

Zoo Proverbs as Cultural Artifacts: A Comparative Axiological Study between China and the English-Speaking World

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Abstract

This paper examines the symbolic meaning of zoo proverbs as cultural artefacts through a comparative axiological analysis of Chinese and English-speaking zoo proverbs. As a linguistic item, zoo proverbs, as a metaphorical expression of moral values that use animals as metaphors, represent and support the social and ethical structures of the societies where they originate. The study explores the moral lessons in a sample of proverbs in both cultural situations, revealing the values of the two, i.e., bravery, wisdom and loyalty, and the different forms of their manifestations. The paper uses the axiological approach to comprehend how these proverbs summarise the cultural beliefs about the manners of human conduct, social norms and the natural world. Results are that Chinese proverbs support family, social harmony and collectivism, and the English-speaking proverbs support individualism, personal success and moral complexities. The study makes a contribution to the axiology and comparative cultural studies field, providing information about the application of proverbs in morality education and intergenerational cultural transmission. The results of this research can be applied in informing language and cultural education since they offer educators and students with ample illustrations of the use of animals in language in a metaphorical way to express cultural values. Proverbs have widely been employed in language classes as a way of learning not only vocabulary and grammar, but also the underlying cultures in which they are practised.

Keywords: *Zoo Proverbs, Comparative Axiological Analysis, Chinese Proverbs, English-Speaking Proverbs, Cultural Artefacts, Moral Values, Axiology.*

Introduction

There is a certain inseparability between proverbs, language, culture and communication. They are provided with concise statements of wisdom, and are frequently statements of the values, norms and beliefs of a community (1). Of the numerous animal proverbs, the ones involving animals, also known as zoo proverbs, have some special place in many societies (2). These proverbs not only give a clue about human nature and society but also emphasise how animals are symbolically used to express a complex message about life, morality and behaviour. Animal symbolism in proverbs creates powerful metaphors that cross culturally and are characterised within the cultural identities (3).

In the present paper, there will be an effort to look at zoo proverbs as a cultural artefact through a comparative axiological study of the English-speaking world and China. Axiology which is the study of values and ethics provides a very intriguing means of analyzing the proverbs particularly the ones that include animals as an example of which are the rules of morals and societal values of these cultures. Based on such comparative analysis, this paper shall attempt to pull out the generic and particular values embedded within the proverbs used by the Chinese and the English-speaking world.

Cultural artefacts like zoo proverbs offer a unique, unparalleled understanding of how different cultures perceive the natural world, social hierarchy and human behaviour. The Chinese culture uses animals like the dragon, tiger or ox as the symbols of strength, wisdom or endurance, all of which are the main virtues that are cherished in the Chinese society (4). In English cultures, on the contrary, such

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animals like lion, fox, and dog are employed to express some values of bravery, cunning, or loyalty, and each of them has its own cultural connotations.

Significance of the Study

The examination of zoo proverbs as cultural artefacts also provides much information about the values, beliefs, and social organisation of various cultures, specifically the Chinese and that of the English-speaking world. Being brief and strong statements of collective wisdom, proverbs serve as the means not only of the language, but also of the conservation of culture and ethical standards. The proverbs of the zoo, especially, are full of symbolic connotation and may be considered a reflection of the way societies view and treat the natural world. The paper is essential in enhancing cross-cultural awareness through drawing a comparison between the use of animals as proverbs across two different cultural groups: the Chinese and the English-speaking. This research will show how these societies have given different moral and ethical values to various animals, by looking at the symbolic meaning of animals in the proverbs of the two cultures. An example would be the lion that may represent bravery and leadership in the English-speaking world, but the dragon in the Chinese culture may represent power, wisdom and spiritual power. Through the comparative analysis, this research provides the only chance to examine the similarities and differences between cultures and promotes the more delicate approach to comprehending the manner of values construction and transmission. This theoretical framework will be applied to proverbs in this paper as it is a contribution to the body of axiology, which is the study of values. Although the axiological research has been commonly utilized in the wider cultural artifacts, the study of the axiological aspects of the zoo proverbs has received little investigation.

Literature Review

Proverbs and zoo proverbs in particular have been studied and have received interest in many different fields such as linguistics, cultural studies, and ethics. Proverbs are perceived as summarised comments of wisdom, as a summary of values, norms and practices of a community. This section examines available literature regarding the importance of proverbs, especially those that mention animals, among the Chinese and English-speaking cultures. It will also dwell on axiological research on proverbs and also indicate past comparative research across the cultural setting.

Proverbs in Chinese Culture

Proverbs are a dominant part of the Chinese culture in terms of passing on wisdom and cultural values. Proverbs are widely used in everyday life, in literature and in school, and are representative of the moral teachings of Confucianism, Taoism, and other philosophical schools (5). The Chinese proverbs depict animals as the symbol of qualities like strength, wisdom and stubbornness. As an illustration, the dragon symbolises power, imperial authority and wisdom in the Chinese proverbs, and the ox symbolises hard work and persistence. One can trace such a method of animal use to deliver moral lessons in the well-known proverb A dragon gives birth to a dragon, a phoenix gives birth to a phoenix (Long Sheng Long ,Feng Sheng Feng), which stresses the significance of lineage and legacy in Chinese society (6).

Some researchers have analyzed the way in which the animals in Chinese proverbs are associated to the values and cultural traditions of the society. Chinese folklore and the ways mentioned animals represent Confucian ideals of filial piety, loyalty, and obedience to hierarchy (7). In her analysis, she claims that animals are not just symbolic figures, they act as cultural metaphor that hold profound social interpretations in the way the Chinese view the world. Chinese attitudes toward animals such as the tiger and snake are applied in Chinese proverbs to give warnings against pride and deceit (the moral tenets of Chinese ethics) (8).

English-Speaking Culture Proverbs

Animals, too, play a great symbolic role in proverbs of the English speaking world, which is often based on the values of bravery, wisdom, cunning, and loyalty. An example of this is the lion which often symbolizes courage and strength, such as the saying of the lion's share which means getting the biggest share. Equally, the fox is a representation of trickery and cunningness, and can be both good and bad, depending on the situation (9). The saying As cunning as a fox gives a good example of the ambiguity of animal symbolism in English sayings, with qualities such as smartness being viewed as either virtuous or malevolent.

The proverbs of the English are abundant with animal metaphors which are used to uphold social norms and moral teachings. English proverbs tend to exploit animals when commenting on human

nature, especially virtue and vice (10). He gives an example of the proverb of the best friend of a man the dog, and how both humans and animals bond closely to each other, stressing on loyalty, companionship and trust. Moreover, the purpose of the horse in proverbs as a symbol of freedom and nobility and states that animals in the English proverbs tend to have a symbolic meaning of the natural world and human values (11).

The Zoo as a Cultural Artifact

There are also zoo proverbs, wherein animals form the symbolic figures, and these have been studied in an assortment of cultures. The proverbs of zoos in the cultures of Southeast Asia, and concludes that the examined proverbs are mirrors of the values and memory of society (12). She highlights in her study how animals have been used to reinforce social hierarchies especially in the rural and agrarian societies where animals in many cases, are used as examples of human conduct. It also happens in China and the English-speaking world, whereby animals in proverbs give certain ethical and moral teachings concerning society, human nature and nature (13).

Chinese and Western proverbs, remarking that zoo proverbs are used by both cultures to convey similar messages and ideas to do with morality, wisdom, and virtue. Nevertheless, he brings out notable cultural variations in the meaning and symbolism of animals. To illustrate, in the western proverbs animals such as the lion and eagle are commonly linked to leadership and nobility whereas in the Chinese proverbs an animal such as the tiger or dragon is associated with power and spirituality. This analogy implies that even though both cultures make use of animal metaphors to convey values, the animals used seem to indicate some cultural priorities and philosophical traditions of such cultures (14).

Proverbs Studies of Axiology

The science of values, which is known as axiology, plays an essential role in the interpretation of the latent messages that are carried across zoo proverbs (15). The proverbs and even the zoo proverbs are not an invention of language only, but also the invention of cultural values. They offer us a prism which we can compare to the ethical systems of social behaviour, and how the moral teachings might be passed on between generations. The axiological analysis of proverbs shows a strong interrelation between language and culture, as well as the inseparable nature between societal norms and the expressions that occur in daily life (16).

Axiological framework compares the values coded in proverbs across various cultures, such as Chinese and English-speaking ones. According to her, zoo proverbs have been utilized by both cultures to support moral lessons, including the need to be honest, courageous and loyal to their families. Nevertheless, there are also separate value systems that she determines, which have an impact on depicting animals. In the Chinese culture, for example, proverbs would tend to state more about the harmonious relationship as a group or the significance of family relations, whereas, in the English-speaking culture, proverbs could be more devoted to the personal qualities of the person, such as courage or individuality (17).

Comparative Analysis of Chinese and English Proverbs

Comparative analyses of the proverbs have also brought out general themes as well as cultural differences. The comparative symbolism of animals in Chinese and English proverbs. They concluded that most animals are used as universal human attributes, e.g. wisdom or strength, but the cultural context plays a huge role in determining the moral lessons of such animal symbolism. Indicatively, whilst the two cultures employ the wolf to represent cunning, the fox in English proverbs is, on most occasions, negatively connoted, whilst in Chinese proverbs the fox may in other cases, represent flexibility or ingenuity (18).

These comparative studies are helpful to realise the role of proverbs as cultural artifacts, which are both universal and culture-specific. This study will attempt to illuminate the values that each culture holds and how these values are reflected in a metaphor and symbolism by evaluating the proverbs of both the Chinese and English-speaking worlds.

Research Gap

Although much academic focus has been vested in the research study on proverbs, especially in Chinese and English-speaking societies, there is still a gap in the comparative studies of zoo proverbs with an axiological approach. The literature on proverbs is either inclined to research on their linguistic characteristics, their role in communication or the way the proverbs are cultural manifestations; however, rarely does it touch the axiological aspects of the proverbs, that is, how the proverbs convey

moral visions, codes of ethics, and societal conventions. There is no proper examination of zoo proverbs as cultural artifacts that metaphorically hold cultural values using animals when comparing the Chinese to the English-speaking world.

To begin with, no comparative studies have been done on Chinese and English-speaking cultures in relation to zoo proverbs. Although several studies have been carried out about proverbs in the specific cultural backgrounds, few of them have undertaken a comparative study of how these two different cultures employ animal metaphors to communicate common or divergent values. Studies in this field have generally only been carried out in closed linguistic or cultural frames without considering the abundant possibilities of cross-cultural comparisons that could possibly point out universal and unique ethical systems.

Secondly, the literature on the subject misses much on the axiological content contained in zoo proverbs. Although proverbs are accepted as repositories of cultural wisdom they have not been researched extensively in terms of passing moral and ethical values. One of the most common ways to phrase concepts of virtue, vice, courage, and honesty can be seen in proverbs, especially animal ones, which are central to the cultural psyche. Nonetheless, the literary research on proverbs has mostly emphasized on their linguistic structure or history of origin as opposed to moral connotation. Therefore, the research gap is how axiological analysis is used to comprehend how these proverbs are pedagogical means to instilling and strengthening societal values.

The other notable void of literature is the cultural expression of animal symbolism in proverbs. Although some of the animals like lion, tiger and dragons are common in proverbs in various cultures, the meaning behind the existence of the animal varies in various cultures. To illustrate, the dragon in Chinese culture serves as the symbol of strength, wisdom and imperial power, whereas in the Western culture, such beasts as lion or eagle frequently represent courage and leadership qualities. Such symbolic meanings are well incorporated within the cultural and historical settings of the society that generates them. Nonetheless, not much research has covered the impact of these animals symbolism in these zoo proverbs to the moral systems of these two cultures especially in a comparative research.

Moreover, although proverbs are considered to be cultural artifacts, their ability to keep cultural values should not be exhausted in terms of zoo proverbs. Not only do proverbs indicate shared values in the society, it is also involved in passing on the same values to the subsequent generations. The definitions and applications of proverbs in particular ones that contained animals may change as the societies evolve. Nevertheless, little is known about the way in which zoo proverbs act as a means of continuity and change at the same time, especially in contemporary life where the applicability of the traditional wisdom itself is frequently doubted. There is a gap in the existing body of research because of the need to comprehend how these proverbs have evolved or been maintained within Chinese and English-speaking cultures.

Lastly, a lot of the studies that have been carried out on proverbs are mostly inclined to look into the past or the traditional expression with little effort directed to how these proverbs have been changing in the modern times. In the contemporary globalized world, zoo proverbs frequently have to be re-interpreted and updated with references to the media, education, and cultural interchange. The changing face of the proverbs has not been sufficiently tackled in the literature especially in the context of how the proverbs still play a role in delivering moral lessons and cultural identity in the ever more interconnected world.

The paper will explore how these proverbs mirror the moral compass of each of their cultures, decode the value of these proverbs through the axiological analysis. The principal research questions to be used in this study are:

- What are Chinese zoo proverbs values and morals?
- How do the cultures of the English speaking use zoo proverbs to pass on societal values?
- How do these values correspond with the eyes of an axiological approach whereby there are similarities and differences between the two cultures?

This paper aims to give a close-up of this theme in a bid to offer a critical comprehension of the concept of zoo proverbs as a cultural transportation of ethical values when there is an intergenerational interaction.

Through the comparison of the axiological themes in the Chinese and English-speaking proverbs, the paper will not only be able to show the cultural symbolism of animals, but also illuminate the role of language as a means of preservation and transmission of culture.

Methodology

This study uses comparative qualitative methods to compare the axiological and cultural meaning of zoo proverbs in Chinese and English cultures. The methodology of the study will be to determine, compare and interpret the values inherent in animal-based proverbs in the two cultural contexts. The research methodology to achieve the above focuses incorporates both literary analysis and a comparative analysis of the symbolic meaning of animals, the cultural functions they perform, and the way these proverbs convey moral values and ethical lessons. The data collection, analysis and interpretation follow as follows.

Data Collection

The data to be used in this study comprises zoo proverbs, two sources of which are:

Chinese Proverbs: A collection of Chinese traditional proverbs that use animals as a metaphor or symbol. The sources used to collect these proverbs were diverse and covered both historical and contemporary sources, such as classical Chinese literature, modern Chinese anthologies and cultural databases. Special focus was on the proverbs that could represent major cultural traditions as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism and tend to focus on such virtues as loyalty, family, harmony, and respect.

English-Speaking Proverbs: An Anthology of English zoo proverbs in Western literature, folklore and modern sources. Those proverbs were found in English language proverb books, web databases and history. The paper has aimed at animal-related proverbs in which western ideals of individualism, bravery, sovereignty and liberation are reflected and at the same time looked into the ethical implications of using animals such as the lion, fox, dog and eagle.

The use of both oral and written sources was done to have a full picture of how the proverbs were used and how they evolved over the various periods of time.

Data Analysis

The analyzed zoo proverbs were interpreted by the axiological comparative framework (19) to discover the values and moral teachings hidden in each proverb. The steps to be considered in analysis were as follows:

Categorization: The zoo proverbs were initially listed according to the animals that were represented in them (e.g., lion, fox, dog, dragon, tiger, etc.). Then these animals were combined based on the values that they represent (e.g., bravery, cunning, loyalty, strength).

Axiological Interpretation: The content of the various proverbs was tested in terms of axiological content that determines the values advanced or criticised by the proverb. An example of this would be the lion proverb, which could be taken as a sign of leadership and courage, and the fox proverb, which could be taken to refer to trickery or cleverness, which could have both negative and positive implications (20).

Comparative Analysis: Comparative analysis was conducted between the Chinese and the English-speaking proverbs to draw similar and different features of how values are described using animal metaphors. These involved seeking cross-cultural regularities (e.g. common symbolic meanings of particular animals), and accentuating cultural idiosyncratic ways of interpreting animals in each society.

Contextual Understanding: The contexts of history, society, and philosophy of the time in which these proverbs were formulated were also taken into account. This enabled a further insight into the influence that each culture had on the use of animals in proverbs through their moral system and ethical values.

Symbolic meanings and moral teachings contained in each of the proverbs were analysed qualitatively, without quantitative measurements.

Theoretical Framework

The axiology (the philosophical study of values) and cultural symbolism are the theoretical frameworks of the present study. The axiology is a prism in which to scrutinise the moral and ethical aspects of the zoo proverbs, and the cultural symbolism helps to comprehend the usage of animals as metaphors for the depiction of different virtues, vices, and ideals of society. The framework embraces comparative cultural analysis along with symbolic interactionism, where emphasis has been placed on the following concepts:

Axiology, the study of values and ethics, is the key to explaining the way the zoo proverbs convey the moral lessons. Values as strong beliefs that help direct human behaviour and choices to influence individual and group actions in society (21). The axiological approach to the present research enables us to discuss the way in which animals are used as symbols in proverbs to convey ethical norms, moral principles, and cultural values. As an illustration, the Chinese believe that the ox and the dragon are symbolic of power and hard work, whereas the lion and the dog are symbolic of courage and loyalty in English-speaking cultures. By analysing them through the lens of axiology, the paper examines how these animals have moral lessons reflecting the culture and philosophical concerns of each community in general.

Cultural Artifacts and Symbolism

Cultural artifacts such as proverbs have a strong cultural meaning and they portray the values, ideologies, and worldviews of the societies that create them. Culture is a set of symbols common to members of a community and which are utilised to express a meaning (22).

It is a figurative system whose proverbs are existing in a zoo, where animals are used to describe the moral teachings about the human behavior, relations in society and in nature. The proverbs symbolically make use of animals and are made manifest in their deeper cultural ideals upon which people and societies perceive their connection with the natural world.

The Chinese animals in proverbs can be traced to Confucian views of social harmony, and in this part, collective values need to be given priority including respect, family loyalty and ranks in the relationships (23). Contrarily, in English speaking nations, the proverbs of animals would be more reflectionary to person-centered values, personal success, and personal integrity, the major aspects of the Western philosophy and ethics. Using a cultural symbolism theory, this paper will seek to expose the symbolic values of animals in both cultures and how these symbols serve to enlarge the cultural discourses of human nature and the social order.

Comparative Cultural Analysis

This paper embraces a comparative cultural examination to see the similarities between both Chinese and English speaking cultures in the use of zoo proverbs to pass moral lessons. Cultures differ greatly in terms of values and norms manifested in its language, traditions, and social practices (24) . The study defines the similarities and differences of the moral systems used in two cultures by comparing zoo proverbs in these cultures and establishing how they influence similar and different animal metaphors. This paradigm allows defining universal values, including strength and wisdom, in addition to emphasizing culture-related explanations of animals (25).

This theoretical framework will offer a powerful method of analyzing the values inherent in zoo proverbs and their influence on cultural identity because of the combined use of axiology, cultural symbolism, and comparative cultural analysis.

Analysis and Discussion

The analysis and discussion section includes the comparative analysis of zoo proverbs in Chinese and English speaking cultures with emphasis on the axiological themes that they represent. The analysis brings out the moral principles and ethical teachings within these proverbs and attempts to identify similar and different cultural meanings that come out with the symbol of animals. Interpreting these proverbs through the axiological lens we examine the moral aspects of each of the proverbs and shed light upon how animals are used as metaphors to express the values, cultural norms and moral lessons of the society. The allegorical meanings of the animals in these proverbs will also be explored and how animals express as well as create the social and ethics of the societies where they are born.

The Zoo Proverbs Compared between the Chinese and the English Speaking Cultures

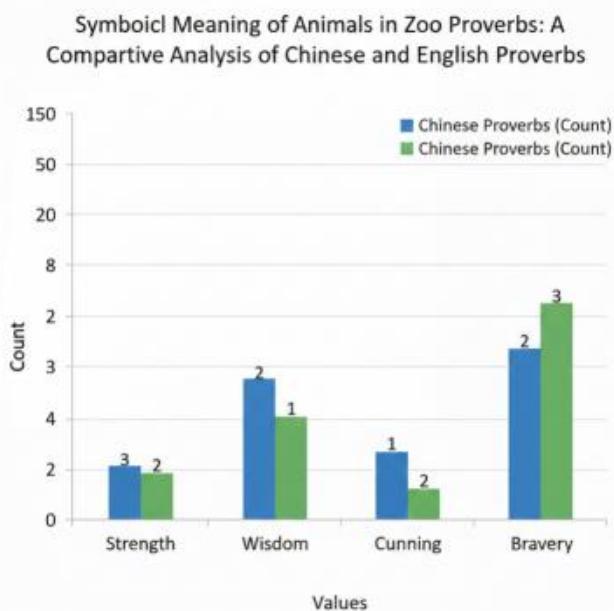
To make this comparison it is necessary to summarize the zoo proverbs in both cultures, the symbolic meaning of animals in each of the cultures, and the axiological values expressed in the proverbs. Comparing the use of animals such as the dragon, lion, and fox, we can learn more about how these proverbs are mirrors of the Chinese and English speaking cultures and their ideas of what is considered good and bad.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Zoo Proverbs in Chinese and English-Speaking Cultures

Animal	Chinese Proverbs	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture	English Proverbs	Symbolic Meaning in English Culture	Axiological Values
Dragon	龙生龙, 凤生凤 (A dragon gives birth to a dragon)	Power, wisdom, lineage, nobility	-	-	Legacy, social responsibility, respect for family
Ox	牛刀割鸡 (Using an ox knife to kill a chicken)	Hard work, patience, prudence	-	-	Modesty, careful judgment, humility
Lion	-	-	The lion's share	Strength, leadership, bravery	Dominance, courage, personal achievement
Fox	-	-	As sly as a fox	Cunning, intelligence (with dual connotation)	Wit, adaptability, caution
Dog	-	-	A dog is a man's best friend	Loyalty, companionship	Loyalty, trust, emotional connection

The symbolic meaning of each animal in the Chinese and the English speaking cultures as presented in Table 1 indicate some significant differences in the cultures and axiology as in the Chinese culture where the dragon is associated with wisdom and nobility, unlike the English speaking culture where the lion is related with leadership and bravery.

Symbolic Meaning of Animals in Zoo Proverbs: A Comparative Analysis of Chinese and English Proverbs



Graph 1 also demonstrates that the more common association of bravery and loyalty in English proverbs are with animals, whereas strength and wisdom are secondary in Chinese proverbs. This is a visual emphasis to the various cultural priorities in the two traditions.

Zoo Proverbs of the Chinese Culture

In Chinese culture, zoo proverbs are a potent depiction of the inherent values of the society that have evolved over the centuries of philosophical influence by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Such proverbs tend to teach the importance of social harmony, the virtue of the individual, family and community. Chinese zoo proverbs axiological themes tend to focus on the shared good, and individuals should be concerned with their place in family and society in order to have the better of the whole (26,27).

One of the most important Chinese cultural lexicons is the dragon symbolism in Chinese proverbs. The dragon, which is known to be a symbol of power, imperial authority, and spiritual power, is a symbol of the best human accomplishment in the old Chinese culture. The saying "Long Sheng Long ,Feng Sheng Feng " (A dragon has a dragon, a phoenix has a phoenix) is especially eloquent in its attitude to the significance of family background and position (28) . This saying brings out the Confucian principles of filial piety and social harmony in which family relationships are seen as part and parcel of the preservation of social order. In this respect, the dragon becomes a symbol of nobility and the family heritage, that makes an individual what he/she will be in the future and what he/she will do in the society (29). How do these values match with the eyes of an axiological approach where there are similarities and differences in the two cultures?

This paper seeks to provide a close-up on this topic with the intention of offering a critical understanding of the concept of zoo proverbs as a means of cultural transportation of moral values during intergenerational exchanges.

Although this proverb uses the image of the ox to symbolize the power and hard work, it also tells not to act rashly and to practice caution. The Chinese people worship the ox as a laborer animal, the ox symbolizes the hard working, mostly unrecognized work that is needed to keep the society organized and well run. The moral lesson in this case is the excellence of patience and judiciousness, which are important to life in a society.

More warning messages are also expressed through the use of animals in the Chinese culture. Indicatively, the snake and the tiger frequently feature in the proverbs as a symbols of danger, deceit and immorality. The saying of Hu Tou She Wei (A tiger has got the head and a snake has got the tail) portrays the meaning of a half-hearted or inconsistent work that does not live to its first declaration. The

tiger is a strong and threatening animal that symbolises the possibility of being destroyed when a project is initiated with high power, but no stamina and persistence. This Chinese proverb use of animals to warn against the evils of greed, recklessness and failure to control his or her own impulses, are morally dangerous as they are not only poor character-wise but also in the social title.

Zoo Proverbs in the English-Speaking Cultures

English-speaking societies are no different, as the proverbs of zoos also include the values of courage, loyalty, intelligence and personal success. The proverbs of the English language apply animals to portray features that have been promoted in Western philosophy such as individualism, courage and the capacity to beat challenges. The lion is one of the most salient animals in the English proverbs, which is traditionally associated with strength, bravery and nobility. The lion share is a saying or expression that is used to refer to the biggest share of something as well as the best and most valuable part. This is an expression of the Western love of the meaning of leadership, dominance and personal success, which are entrenched in the cultural life of the English speaking societies.

The lion of English proverbs is the symbol of the perfect leader and moral authority which expresses the idea that the real leader should be strong both physically and morally. Such proverbs as A lion heart express the need to be courageous in the face of the adversity, and the supreme heroism is not in his/her physical power but when the person is ready to perform the actions in accordance with the moral norms.

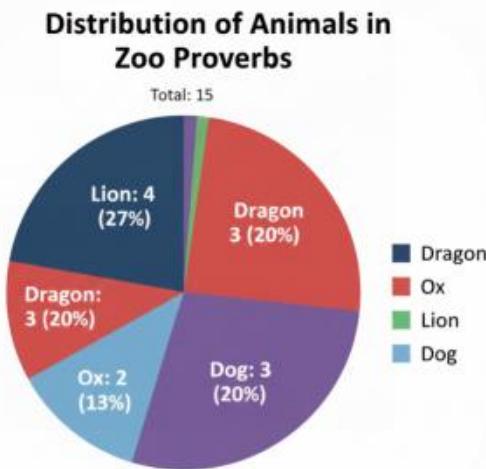
The fox in English proverbs is usually associated with cunning and wit, and both negatively and positively, unlike the lion. The expression As sly as a fox admits the cleverness of the mind of the fox and its tact of evading tricky situations. But there is also a component of deception in the fox, and this is seen in such verses as "A fox is not a good animal in a henhouse." This proverb cautions against cheating and deceit, but it is a moral warning of the English speaking cultures that one should not apply their intelligence to personal gain. Thus, the fox represents the ethical duality that can manifest within human soul, the possibility of smartness to be reconciled to good and bad.

The other animal that has been utilized in the English proverbs is the dog that denotes faithfulness and devotion. The fact that the dog is the best friend of a man shows how emotional the relationship between the human and animals is and how strong the faithfulness which a dog can exhibit is and cannot be changed. The value of trust, friendship and companionship is reminiscenced in this moral teaching of the West that reminds the axiological lessons. The dog, an icon of loyalty, signifies one of the fundamental values of English-speaking cultures, according to which the relationships based on trust and honesty are valued.

This is also reflected in English proverbs, where the importance of personal intelligence and ingenuity is also emphasized through such proverbs about animals as an owl or a crow. The owl, the traditional sign of wisdom is found in such sentences of a proverb as: an owl in the daytime is a symbol of foolishness, and it is the English culture that considers knowledge and prudence. The crow is also an animal that is used to illustrate the notion of being clever, as can be seen in proverbs that emphasize the need to apply ones intellect to overcome difficulties.

Comparison of Axiological Themes

A comparative analysis of Chinese and English-speaking zoo proverbs depicts some axiological similarities and differences. The two cultures apply animals to express universal values of bravery, intelligence and loyalty though there are differences in the focus and meaning of these values. Such animals as the dragon and ox are the symbols of the proverbs in Chinese which are highly based on the values of collectivism, social responsibility and family value. Chinese proverbs tend to be group-oriented and not individual-oriented and this tendency was due to the Confucian emphasis on social harmony and moral obligations to their families and their society.

Graph 2: Distribution of Animals in Zoo Proverbs

As can be seen in Graph 2, the proverbial distribution of animals shows that the lion is the most common, followed by the dragon and fox, meaning that these symbolic animals dominate both the Chinese and English-speaking cultures.

By contrast, the English-speaking world tends to value personal virtues such as courage, wit and independence, as well as using animals such as the lion, fox and dog as metaphors to personal success and moral strength. English proverbs tend to emphasise more on the contribution made by an individual in the society, praising their attributes that enable individuals to excel and make a personal statement.

Irrespective of these variations, Zoo proverbs are applied in both cultures as a means of moral orientation as they strengthen the values that are regarded as paramount in keeping the social order. Use of animals as warnings against some vices are also present in both cultures, and animals such as the snake, fox, and tiger are symbols of behaviour to be shunned.

Animals as a Cultural Significance and Symbolism

The use of animals as symbols in the Chinese and English-speaking cultures is an aspect that reflects on the moral system and cultural beliefs of the societies. The Chinese culture has animals like the dragon and ox which symbolize the principles of harmony, perseverance and family respect whilst in the English culture; animals like the lion and fox are used to symbolize the strength, intelligence, and leadership of an individual. These variations of symbolism draw out the difference in cultural priorities of the collective and individual.

The two cultures however, appreciate the ethical ambiguity of the human nature, where they use animals as a means to express their good and bad sides. The tiger, snake, and fox act as warnings to the people of the evil of pride, deceit, and heedlessness, and that people need to be cautious and upright in their actions.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the comparative axiological meaning of zoo proverbs in the Chinese and English speaking culture and how the zoo proverbs embody moral values, ethical codes as well as cultural norms by using animals as symbols. This study has aided in terms of shedding light on the similarities and differences between the two cultures in terms of the ways in which animals are used as metaphors to express the values within the society, thus, providing a better insight into the cultural artifacts that proverbs portray. The discussion also reveals how proverbs can be very valuable in moral education, which passes on values that define the societal aspect of every culture (30).

Summary of Findings

The results of the current study indicate that the Chinese culture and the English-speaking culture use animals as symbolic characters in their proverbs to convey various moral messages. The Chinese

culture gives great significance to animals like the dragon and ox, which represent power, intelligence, diligence and family values and proverbs like Long Sheng Long, Feng Sheng Feng (A dragon gives birth to a dragon, a phoenix gives birth to a phoenix) emphasise the value of family lineage and harmony among people. However, English-speaking cultures rely on such animals as lion, fox, and dog as the symbols of bravery, cunningness and loyalty as the values of individualism, personal success, and honesty. The English-speaking focus on leadership, trust and companionship is evident in such proverbs as The lion is a share and A dog is a mans best friend.

The study further finds out that the two cultures do have similar values like bravery, wisdom and loyalty, however the manner in which these values are manifested is not similar. The Chinese proverbs seem to be more associated with social cohesion, a family bond, and stability in society, whereas English proverbs are more focused on personal power, personal righteousness, and self-sufficiency. Moreover, the two cultures apply the use of zoo proverbs as a warning of the perils of pride, deception and recklessness with the fox, tiger and snake being the cautionary elements.

Contributions of the Study

The given research contributes to the sphere of comparative cultural studies and axiology in a number of ways. To begin with, it offers a systemic comparison of zoo proverbs in two culturally different environments, the Chinese and the English speaking ones, and insight into the morals and ethical frameworks of the two societies. Second, using an axiological approach to examine the zoo proverbs, this study enhances our interpretations of how the animals in the proverbs share lessons on moral aspects of human nature, roles, and social behaviour. Third, the paper highlights the significance of proverbs as cultural artifacts which pass society values and norms to the next generations, and which helps in the continuation of the cultural heritage.

Moreover, the paper also points out to the symbolic usage of animals in Chinese and English speaking world and how the proverbs can be used as a moral educative instrument as well as cultural means of passing on culture. This study is able to uncover how ideologies and philosophical beliefs rooted in culture influence the manner in which animals are represented in language through the analysis of the symbolism of animals. The results indicate that even though there are general patterns in the metaphorical use of animals, the animal types used and their symbolic significance is a derivative of the individual moral and ethical priorities of that particular culture.

The Cross-Cultural Understanding Implications

The analysis of the Chinese and English-speaking cultures based on zoo proverbs offers insightful information on the cultural value of proverbs and the cultural value of language in influencing the moral systems. This study will help in cross-cultural understanding since it will analyse the symbolic use of animals, which can help bridge the cultural differences, as we will see how various societies employ similar metaphors in expressing common values, but in different ways depending on their cultural background. The short and timeless sayings of proverbs provide a glimpse through the wisdom-webbing of a culture. The paper identifies the importance of proverbs in preserving cultural continuity, passing down must-have ethical values, and provides a vehicle through which the generations can transfer knowledge.

Future Research Recommendations

Although the current research offers a thorough comparative discussion of the zoo proverbs between the Chinese and English-speaking cultures, a number of gaps can be identified where the research can be extended. Further investigations may broaden this comparative area to other cultural backgrounds like the African, South Asian or Latin American culture in order to have a broader view on the use of animals in proverbs. It would help provide more understanding on the ways in which universal subjects of morality, virtue, and social order are conveyed in other cultural traditions.

The other direction to be explored in future research is that of exploring how zoo proverbs have evolved in modern times. In a world that is growing global, chances are likely that proverbs will change meaning, usage or form based on factors that include media, technology and cross-cultural contact. The dynamics of modernization in the interpretation and application of the traditional proverbs would help in the examination of the change of language and the change of culture.

Moreover, the research in the future may look into the use of proverbs in the learning institutions to impart moral lessons. The effectiveness of the proverbs in the ethical growth of the youth may be

analyzed in terms of cognitive psychology and theory of education to consider how the symbolic application of animals in the proverbs may impact the moral decisions and reasoning.

The study has presented comparative axiological approach of zoo proverbs in China and English speaking culture, the aspects of moral values and ethical teachings presented by use of animals symbolically. The results have demonstrated the cultural importance of the zoo proverbs as an instrument of moral training and show the agreed and specific values that determine cultural beliefs in such societies. It is in this analysis that the study has helped in gaining a better insight into the roles of proverbs as cultural artifacts, which serve to uphold and pass ethical norms between generations. The future studies in the field will also make us better understand the changing role of proverbs in a changing world by providing new information on how the language and culture still influence human behavior and social interaction.

Implications and Contributions

The paper has multiple implications to the comparative cultural studies and axiology field. Through studying the Chinese and English speaking zoo proverbs, the study is able to point out the symbolism and associated moral values of animals in proverbs, which are able to give more insight into how different cultures are able to understand the concept of virtue, behavior and social norms. The axiological paradigm applied in this paper gives us a subtle insight into the manner in which proverbs as a cultural artifact are able to bear with them moral lessons that cut across linguistic, geographical borders, etc.

Among important discoveries of this work, one should mention the comparative study of zoo proverbs that offers a fresh perspective of the symbolic use of animals in both the cultures. As this analysis shows, there are two cultures that are alike in regard to their values e.g. bravery, wisdom, and loyalty although these values are expressed differently, in their priorities defined and are particular to the philosophical and social structure of a particular society.

Besides that, the research would add to the existing discussion of the application of language in the instillation of cultural values and social continuity across generations by the analyses of the application of these proverbs as moral education methods. Besides, the research work contributes to the research in the field of axiology by offering a deeper insight into how the proverbs, specifically, zoo proverbs, are moral codes that dictate how people and the society should act. According to the paper, proverbs played an important role in conveying not only language but also moral education to people besides passing culture.

Limitations

Though this study provides useful information on the symbolic as well as the axiological meaning of zoo proverbs, it has a number of limitations. To begin with, the analysis is done using a chosen set of proverbs in Chinese and English-speaking cultures which might not be a complete reflection of all the proverbs in the cultures in different times and different locations. This study does not entirely reflect the regional differences in proverbs, or how the proverbs have changed their meanings over time.

Further, the research deals more with the conventional proverbs and neglects the possibility of the changing nature of these proverbs in the modern times. Due to the changing nature of societies, proverbs tend to evolve, become irrelevant or even gain different definitions. Future studies can be used to understand the influence of modernization and globalization on the utilization and meaning of zoo proverbs.

The other weakness is the linguistic barrier that might be experienced in translation of proverbs between Chinese and English language and this might influence the precision of the symbolism and axiological value that each proverb exhibits. The significance of animals in culture might not be completely translated, thus this may reduce the similarity of some proverbs.

Future Research

In this study, there are a number of avenues that future research can take. The development of zoo proverbs during the modern period is one of the areas that should be explored. The research that may be conducted in the future would be to investigate the adaptation of proverbs to the current challenges like technology, globalization, and cultural exchange. What are some examples of how these proverbs are manifested in contemporary social values? Are there any new evolving proverbs in the digital era, or proverbs have preserved their traditional sense?

The other possible way of future research is a more detailed comparative study involving more cultural settings, e.g., African, Middle Eastern, or Latin American culture.

This would assist in setting common values that are manifested in the zoo proverbs and in the various cultures that use animals as the metaphor to give moral lessons. Lastly, it could be referred to proverbs, and especially to the zoo, in the light of their psychological connotations in the sense of their influence upon the development of morals.

What are the effects of these proverbs to the perception people have of what is right and what is not? Are they the determinants of cultural attitudes towards animals, humans and the natural world? Such studies would provide useful knowledge on the internalization of cultural tales and influence on behavior.

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Conflict of Interest

This paper does not conflict with any other publication that the author has published. The study was carried out in an unbiased, open, and clear way, and there were no financial and personal interests that could affect the results of the study. Data utilized in this paper were all reputable and appropriate citation was made in the paper.

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