therefore, it is requisite to minimize professional terms and appropriately use metaphors to demystify scientific knowledge. Metaphor, like a bridge, introduces new concepts into the cognitive field of society, making complex things simple, and grasping the essence of things without lengthy and detailed explanations. Some metaphors are often ignored because they have been integrated into daily life and are well known and used frequently. This paper will analyze the metaphor phenomena and essences in daily life in terms of network popular terms, proverbs, teleplay and so on.

2. Metaphors in Proverbs

Proverbs are concise and comprehensive phrases that are widely spread among the people. They express profound truth with popular words and reflect people's life practice. From the perspective of metaphor, proverbs can be divided into metaphorical proverbs and non metaphorical proverbs. Metaphorical proverbs refer to proverbial units that carry or contain metaphorical forms or meanings. Non metaphorical proverbs refer to proverbial units without metaphorical form or meaning, which only state some natural phenomena, social truths or common sense of life through straightforward words. There are a large number of metaphorical proverbs in Chinese and English animal proverbs. People regard animals as the main images of the source domain, map the nature of animals to human beings, and reveal the characteristics of human nature and the phenomena of human society. Next, from the perspective of conceptual metaphor, this paper discusses the similarities and differences between Chinese and English animal metaphorical proverbs, as well as the cultural similarities and differences between the two countries behind

them, using English Classic Proverbs and Chinese Proverb Dictionary as the basic language materials.

2.1. Metaphors of Snakes in Proverbs

- ① “蛇遭蝎子蛰，一个比一个毒”
- ② “当面笑呵呵，背后毒蛇窝”
- ③ “Snakes are of all sizes, bad people are of all sizes.”

Snakes represent evil and insidious in both Chinese and English cultures. In these above three proverbs, from the appearance of snakes and the nature of cold-blooded animals, people endow them with the characteristics of insidious and poisonous. In proverbs, these characteristics are mapped to people.

- ④ “Snakes sneezes and poison their mouths”
- ⑤ “蛇不打死害众人，虎不打死当祸根”

In the above two proverbs, “snake” represents a potential danger that need to be eliminated immediately. What's more, in the Western Bible, the snake tricked Adam and Eve into swallowing the forbidden fruit, and finally they were punished by God, which is also the embodiment of this usage.

2.2. Metaphors of Dogs in Proverbs

- ① “狗咬吕洞宾，不识好人心”
- ② “Love me, love my dog”
- ③ “Dumb dogs are dangerous.”

Dogs often appear in people's family life in both Chinese and English cultures, and they are closely related to people. In Chinese culture, dogs are usually derogatory, such as “狗仗人势” and “狐朋狗友”, which mean “a dog counting on its master's backing” and “evil associates”. The first proverb above refers to people who are ungrateful and ungrateful. On the contrary, in Western culture, dogs are family members, such as the second proverb above, and generally people do not use derogatory expressions. However, it can be found that there are also derogatory meanings in English proverbs, such as the third proverb above.

2.3. Metaphors of Cats in Proverbs

- ① “The cat jumps”

② “狗是忠臣，猫是奸臣”

③ “好奇心害死猫”

The first sentence means "the situation is clear" and the second one means "Dogs are loyal, cats are treacherous", in which the "cat" represents a person who is adaptable and masters the situation, because the cat will always pay attention to the movement of the prey when hunting, and seize the opportunity to take action. While in the third proverb, cats symbolize people who have strong curiosity and are bold to take risks, which because what can move in the eyes of cats are prey, so instinct drives them to try everything they see moving.

3. Metaphors in Network Popular Terms

In recent years, with the continuous development of Internet technology, the virtual platform built by the network has increasingly become an important field for people to communicate. Under the network environment, the spontaneous discourse expression of netizens has also spawned a series of network catchwords different from conventional languages. These network terms can be roughly divided into four categories.

The first type is to use homophones to express the same or different meanings with the original words, such as “耗子尾汁” “智齿” “不鸡丢” “蚌埠住了” “雨女无瓜” and “秃然”. The first five words have the same meanings with the original words, however, the last one has both the original meaning and the new one, which means “becoming bald suddenly”.

The second one is abbreviation, such as “爷青回” “YYDS” and “XSWL”.

The third one is foreign vocabularies, such as “栓Q” “EMO” “瑞思拜”.

The fourth and most important one is those with metaphor. The examples are as follows.

① “躺平” “内卷”

② “柠檬精”

③ “舔狗”

In the first example, both words use their form to express the meanings. “躺平” literally means lying flat, while its true meaning is to give up oneself instead of working or studying hard. When people mention "lying flat", we naturally think of the "flat body state", based on experience, and then associate it with "take a rest" and "cease one's efforts", which is different from the state of working hard. Therefore, it has something in common with "giving up oneself".

“卷” means bending inward in Chinese. It can be imagined that if the edge of a bowl continues to extend inward to the center, the remaining space in the bowl will be less and less, and the edges of bowls in different directions will gradually close to each other until they squeeze each other. This will create an urgent and stressful situation, which can be used to express "negative growth without development".

The remaining two examples have the same metaphorical technique that describing a kind of people with the extended meaning of the remarkable characteristics of a thing. The distinctive feature of lemon is acid, which is often extended to "envy" and "jealousy", so "柠檬精" is used to refer to those who envy others. Dogs lick to show obedience, kindness and

ingratiation, which is similar to some people's bottomless courtship. Therefore, “舔狗” refers to those people who abandon dignity and bottom line to cater to the other person in the process of pursuing a boyfriend or girlfriend.

In conclusion, different from the general network catchwords, metaphorical network catchwords use rhetorical devices to express meaning, and their underlying logic is a meaning mapping relationship. With this relationship, meaning transfer can be realized, which also enables people to grasp new concepts and new things intuitively.

4. Metaphors in Films and TV Series

4.1. Metaphors in Harry Potter



Figure 1. Google Scholar

In the Harry Potter films, Hogwarts is divided into four faculties, namely Gryffindor, Slytherin, Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff, whose symbolic animals are lion, snake, badger and eagle, which represent different characteristics of each faculty. Take the first faculty as an instance. The lion represents courage, kingship and power, and Gryffindor College is famous for cherishing courage, bravery and chivalry. Gryffindor's students are reliable, tenacious, courageous, positive, confident and capable of leadership. For example, although Harry Potter had a miserable childhood, he was still right-thinking, strong-minded and enthusiastic. When the Ministry of Magic controlled Hogwarts, he and Hermione organized students to practice magic secretly. As a leader, he maintained order and guided students.

4.2. Metaphors in Advertisements

Public service advertising is a component of social public welfare undertakings, whose content is closely related to the daily life of ordinary people, so it has a broad mass base. It plays a positive role in guiding the masses and promoting social positive energy in a healthy way through the use of profound and unique forms of creativity. Next, the CCTV public service advertisement "Family" will be taken as an example, to analyze the metaphor in combination with the genre characteristics and emotional orientation of public service advertisements. This public service advertisement perfectly combines the English word "family" with family members "father", "mother" and "I", and illustrates the warmth and significance of "home" by demonstrating that the change of the word "family" is mapped to the change of roles and responsibilities among family members. In the picture, "F" - Father, "M" - Mother, "I" - myself. Advertising is presented in three stages:

① In childhood.



Figure 2. Google Scholar



Figure 3. Google Scholar

The increasingly tall and elongated letter “F” in the image reflects the image of the father as the pillar of support. The process of gradual change also makes the responsibility of mapping the father more and more heavy. The small red umbrella on the letter “M” is the mother's shelter from the wind and rain, helping the child to prevent external harm, and providing a safe environment for the child's growth. At the same time, the letter “M” stretches its "arm" and shakes the letter “I”, which reflects the mother's careful care for the child, showing the image of the mother caring for the child gently and beneficially.

② At puberty.

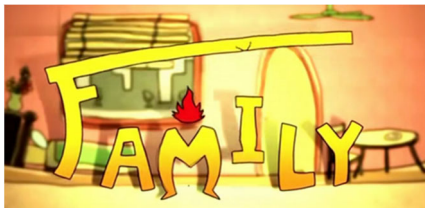


Figure 4. Google Scholar



Figure 5. Google Scholar

Children gradually enter puberty and begin to rebel against their parents' control. They constantly want to break away from their parents and often have conflicts with them. In Figure 4, children's ignorance and rebellion are vividly reflected by the deformation of the letter “I”. The up and down movement of the letter I reflects that the child is dissatisfied with the control of his parents and constantly wants to break free, repeatedly contradicting his father. From Figure 4 to Figure 5, the letter “F” gradually shrinks and cracks appear on the horizontal bar of the letter, reflecting the sad heartbreak of the father who has been rebuffed for repeatedly disciplining his children. The flame on the letter “M” reflects the anger of the mother caused by the disobedience and ignorance of the child. In Figure 5, the shape of “I” reflects the child's disdain for parental discipline. The advertisement uses image symbols such as cracks and flames to present the source domain, and vividly shows the

audience their respective emotions.

③ In adulthood.



Figure 6. Google Scholar



Figure 7. Google Scholar



Figure 8. Google Scholar



Figure 9. Google Scholar

In Figure 6, the letter “I” keeps getting higher; In Figure 7 and Figure 8, the body of the letter “F” gradually bends, and the letter “M” becomes shorter and wider, which implies that parents are getting older while children are growing up. The horizontal bar of the letter “I” in Figure 9 gradually lengthens until it covers the whole family, which means that the children grow up. Finally, they realize the difficulties of parents in raising children and begin to actively rely on them. The increasingly long horizontal bar of the letter “I” implies that the children gradually have strong arms to help their parents shelter from the wind and rain. The wind and fallen leaves at this time imply some external difficulties and pressures encountered by the family.

Filial piety is a traditional virtue of the Chinese nation, as well as the responsibility and obligation of children. Advertising interprets the meaning of the English word "Family" through animation, and metaphor the changes of characters through the deformation of letters. It is interesting and novel, but also makes people have emotional resonance, thought-provoking, and better interpret the connotation of advertising.

5. Metaphors in Colors

Color exists in all aspects of our life and is closely related to human life, which is often given a deep meaning. People, both in China and abroad, have always liked to use color to express meanings, for example, in China, "red" represents luck, joy and passion; "white" represents death, loneliness and seriousness. However, when color and network language are combined, they will be imparted with new metaphors. Next, several examples will be given to analyze the metaphor behind.

5.1. White

White often represents purity, kindness and justice. However, “白莲花”, white pond lily in English, refers to someone (usually girl) who is sinister and scheming but pretends to be innocent rather than a person who have those virtues above. On the contrary, “黑莲花”, black pond lily in English, represents a girl who is weak in appearance but brave in struggle and revenge.

5.2. Green

Green generally means freshness, nature, vitality, etc. However, “绿茶” green tea in English, refers to a person who intentionally caters to the opposite sex in order to maintain an ambiguous relationship with that person, similar to “白莲花”. Sometimes green is also given other meanings, for example, “绿帽子”, green hat in English, means cheating.

5.3. Black

Black usually symbolizes nobility, silence, inscrutability, stability, seriousness, death, low profile, mystery, and sadness. The term ‘腹黑’, a derogatory word, which means black belly literally in English, originates from the "腹黑い" in ACGN (Animation, Comic, Game, Novel) of Japan, which is used to describe people who are kind and gentle on the surface but evil and dark on the inside. In the ACGN world, this kind of

person has several common characteristics: being loved, having a huge debt of blood, and dedicating to a certain event. Later, the term was used in online romance novels, usually to describe the hero who is calculating and can always defeat his opponents. Such people are usually very capable, successful in their career, able to maintain an ambiguous relationship with the heroine and able to protect her from harm. Therefore, “腹黑” became a commendatory words to some extent.

6. Conclusion

Metaphor is an indispensable part of our daily life, which enables people to establish an abstract mode of thinking, so that people's ideas can be more stimulated and communicated, so as to have better output and results. Metaphor plays an important role in proverbs, movies, network expressions and colors. In addition, with the development of the times and the constant changes of society, the same thing may have different metaphors. In this respect, metaphor can reflect the changes and development of society to a certain extent.

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