



THE METAPHOR OF “A LIFETIME IS A DAY” IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE POETIC WORKS

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Introduction

The experience of being human is intangible. As a result, descriptions of human experience rely heavily on metaphor to convey something of that whole lived experience (Phil.B, 2000). From its inception with the publication of *Metaphors We Live By*, (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) conceptual metaphor theory has been influential in linguistics, psychology, communication studies, and a host of other disciplines (Kovecses, 2002; Lakoff, 1993). According to the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) of cognitive linguistics (see, e. g., Fusaroli and Morgagni 2013; Gibbs 1994, 2008; Gibbs and Steen 1999; Johnson 1987; Kövecses 2005, 2010, 2015; Lakoff 1987, 1993; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) alternative conceptualizations can be achieved via different source concepts mapped metaphorically onto the same target concept. Cognitive linguists argue that conceptual structure is derived from embodiment, i.e. that “the nature of our embodiment determines and delimits the range and nature of concepts that can be represented” (Evans and Green 2006: 176).

Life is an eternal topic in literary texts in many languages. The concept life has many facets to it: a particular living being or living beings in general, the active force that makes living beings alive, the state or period of living, a way or manner of living, the activity or spirit that constitutes the living existence, the living existence as social life and relationships, and so on. Its applicability ranges from the micro level of individual plants, animals or humans to the macro level of organizations, nations or societies. For this reason, life is understood metaphorically via a variety of source concepts: precious possession, fire, light, day, etc.

The article focuses on the metaphor of “a lifetime is a day” in English and Chinese. Although English and Chinese are radically different languages and cultures, as Kövecses (2010) stated that some kinds of conceptual metaphors can be and are found in many languages. If some kinds of conceptual metaphors are based on embodied experience that is universal, these metaphors should occur - at least potentially - in many languages and cultures around the world. Different cultures may use the same source domain to express the same target domain. The data of expressions are extracted from English and Chinese poem works. It is considered that poets commonly use metaphors because literature is a part of culture, metaphor and culture can be seen as intimately linked.

Discussions

A lifetime is the length of time that someone is alive. A person's lifetime consists of birth, youth, middle age, and old age. A day can be divided into morning, noon and evening. The cycles of day and night are considered as the symbols of different stages of life. Kövecses (2005) states that universal human experiences produce universal primary metaphors, and these metaphors embodied in universal experience must be found in many languages. The metaphors do not exist in English, they also have a wide influence on Chinese conventional metaphors.

1. Morning/ sunrise is youth

Morning is called “早晨”, “晨” and “朝” in Chinese, it refers to the time between sunrise and two hours after sunrise. As the beginning of a day, morning is often seen as a youthful moment, hence the old Chinese saying “the whole day's work depends on a good start in the morning.” Sunrise (朝/日出) refers to the time in the morning when the sun



appears of full daylight arrives. Seeing the sunrise, which always make people think of hope and energy.

(a). Now therefore, while the youthful hue Sits on thy skin like morning dew,

Thus, though we cannot make our sun Stand still, yet we will make him run.

(To His Coy Mistress Andrew Marvell)

(b). The sun rises with its golden hues Making everything bright and new. The green becomes golden and

warm.

And new life on Earth will grow and form

Until the sun goes down the last day of your life.

There will be no more tears, no more hardships, and no more strife.

The sun slowly sinks to the other side of the Earth.

And you will return to where your life led you starting at your birth

(Distance From the Sun Megan Fricke)

(c). 盛年不重来，一日难再晨。及时当

勉励，岁月不待人。

杂诗十二首·其一 陶渊明)

(Once the beautiful youthful days are gone, they will never come back, just as there is never a second sunrise in a day. Encourage yourself to work hard while you are young. Time passes and wait for no man).

(d). 东隅已逝，桑榆非晚。

(滕王阁序 王勃)

(Though the morning is gone, it is not too late to cherish the evening)

In the example (a), the speaker urges a young woman to enjoy the pleasures of life before death claims her. In these lines, morning corresponds to youth, and the movement of the sun corresponds to the progress of life. Chinese literary also conceptualize morning as youth. In the example (c), the poet thinks that youthful time is as precious as sunrise in a day, which implies the metaphor of “youth is morning.” The youth will not come for the second time in one’s life, and there is no second morning in a day. In the example (b), the theme of the

sun as being a healing source of life and love. The sunrise represents a beginning or youth in this poem. The same metaphor found in the example (e), “东隅” refers to the sunrise in the east, and it also refers to morning, indicating youthful years. The literal meaning of “桑榆” is “ mulberry and elm trees” in English. The Chinese believe that the setting sun shines on the mulberry and elm trees, so it refers to the sunset, which means old age. The youthful days are gone, if people can cherish the time and work hard, it is not too late even if they are old.

2. Evening/ night/dusk/ sunset / twilight is old age

Chinese character “暮” means evening, dusk and sunset in English, and these can be conceptualized as old age both in English and Chinese. Evening and night is the last period of a day, and it indicates a day will be over soon, which makes people feel sad and sentimental. Sunset refers to the time when the sun goes down and night begins. There is a Chinese saying “夕阳无限好，只是近黄昏”， it means that the setting sun is infinitely good, but near dusk. In view of these common natural phenomena and cognitive feelings, both Chinese and English people compare sunset to old age.

(e). The sunset of my life approaches Having basked in the glory of youth Each waning ray of light's disappearing

(The sunset of my life)

(f). Alice grown lazy, mammoth but not fat, Declines upon her lost and twilight age; Above in the dozing leaves the grinning cat Quivers forever with his abstract rage:

(Last days of Alice Allen Tate)

(g). 惟草木之零落兮，恐美人之迟暮

(离骚 屈原)

(Only the grass and trees are scattered, fear the beauty of the twilight.)

(h). 君不见高堂明镜悲白发，朝如青丝暮成雪。



(将进酒 李白)

(You did not see the old parents, lamenting their white hair when they looking at the mirror. They had black hairs when they were young, while their hairs are as white as snow when they are old.)

In the example (e), the speaker wants to express that he is getting old, and he wishes his youth can come back again. Sunset, also known as sundown, is the daily disappearance of the sun below the horizon due to earth's rotation. Sunset also refers to a period of decline, especially the last years of a person's life. English expression "the sunset of one's life" is equivalent to Chinese phrase "迟暮", and the same expression can be found in the Chinese literary text. For example, in the example(g), when the poet thinks of that fact that trees and grasses eventually fade and wither, and he can't help worrying that the beauty is inevitably getting old. The poet use the image of the unavoidable fate of plants and the beauty to show that life is short, and time wait for no man. "暮"(twilight) refers to the faint light or the period of time at the end of the day after the sun has gone down,

beside, it also can refer to the final stage of life. Both example (f) and example (h), "暮"(twilight) is conceptualized as the last years of one's life. In the example (h), the poet laments that life is hard and short, describing the whole process of life from youth to old as a "morning" and "twilight", which makes people feel life is shorter than they think.

Conclusion

The article mainly analyzes two sub metaphors: "morning/sunrise corresponds to morning" and "twilight / dusk / sunset corresponds to old age," the two sub metaphors are salient conceptual metaphors with exceptionally rich and systematic linguistic manifestation in English and Chinese poetic works; and the two metaphors are shared both in English and Chinese based on the universal human experiences. No matter in English poems or Chinese poetic, these metaphors are often used to show that life is short, encourage people to seize the opportunity, and cherish the time.

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Ли Диди. Метафора “Жизнь – это день” в английской и китайской поэзии. Метафора является основным инструментом для понимания нашего мира и нас самих, вступление в взаимодействие с мощными поэтическими метафорами является важным способом определения человеческой жизни. Целью данной статьи является получение понимания межкультурного сходства в английских и китайских поэтических произведениях, что касается метафоры «жизнь - это день», и в этой статье анализируются две подметафоры в английских и китайских поэтических произведениях, включая «утро / восход - молодость» и «вечер / ночь / сумерки / закат / сумерки - старость». В исследовании делается вывод о том, что в английском и китайском обнаруживаются сходные метафорические образы, хотя сами языки не связаны друг с другом.

Li Didi. Ingliz va Xitoy she'riyatida "A lifetime is a day" metaforasi. Metafora bizning dunyomizni va o'zimizni anglashning asosiy vositasidir, kuchli she'riy metaforalar bilan shug'ullanish inson hayotini anglatadigan muhim usuldir. Ushbu maqolaning maqsadi - ingliz va xitoy she'riy asarlarida o'zaro madaniy o'xshashliklar to'g'risida ma'lumot olish. Ushbu maqolada asosan ingliz va xitoy she'riy asarlaridagi ikkita metafora, shu jumladan, "ertalab / kun chiqishi - yoshlik" va "kechqurun / tunda / tushda / quyosh botganda / olaqorong'ulikda keksalik" tahlil qilinadi. " Tadqiqot ingliz va xitoy tillari bir-biriga bog'liq bo'lmagan ikki til bo'lsa ham, ingliz va xitoy tillari bir xil ikkita metaforani birlashtiradi degan xulosaga keladi.