

# Cultural Metaphor and Translation Strategies in English and Chinese Animal Idioms

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**Abstract**—Idiom is an important part of language. Thanks to the intimate relationship with animals, there are a large amount of animal-related idioms in human language. Human tend to express different emotions and reflect some social phenomena in certain times with the help of animals. As a result, most of idioms which include animals are terse but concise, short but comprehensive. A lot of animal idioms are found in English and Chinese language. However, since there are great differences in history, culture, geographical environment, fairy tale, custom, religion and mode of thinking between England and China, people who speak English and people who speak Chinese as their native language have different ideas for the same animals. So do the animal associations. Therefore, there will be different cultural metaphors in English and Chinese idioms. These cultural differences can be divided into three groups: conflict of cultural meaning between English and Chinese animal idioms and cultural exclusiveness of English or Chinese animal idioms, which lead to great trouble in translating. Combined with a large number of examples, this paper aims to analyze characteristics, differences, and reasons of animal idiom from the perspectives of conceptual metaphor and try to probe into some suitable translation strategies when translators are facing a variety of difficulties, whether direct translation or changes animal in English (Chinese) idiom with another animal in Chinese (English), so as to meet the target of retaining the original meaning.

**Index Terms**—animal idioms, cultural metaphor, cultural difference, translation strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

In mechanics people sometimes cannot observe a system without altering it. Linguists have altered language system and have created linguistic metaphors that are indeed be readily and widely used to in everyday language use, on the Internet. David Hawkes & John Minford's translation work *The Story of the Stone* (1973-1986, 1979-1987) have set the directions of metaphor research for years to come. They collected sets of organized cultural metaphorical language data that reflect conventional thought structures in human mind. After learning English years after years, I have found that people speaking English and people speaking Chinese have different thought structures and moods about many animals. For example, Chinese people identify dog as negative while English-speakers see it as positive, which arouse my interest in studying how western and Chinese people express animal idioms and their thought structures. As idiom is the pith of language and bears a thick ethnical cultural atmosphere, a deep culture as well as a long history, I treated animal idiomatic expressions from *The Story of the Stone* as if they indeed pervade our lives.

Till now, many scholars around the world have deeply studied this topic. Experts in China have probed into connotation of common animals such as cat, dog, and horse or animals that western people are more familiar with. In *English Idioms and Their Cultural Origin*, Li Yuping (2008, p.102-110) fully analyzed the connotation of pets and listed many examples. Editor group in Xiamen University collected 90 idioms whose connotations are connected with dog, and 80 with horse, 60 with cat, and compiled them in *Comprehensive English Idiom Dictionary* (Liu Xianbing, et.al, 2006). For the classification of animal idioms, one Chinese scholar Luo Shiping (2006) has divided animal idioms into four categories in his book *The Research of Idioms*. They are land animal idioms, flying bird idioms, aquatic animal idioms and insect idioms. Professor Ping Hong & Zhang Guoyang (2000) assorted animal idioms into noun idioms and verb idioms in *English Idioms and England and American Culture*. What's more, Chinese language experts have discussed many methods to study idioms. Among them, some popular methods are comparison of English and Chinese, metaphor understanding, context learning, origin tracing and translation comparison and contrast. For example, in *Language and Culture---The Comparison of English and Chinese Culture and Chinese and English Idioms*, written by Deng Yanchang & Liu Runqing (1989), a comparing and contrasting culture difference has been adopted to study metaphor among English and Chinese animal idioms. Professor Zhuang Hecheng (2002) utilized origin-tracing method in his book *Tracing the Origin of English Idioms*.

Early linguists mainly concentrated on the assortment of idiom origin and description of idiom expressing function. One of the representatives is linguist Logan Pearsall (1925) who regarded animal idioms as a part of idioms and divided animal idioms according to their communicative functions. He thought animal idioms can be used to express feelings, attitudes, will, anger, curse and so on. Other linguists assorted animal idioms on the basis of animals' behaviors. Christine Ammer (2013) divided animal idioms into pet (like dog and cat) idioms, bird idioms, pasture-related idioms, park animal idioms and underwater animal idioms. Prof. Smith once said among all the animals, dog and horse play the most important role in animal idioms. Owing to the impact of system-functional linguistics, Australian linguist Fernando (1996) and Kramersch (2000) discussed the function of animal idioms during communication. In *Patterns of Culture*, Mr. Benedict (1934) regarded cultural meaning of animal idioms can be indicated in three layers: surface layer, middle layer, and deep layer. What the surface layer culture animal idioms transmits is material culture, including all tangible and touchable material and intellectual products, which are reflected in architecture, clothing, diet, tools and so on. What the middle layer culture animal idioms mainly display is institutional culture, such as system, law and regulation, manner and custom. What the deep layer culture animal idiom implies is intellectual culture. It is manifested by way and product people produces through thinking activity. It contains values, way of thinking, aesthetic taste, and habit of thinking, morality, religion and philosophy.

#### A. Definitions

Metaphor is a popular concept for scholars at home and abroad. Unlike simile, metaphor often hides its real meaning. Aristotle (1984) defined metaphor as follows: expressing meaning by using words which are used to refer to other things. He believed that metaphor was a rhetorical tool, which was mainly used in literary, and was especially widely applied in poetry. "On the basis of some common features of the two things, speakers do not directly identify them while depending on readers to understand the meaning, known as metaphor" This sentence is derived from *English Rhetoric* written by Xie Zujun (1981).

Scholars in our country have already cited the concept---"cultural metaphor", but no one has ever defined it. As a concept, cultural metaphor is only defined by Dr. Martin J.Gannon (2001), a professor from Colombia University, author of *Cultural Metaphor: Readings, Research, Translation and Commentary*. In Gannon's opinion, cultural metaphors is a unique or distinctive customs, phenomenon or activity in one country or culture, this custom, phenomenon or activity is accepted by the vast majority of people and it is cultural metaphor that distinguishes them from other peoples.

Idiom generally refers to phrases which are commonly used together with a specific form. Its meaning can't be understood by speculation of single words. Idiom is the carrier of culture and the essence of language, and animal idiom is even a wonderful flower (miracle) with dazzling shine of language. Usually, it includes sayings and proverbs, proverbs, slang, jargon. Known by many people, animal idioms are idioms which contain animal words. Animals mentioned in this thesis are almost common animals in everyone's daily life.

#### B. Research Significance

There is no denying that animals in idioms not only represent animal themselves, they also show readers characteristics of their own culture. Studying animal idioms can help people who speak English and people who speak Chinese know each other's culture better. Therefore, translators who are responsible for exactly expressing another language most people are unfamiliar with in their mother tongue in order to make more civilians understand the correct meaning of animal idioms play an important role during the process. The quality of translation directly decides the degree of understanding another culture. So, there is a need to deeply probe into the topic.

#### C. Research Content

*Dream of the Red Chamber* is a famous classical literature with highly ideological content and artistic quality. It uses a large amount of expressive spoken language, dialect words and lexical meaning as well as the idiom, proverb and Xiehouyu which are full of thick life breath, comprehensively depicts the rise and fall of a noble family in the feudal society, and profoundly criticizes the feudal and decadent. Someone praises "*Dream of the Red Chamber*" as "China feudal society's encyclopedia" and a treasure word.

Animal's cultural metaphor discussed in this thesis is mainly based on David Hawkes translation *The Story of the Stone* (1973-1986, 1979-1987). Looking at the full paper, I have studied many animals, such as dog, fish, wolf, horse, crane etc. Reasons for choosing these animals are: they can well reflect Chinese and western cultural differences make people who are interested in expressing thoughts and feelings pay attention to the Chinese and western cultural differences in expression.

## II. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

#### A. Similarities

Language and culture influence and interact with each other. Because human's living environment is much the same, there are many animal idioms which have the same or similar cultural metaphor of the same animal. These similarities between English and Chinese peoples have been reflected in terms of life experience and understanding of common. At

this point, the English and the Chinese have the same association, giving animal idioms same connotation of cultural metaphor.

#### • Wolf

In English and Chinese culture, people believe that "Wolf" has a "cunning, greedy, cruel" nature, and used to compare wolf to greedy, murderous people. In a Chinese idiom "wearing a wolf in sheep's clothing" is used to cynically imply who looks nice but is ruthless in fact. Also there are many "Wolf" idioms in English. For example:

原文：中山狼，无情兽，全不念当日根由。(第五回)

译文：Zhong-shan wolf; Inhuman sot; Who for past kindnesses cared not a jot!

Man is a wolf to man (尔虞我诈).

The lone sheep is in the danger of the wolf (孤羊逢狼，必定遭殃).

The death of wolf is the safety of the sheep (狼的死亡就是羊的安全).

In Chinese culture, people like to criticize the erotic as "wolf"; in English "wolf" also means man who harasses the female.

#### • Other Animals

Some animals in English and Chinese idioms show an amazing similarity or similar cultural metaphor. For example, the donkey is stupid and inflexible; deer is timid and meek; lambs are adorable; pig is greedy and dirty; crows are inauspicious; snails are slow; snake is diabolical ... ..Below is a table about animal which clearly reflects some similarities of cultural metaphor between English and Chinese.

狼	wolf	cunning, greedy and cruel
驴	donkey	stupid and inflexible
鹿	deer	timid and meek
羔羊	lamb	adorable
猪	pig	greedy and dirty
乌鸦	crow	inauspicious
蜗牛	snail	slow
蛇	snake	diabolical
熊	bear	rude and stupid
百灵鸟	lark	happy
兔子	rabbit, hare	agile
鸽子	dove	peaceful

### B. Differences

In the process of human civilization, due to differences in geographical environment, customs, religion and other aspects, the language which can reflect the culture is also different. English and Chinese are originated from different ethnics and geography, which give animals different meanings. English and Chinese is completely distinctive culture, their strong cultural connotations make exactly corresponding vocabulary in two languages relatively rare. People will always think of certain characteristics for the same animal in western and Chinese culture, but there is a big difference in association with characteristics.

#### 1. Same Animal Idioms with Different Cultural Metaphor

As we all know, English and Chinese belong to completely two different cultures. The strong cultural connotation of two languages makes it nearly impossible to produce corresponding vocabularies. Owing to differences in geographical environment, historical events, manners and customs, and religious beliefs, the two ethnics tend to emphasize on different things when choosing animal metaphorical objects for language exchange and communication, which makes it possible to generate such a phenomena that people select the same animals but endow them with totally different cultural meanings.

#### • Dog

Different social customs, cultural traditions, ways of thinking, values geographical environment, religious beliefs can not only make different ethnic groups have their own reliance on the animal metaphor selection during the process of transmitting and exchanging language, or even lead to same metaphor with contrary meaning. The most typical one is reflected on the dog.

Dog is a humble animal in Chinese culture. Although China has thousands of year history of feeding dog, dogs act as doorkeeper, so it is also called the "guard dog". With a strong sense of being negative, Chinese give the dog "servility". It is commonly used to describe the bad people and bad things. Oriental culture pays attention to the negative characteristics of dogs. That is to say, everything relating to ugly words is given to this animal in order to express humanity disgust and contempt.

For example, if someone is bullying people with his hegemony, people will call him “狗仗人势”; if someone is reckless and audacious, people will call him “狗胆包天”; If someone doesn't make sense, people will call him “蝇营狗苟”; if bad guys speak something ill, people will say “狗嘴里吐不出象牙”; if someone has no conscience, people will

scold him “狼心狗肺”；if someone interrupt other people’s business, people will say “狗拿耗子多管闲事”；if someone can’t distinguish the good from the bad, people will criticize him “狗咬吕洞宾,不认好心人”。

Even dog’s movements and habits are also used to describe bad people and bad things. For example, “狗急跳墙”, “狗改不了吃屎”, “狗眼看人低”. “狐朋狗友” is used to refer to people who like to idle away in seeking pleasure and ignore their own occupation. An example from *A Dream of Red Mansions* is as following:

原文：恼的是那群混帐狐朋狗友的扯是搬非，调三惑四的那些人。（第十回）

译文：She was upset to think that those horrible boys at the school should be able to twist things round and say such terrible things about him.

Anything related to dog will basically have no good reputation. Although there are a few vocabularies which are related to dog sounding nice, basically “狗” is replaced by the “犬”, such as “愿效犬马之劳”. Every year in Guizhou, local citizens still keep the custom of eating dog meat, but in English speaking countries the situation is completely unthinkable and unbearable.

However, in western English-speaking countries, the main purpose of feeding a dog is to keep as a companion. A pet dog has become an important part of people’s daily life. Many people keep dogs as a part of the family and treat them as family. Therefore, dogs are considered as the most loyal friends of human beings. People often praise it and often compare the dog to human, and this has become a kind of fashion. So it is reasonable to generate an idiom--- “love me, love my dog”, translated as “爱屋及乌”. Although nowadays more and more Chinese begin to keep pet dogs, attitudes toward dogs between western and Chinese people are somewhat different, which can be found in the following examples:

When a woman who keeps a pet happily knows that she is going to give birth to a new life, westerners say: “Our children are going to have the best partner once he or she is born”.

The Chinese will say: “Take your pet out! Be careful of your child!”

When a man takes a walk with his children in the street, on the opposite comes a man with a dog.

A westerner would say: “Baby, look! That is a dog. It is our human friends.”

The Chinese people will say: “Baby, look! Dog! Don’t go to there! Beware of dog biting you!”

Seeing the examples, do you understand something?

In the west, because the dog’s image is positive, most idioms with dogs in English except for the part due to the impact of other languages are positive. In English, dog is a metaphor of human behavior, such as a lucky dog(幸运的人), a gay dog(快乐的人), a top dog(胜利或身居要职的人), a clever dog.(聪明的人). There are a number of other dog-related idioms. For example, “Every dog has his day” describes a person may not always in adversity. In addition, “Old dog will learn no new tricks” means you can’t teach an old dog new things; “Help a lame dog over a stile” means to help people over the difficulties; “A wet dog” is used to praise someone that swims good; “As happy as a dog with two tails” describes a very happy people. We can see that people in English-speaking countries view the dog as a good animal from the above examples. People put the dog as best friend.

#### • Fish

Britain is surrounded by sea, fishing and farming which originated from its unique geographical location and natural conditions also have an important influence on English. You can find fish-related idioms everywhere. The British use fish to represent all kinds of people: a big fish (a tycoon); a loose fish (a dissipated person); a queer fish (a strange man); a poor fish (a fool) etc. There are many idioms which are composed of fish, for example “like a fish out of water” (metaphors someone feel uncomfortable in a strange environment); “drunk as a fish” (extremely drunk); “have other fish to fry” (have other important things to do); Never fry a fish till it’s caught (do not act with haste) etc. In Chinese culture, people love fish. In addition to its edible value, it is also a beautiful cultural symbol. In Chinese, we send good wishes to people like “Fu Gui You Yu”, “Ji Qing You Yu”, and “Jin Yu Tong He”. And there is a sentence about fish in *A Dream of Red Mansions*: “吉庆有鱼”银钹十锭(第十八回). It can be translated as “Ten silver medallions with a design showing a stone-chime flanked by a pair of little fish (carrying the rebus-message ‘Blessings in abundance’)”.

Because the pronunciation of “fish” is similar to “Yu”, which means much money, fish is auspicious.

#### 2. Different Animal Idioms with Same Cultural Metaphor

Every nation has a different experience of life and ways of thinking, so metaphor of many animals in the ideology of people in different ethnic groups is different.

Therefore, it is possible to express the same phenomenon or concept with the help of different animals.

#### • Cattle and Horse

“Horse” in the English often plays the role of the “cow” in the Chinese. In ancient times, agriculture is the pillar and foundation of China’s economic development, people need cattle to do farming. The painstaking cattle work day and night. As time passes, it is endowed with images which have great force and bear the burden of responsibility. Thus, Chinese people have a special feeling to cattle and there are many cattle-related idioms, for example:

the spirit of old cattle---老黄牛精神;

gulp---牛饮;

He’s a stubborn little chap when he’s made his mind up!” they said---众人都笑说：“天生的牛心古怪。”（第二十

二回)

For English-speaking countries, people, horses represent strength and speed. Horse is very important to farms. Instead of the work of the cattle in Chinese, horses are farming tools in English. Therefore, the "horse" in English corresponds to the "cattle" in Chinese. So many idioms will be translated like this: "talk horse"---吹牛; "He is as strong as a horse"---他壮如牛; "He is really a willing horse"---他真是头老黄牛; "Work like a horse"---努力工作; "Stubbornness"---牛脾气.

#### • Other animals

Other animals are also found to have the corresponding cultural metaphor in animal idioms, as you can see from the below chart.

汉语	英语
一箭双雕	to kill two birds with stone
虎口拔牙	beard the lion
缘木求鱼	seek a hare in a hen's nest
像热锅上的蚂蚁	like a cat on the hot bricks
猫哭耗子	to shed crocodile tears
如鱼得水	like the duck to the water
亚洲四小龙	the four tigers of Asia
一丘之貉	birds of a feather

### 3. Animals Which Have Exclusive Cultural Metaphor in Chinese

As every ethnic has its own experience of life and mode of thinking, cultural metaphors of many animals differ from one ethnic to another ethnic. Therefore, as one of the most ancient civilization countries in the world, Chinese people usually apply something animals which have special cultural meaning in Chinese culture to describe certain situations.

#### • Crane

The crane is a symbol of longevity in Chinese culture. Thus parents giving names like "鹤年" and "鹤龄" show their hope that the child will live to a ripe old age. The crane is often paired with the pine tree, which is a symbol for sturdiness and long life. For example:若无知音,宁可独对着那清风明月,苍松怪石,野猿老鹤,抚弄一番,以寄兴趣,方为不负了这琴。(第八十六回)

译文:If there is no one able to share your music's true delight, then sit alone, and serenade the breeze and moonlight, hymn the ancient pines and weather-worn rocks; let wild monkeys and venerable cranes hear your song.

In paintings and art designs, the two often appear together with the motto (松鹤延年). Gifts with such designs are favorites for older people, especially on birthday occasions. But to Western minds, the crane does not arouse any association, so it is impossible to produce any cultural metaphor. If there are any associations at all, they probably came from stories about the bird in Aesop's fables.

#### • Turtle

Chinese symbolism that goes with the tortoise or turtle is twofold. On the one hand is longevity. Stone tortoises symbolic of venerable old age can be seen in front of ancient halls, temples and palaces. On the other hand, the creature is also the symbol of the cuckold. To call a person a turtle or tortoise or a turtle egg is highly insulting and highly profane. For example:

原文:女儿悲,嫁了个男人是乌龟。(第二十八回)

译文:The girl's upset: She's married to a marmoset(狨猴---the smallest monkey in the world, it refers to a coward).

In Western culture, there is no such occasion. The turtle is just a slow-moving and not very attractive creature. The English term "turtleneck sweater" often brings a grimace to Chinese when they learn that such is the English name for "翻领毛衣" they are wearing.

### 4. Animals Which Have Exclusive Cultural Metaphor in English

Idiom can provide interesting little glimpse or clues to a people's geography, history, social organization, social views, attitudes. The same goes for English idioms. Some animal-related idioms in English will have its unique features.

#### • Bull

To Chinese, bull carries no particular metaphor. They are merely animals that may or may not be common, may or may not be useful. Chinese might be able to guess the meaning of "a bull in a China shop", but they would not have the image that would be evoked in the minds of English-speaking people: an angry, snorting bull charging into a shop filled with exquisite fragile porcelain. Consequently, Chinese would be less appreciative of the vividness of the expression---meaning a person who is clumsy and bungling and causes a lot of trouble in a situation requiring tact and delicacy.

#### • Beaver

The beaver is chiefly a North American animal, not widely known in China. Its constant activity, its habit of gnawing down trees and building complex "homes" and its skill and ingenuity in doing this have earned for the animal the name "eager beaver"(卖力的河狸). In metaphor, an eager beaver is a person who is anxious to get something done, works hard, and is somewhat impatient. The term sometimes has a slightly derogatory connotation.

### III. REASONS FOR THE DIFFERENCES

Very few people interpret things without relying on their cultural preconditioning. Culture shapes our perceptions and behavior. Due to differences in historical development, Chinese and English have different historical background, beliefs and customs. Languages of different culture will have big differences. The following paragraphs will discuss the topic from four aspects: geographical environment, historical events, manners and customs and religious beliefs.

#### A. Geographical Environment

Cultural characteristics and geographical environment are closely linked; any kind of culture will have its own characteristics because of the distinctive characteristics of the geographical environment. Britain stands in the British Isles. With a vast coastline, it has more developed fisheries. Affected by the fisheries, many fish-related idioms are found in English, for example "dull fish" is used to describe boring man, "drink like a fish" is used to express someone that drinks too much, "cool fish" is used to describe cheeky man. However, China is a large agricultural country, the cattle is used as a major farming tools. Cattle bring the joy of planting and harvest. Cattle-related idioms are largely discovered in Chinese, such as "牛脾气""吹牛".

#### B. Historical Events

Every nation writes its own history in different ways in the advance of civilization. A lot of English and Chinese idioms are of historical events. They are a reflection of Western and Chinese history. In general, the meaning of idioms is often its meaning of general historical events or its implied meaning.

UK received more than one invasion in the history, such as the ancient Romans, Greeks and Jutes. Therefore, the nation's culture has impacted on the British culture, of which many imprinted by their national culture. For example:

(1) rain cats and dogs (下倾盆大雨)

This idiom is created by invasion of the Scandinavians during the development of English idioms. Ancient Lord God is Odin. Dog symbolizes wind and cat symbolizes cat. Therefore, cats and dogs symbolize "thunder and storm."

Chinese culture also has a long history. The vast majority of Chinese idioms have the stigma of the times or retaining traces of the historical development, among which are related to all aspects of political life. For instance:

(2) paper tiger (纸老虎)

This idiom comes from Mao Zedong's famous quotations. "All the imperialists and reactionaries are paper tigers." Then it is used to imply someone who has powerful appearance but is weak in fact.

#### C. Manners and Customs

Manners and customs are important parts of a nation's social culture, reflecting people's lifestyles and ideological criteria. Due to the impact of people's own politics, economy, religion and literary works, people who live in different regions have different customs. As an important part of the culture, there is no doubt that language will also be affected social customs, not to mention the idioms. Let's take eating habits for example. British men have their particular eating customs. Britain and Americans tend to eat meat, beef, chicken and fish are the common things of the table. The flavor of McDonald's and KFC's fried chicken drifts into every corner of the world. It is precisely because of this eating habits that generates a lot of idioms such as chicken-hearted (胆怯), talk turkey(直率地说), walk turkey(前后左右颠簸), be as red angry as a turkey(因生气而满脸通红).

Chinese eating culture has a long history. Types of poultry are also extremely diverse. Lamb meat is popular in many parts of China (especially in northern areas). Therefore, some idioms related to the "sheep" such as "羊毛出在羊身上", "羊质虎皮", "羊肠小道", "挂羊头卖狗肉" have a long history.

#### D. Religious Beliefs

Religion is not only a social phenomenon, but also a cultural phenomenon. Religion is an important part of human ideological culture. Different religious beliefs have a profound impact on the culture and life. Chinese and English-speaking people have different religious belief. Therefore, animal idioms which have connection with religion can better reflect the impact of religion on language. Buddhism was introduced into China for more than a thousand years. Chinese culture (such as philosophy, art, literature, etc.) has a very close relationship with Buddhism, and it is reflected in language. There are many idioms associating with Buddha or Buddha art theory and basic doctrine such as "人面兽心" and "牛头马面". China's indigenous Taoism is another religion which has an important impact on China. Therefore, there are many animal idioms which are associated with Taoism such as "一人得道, 鸡犬升天".

In the West, especially in the Anglo-American countries, people believe in Christianity. Christian doctrine "Bible" has a great influence on English, which is unmatched by any other old book. Many animal-related stories in the Bible are transformed into the idiom. For example:

(1) Separate the sheep from the goats

This phrase is abstracted from the *New Testament Matthew*. Sheep and goats are used to describe good guys and bad guys, so this idiom means "to distinguish good man and bad man" or "discern good and bad".

(2) Lion in the way

The phrase comes from the *Bible, Old Testament, Proverbs*, it means "stand in the way" or "terrible obstacle".

#### IV. PROBLEMS IN TRANSLATING AND TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

##### A. Problems in Translating

When translating, we should pay attention to the positive and negative meaning. Let's take "Birds of a feather flock together (物以类聚, 人与群分)" as an example. It seems that there is no derogatory meaning in this idiom, but in general it is only used in negative conditions.

When translating, we should pay attention to many fixed idioms with specific meanings. These idioms should not be translated according to their literal meanings. For example, "watch the birdie" should be translated as "look here" rather than "to see the bird" because children always look around when people take family photos. In order to let children look to the camera, the photographer calls out "watch the birdie" to attract the eyes of the young children, and then presses the button.

We should retain its national and local characteristics when doing idiomatic translations. In both languages, the meaning of some idioms is roughly the same, but each contains more obvious national and local characteristics. For instance, "When the cat is away, the mice will play" can be translated as "猫儿不在家, 老鼠闹翻天" rather than applying the Chinese idiom "山中无老虎, 猴子称霸王".

##### B. Translation Strategies

With the continuous development of Chinese and western cultural exchanges, the contact and communication between British men and Chinese are increasingly frequent. The precise translation of idioms will cross cultural barrier for people, promoting cultural integration, play an important role in "removing barrier". In order to obtain accurate translation of the idioms, help people overcome the cultural gap, and achieve the transformation of language and the transplantation of culture, translators should adopt corresponding translation strategies for different cultural connotation. Concluding all the animal idioms translation both at home and abroad, we find the following translation strategies:

###### 1. Direct Translation

For idioms which almost have the same connotations, we can translate directly. In this way, we can not only accurately grasp their metaphorical meanings, but also maintain the integrity of expressions, for example:

原文: 如今我们家赫赫扬扬, 已将百载, 一日倘或乐极生悲, 若应了那句-树倒猢猻散的俗语, 岂不虚称了一世的诗书旧族了。(第十三回)

译文: Our house has now enjoyed nearly a century of dazzling success. And suppose that in the words of another proverb---when the tree falls, the monkeys scatter. Will not our reputation be one of the great cultured households of the age then turn into a hollow mockery?

One swallow does not make a summer. 一燕不成夏

The frog in the well knows nothing of the great ocean. 井底之蛙

a wolf in sheep's clothing 披着羊皮的狼

###### 2. Replacement of Animal

For idioms which have some corresponding connotation, we can replace animals in English idioms by Chinese animals which have the same metaphor. Thus it will not only express the original meaning of the idiom, but also achieve the same effect, for instance:

原文: 一面又向贾政笑道: "令郎真乃龙驹凤雏, 王在世翁前唐突, 将来雏凤清于老风声, 可量也。"(第十五回)

译文: The prince observed to Jia Zheng that - the young phoenix(龙—凤凰)was worthy of his sire. I trust I shall not offend you by saying so to your face, he said, but I venture to prophesy that this fledgling of yours will one day sing sweeter than the parent bird.

As timid as a hare 胆小如鼠(兔—鼠)

The fox prays farthest from home. 兔子不吃窝边草(狐狸—兔子)

Every dog has its day. 凡人皆有得意时(狗—人)

###### 3. Direct Translation with Annotation

As for idioms which have completely different cultural meaning, we can use direct translation with the help of annotation. Direct translation cannot completely express the original meaning of an idiom, therefore direct translation and annotation can be used to deal with this problem. This method not only makes the meaning clear at a glance, avoiding translator devouring its original meaning on the basis of understanding, but also enable readers more accurately grasp the profound metaphorical metaphor. For example:

原文: 如今便赶着躲了, 料也躲不及, 少不得要使个'金蝉脱壳'的法子。(第二十七回)

译文: There isn't time to hide. I shall have to do as the cicada does when he jumps out of his skin: given them something to put them off the scent.

To shed crocodile tears 鳄鱼流眼泪, 假慈悲

The Trojan horse 特洛伊木马, 引起内部破坏的因素

Dark horse 黑马, 原来不为人知、意外取胜的选手

#### 4. Free Translation

Some animal idiom's expression in English does not exist in Chinese. In this case, we usually paraphrase (free translation), that is not to seek the literal peer-to-peer meaning of but translate deeper meaning. The features of paraphrase method is that idioms can be simply and easily understood by people, making its meaning clear but not exposed, reaching the effect of reappearing original language effect, which allows its idea to be conveyed more easily, for example:

原文: 一面又向贾政笑道: “令郎真乃龙驹凤雏, 王在世翁前唐突, 将来雏凤清于老凤声, 可量也。” (第十五回)

译文: The prince observed to Jia Zheng that - the young phoenix was worthy of his sire. I trust I shall not offend you by saying so to your face, he said, but I venture to prophesy that this fledgling of yours will one day sing sweeter than the parent bird.

Sow dragon's teeth 播下仇恨与敌意的种子

Live a cat and dog life 整日争吵不休

As proud as a peacock 骄傲的神态

#### V. CONCLUSION

Although animal-related idioms takes up for a limited portion in Chinese and English, due to the close relationship between animals and people's lives, the use of animal idioms make the language more interesting. By comparing and contrasting cultural information English and Chinese animal idioms hosted, we can see English and Chinese idioms reflect the unique cultural characteristics of the two ethnics. Professor Fan Cunzhong remarks that there are equivalent phrases or sentences between the two languages, but it is relatively few. There are more correspondent phrases or sentences, and the vast majorities are neither equivalent nor correspondent. By comparing English and Chinese animal idioms, cultural metaphors under different background differ. Therefore, translator should focus on accumulating cultural knowledge between English and Chinese animal idioms, trying to understand their metaphor meanings. Translators should accurately grasp the hidden meaning expressed in the original idiom, rationally use translation strategies, and represent rich connotation and language style in English animal idioms.

Besides, translators should proceed from their cultural background in the specific practice of translation departure, seeking joint point in both English and Chinese cultures, so that translation of animal idioms can demonstrate their own cultural characteristics without losing original cultural connotations of the words or accurately transfer cultural information purposes, thus promoting cross-cultural exchange of English and Chinese.

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