

Corpus-Assisted Study of Gender Related Tiger Metaphors in the Chinese Context

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Abstract : Animal metaphors have many different connotations, ranging from loving emotions to derogatory epithets, but gender expressions using animal metaphors are often imbalanced. Generally, animal metaphors related to females tend to be negative. Little known about the reasons for the negative expressions of animal female metaphors in Chinese contexts still have not been quantified. The Modern Chinese Corpus at the Center for Chinese Linguistics at Peking University (CCL Corpus) provided the data for this research, which aims to identify the influencing variables of gender differences in the description of animal metaphors mapping humans in Chinese by observing the percentage of "tiger" metaphor, which is based on the conceptual metaphor theory. A quantitative research method was used in this study to statistically examine the gender attitude percentage of the "tiger" metaphor using corpus data. This study has proved that the tiger metaphors associated with humans in the Chinese context tend to be negative. Importantly, this study has also shown that the high proportion of tiger metaphorical idioms is what causes the high proportion of negative tiger metaphors that are related to women. This finding can be used as crucial information for future studies on other gender-related animal metaphorical idioms and can offer additional insights for understanding trends in other animal metaphors.

Keywords : Chinese, CCL corpus, gender differences, metaphorical idioms, tigers

Conference Title : ICLCG 2023 : International Conference on Language, Cognition and Gender

Conference Location : Singapore, Singapore

Conference Dates : January 09-10, 2023