

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study *English animal idioms based on the Chinese zodiac and their conceptualizations* is to help learners of Chinese understand the meanings of English animal idioms related to the Chinese zodiac and the cultural differences in them by analyzing their conceptual metaphors. In this research, the author has collected and analyzed the data of idiomatic expressions of 12 animals based on the Chinese zodiac and concentrates on exploring metaphorical expressions of those animal terms from the point of view of Conceptual Mapping Theory according to Lakoff and Johnson. This study focuses on those English animal idioms from ELT perspective by selecting them from those occurring in standard ESL dictionaries.

Through the study, the author found that English animal idioms had significant metaphorical patterns. As the zodiac animals are very important in Chinese life and thinking, this study makes an analysis of how they are understood in English and how they are culturally different in Chinese. The significant features of conceptual patterns in the data are presented as resources for Chinese teachers and learners of English, such as those related to dragon, goat/sheep, tiger, cow, horse, dog.