

Desirable Character Traits In Igbo And Chinese Chicken Idioms: A Cross-Cultural Study

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Abstract

This study examines the desirable character traits in some selected Igbo and Chinese Chicken idioms that are mapped into human characters using a cross-cultural approach. The conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson is employed for the study. The study adopts a descriptive approach. The data for the study is from both primary and secondary sources; The idioms were collected from books, internet sources, personal communication and intuitive knowledge. . A total of twenty Igbo and Chinese selected chicken idioms are presented and analyzed. The findings show that Idioms convey cultural content in inter-cultural communication, that conceptual domain mappings vary in the two languages and cultures due to cultural influence. Also, culture-specific features shape the metaphoric use of animals in idioms. The findings also show that some desirable chicken idioms mapped into desirable human behaviors include; commitment, responsibility, planning, discipline, concern for others, beautiful character, contentment, leadership, peaceful co-existence, diligence. The conclusion here is that idioms are a conceptual universal phenomenon with high communicative and cross-cultural values, understanding this phenomenon is very important in order to promote inter-cultural communication and avoid language barriers. The study recommends that further research be carried out in the areas of undesirable chicken idioms in other languages and cultures.

Keyword: *Chicken Idioms, Igbo, Chinese, inter-cultural communication, domain mapping,*

Introduction

Until the 1970s, the study of idioms was not conducted from a cognitive point of view. The metaphorical nature of idioms and their influence on the mental images in people's mind became a point of interest to researchers from the end of 20th century. All societies have idioms as part of their languages which they hand down to their children from generation to generation. They are used in everyday conversation and in all forms of human communication. The use of idioms helps to strengthen arguments and express certain generalized ideas. While some certain situations which appear to be the same in different communities and cultures are represented with similar idiom expressions, some metaphorical idioms which are coloured with cultural-specific features generally impede successful communication between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. In idioms, people see human concerns as the target domains to which isolated idioms refer, this in essence, helps one to understand idioms from unfamiliar cultures without difficulty. (Gibbs 1994, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Lakoff 1993, 2008).

Animal metaphors have been a great part of our language especially idioms. Such idioms have had the power to reflect both cognitive and cultural richness. Metaphorical understanding, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) occurs through a mapping across conceptual domains, that is, from a concrete source domain to an abstract target domain of experience. Our interaction with animals have given a significant place to them in our metaphorical thinking so that Kovecses (2002) cited in Johnson (2008) considers them as the extremely productive source of domains in our conceptual metaphors. Works on metaphoric interpretation reveal that non-native speakers encounter difficulty in comprehending metaphors (see Boers 2003, Littlemore & Low 2006). The

outcome of the understanding of human-in general-and human behaviour-in particular-in terms of animal behaviour has generated the PEOPLE ARE ANIMAL metaphor. Studies reveal that the tendency to use animal to refer to human beings is universal. Notwithstanding, there is a high degree of culture-specificity in the pervasiveness of animal metaphors underlying the idioms on the one hand and the type of animal which is used to refer to a certain human trait on the other hand (Deigman 2003).

The current study is on desirable character traits in Igbo and Chinese Chicken Idioms. Since Igbo and Chinese belong to different language families, scholars have tried to highlight those areas that constitute learning difficulties to L1 Igbo Chinese learners. From the existing literature, it is obvious that few cross-linguistics studies were conducted between different languages such as the present study. Hence the study will contribute to filling the gap in the literature on metaphoric animal-related idioms and enriching the cross-linguistic studies between languages like Igbo and Chinese.

Igbo and Chinese belong to different language families. Igbo is one of the three major indigenous languages of Nigeria. The Igbo live in the Southeast of Nigeria in the states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo, as well as in parts of Delta and Rivers states. Igbo is classified as a Niger-Congo language (Williamson & Bleach 2000). The term 'Igbo' refers to both the people and the language. The Igbo language like any other language is very rich in proverbs. Various works have been done on Igbo proverbs (see Emenanjo 1972, Egudu 1972, Nwoga 1975, Ogbalu 1978, Ugonna 1980, Umeh 1986, and Nwachukwu-Agbada 2002). Whereas Ogbalu 1978 is a collection of over one thousand (1,000) proverbs, the others analyse the Igbo proverbs from the poetic, aesthetic, oratorical, contextual, and structural point of view (Mmadike 2014).

Chinese on the other hand is the official language of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. It is one of the four official languages of Singapore and one of the six official languages of the United Nations. It belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family. Chinese include varieties from eight main dialect groups; Putonghua (Mandarin), Yue (Cantonese), Wu (Shanghainese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan and Hakka. The Northern /Mandarin dialect covers three fourths of China's territory and include two thirds of its population. Standard Chinese is known as 'Putonghua' which literally means 'common speech'. Putonghua uses the dialect of Beijing as the basis for its pronunciation. Chinese is now one of the most widely used living languages; with more than a billion native speakers worldwide (Yip & Don 2016).

Lakoff and Tuner (1989) note that the domain of animal life is one of the most elaborate ones, which we use to understand the human domain. This is important to proverb analysis and understanding. A considerable amount of research has been done on proverbs within the field of study known as Paremiology. Metaphoric proverbs like that of animal-related ones play important role in acquiring cultural knowledge, metaphorical understanding, and communicative ability in the process of teaching /learning.. The problems these metaphoric proverbs cause in the L₂ teaching /learning have great import in the Nigerian higher education context, especially in Igbo language teaching/learning environment like Nnamdi Azikiwe University.

The reason above stimulates our interest as teachers and researchers to investigate metaphoric animal-related idioms in Igbo and Chinese, to discover cultural specifics characterizing metaphor that may constitute difficulties for Igbo L₁ speaking Chinese learners, in so doing draw teachers' attention to them. This may help learners overcome this difficulty and make them able to comprehend metaphoric idioms and cultural differences /divergences and thereby help in effective Chinese teaching/learning. Also the study will explore how one particular conceptual metaphor is conceptually and socio-culturally rendered in two different languages via a comparison of domain mappings involved in HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR conceptual metaphor and a cognitive and cross-cultural investigation of idiom meaning . Also, the reason for selecting

idioms is that they are among the richest part of any language and cultural heritage which can reveal remarkable information about their cultural heritage, linguistic and conceptual properties all at the same time

Objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to examine the desirable traits of Igbo and Chinese Chicken idioms. Its specific objectives are to;

1. Identify some selected desirable Igbo chicken idioms.
2. Identify some selected desirable Chinese chicken idioms.
3. Describe how these desirable Igbo and Chicken idioms are mapped into desirable human behaviours.
4. Explain how these chicken idioms enhance inter-cultural communication.

Research questions

In order to provide answers to the objectives of the study, the following research questions are formulated to guide the study:

1. what are some selected desirable Igbo chicken idioms.
2. what are some selected desirable Chinese chicken idioms.
3. how are these desirable Igbo and Chinese chicken idioms mapped into desirable human behaviours.
4. how can these desirable Igbo and chicken idioms enhance inter-cultural communication.

Research Methodology

The study adopts the qualitative research design in the comparative analysis of Igbo and Chinese chicken idioms. According to Nworgu (2006), a qualitative research is a scientific method which involves observing and describing data (especially secondary data) without influencing it in any way. It is a valid method for researching specific subjects. Using the appraised instrument on animal-related idioms in Igbo and Chinese idioms, a total of twenty (20) Igbo and Chinese idiom were selected with regards to their relevance and appropriateness to the issues raised in our study. The data include; a set of metaphoric idioms related to chicken and which display the HUMAN BEHAVIOUR is ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR conceptual metaphor. We have restricted the list of idioms to those related to domestic animal; the chicken. The idioms are collected from direct interview (with both Igbo and Chinese), printed materials such as books, journals, thesis, internet sources and introspection on the part of the researcher being a native Igbo speaker.

We have collected proverbs used in the standard Igbo and Mandarin Chinese for two basic reasons; (a) the Igbo and Chinese learners are exposed to the standard forms from secondary schools and university. (b) The other reason is that the standard forms (of Igbo and Chinese) are easily accessible to us.

Literature review

The Conceptual Theory of Metaphor

The conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) was propounded by George Lakoff, a linguist and Mark, Johnson a philosopher in their book titled 'In Metaphors We Live By' (1980). The claims of the theory, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980:4) is that metaphor plays a central role in structuring human thoughts, As they posit; '...metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act is fundamentally metaphorical in nature'

The Systematicity of Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson note that because the metaphorical concept is systematic, the language we use to talk about that aspect of the concept is systematic. Since metaphorical expressions in our language are tied to metaphorical conceptions in a systematic way, we can use metaphorical

linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities. Example is seen in the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor; such expressions from the vocabulary of war like, attack a point, indefensible, strategy, new line of attack, win/ gain ground etc. form parts of systematic way of talking about the battling aspects of argument.

Knowledge of how metaphorical expressions in every-day language can give us insight into the metaphorical nature of concepts that structure our everyday activities, in the metaphorical concept TIME IS MONEY reflected in the English vocabulary is presented below:

TIME IS MONEY

You're wasting my time
This gadget will save you hours
I don't have the time to give you.

In our culture time is a valuable commodity, a limited resource, even money. We conceived of time as a kind of thing that can be spent, wasted, budgeted, invested wisely or poorly, saved or squandered. For human being to conceptualize time, it is tied to our culture. The metaphorical concepts: TIME IS MONEY, TIME IS LIMITED RESOURCE, TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY form a mingle system based on sub categorization, since in our society money is a limited resources and limited resources are valuable commodities. This sub categorization relation helps to characterize entailment relationships between the metaphors. TIME IS MONEY entails that TIME IS A LIMIMTED RESOURCE which entails that TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY

Empirical review

The work of Onwudufor (2008:1-260) is a documentation of 861 Igbo proverbs whereas Nwadike (2009: 35-57) outlines 85 proverbs with English equivalent. He further separated the proverbs into specific themes with regards to different aspects of the lives of Igbo people.

Sameer's (2016) study is a comparison of English and Arabic proverbs on dogs and horses. The study uses elected model gathering approach of Lakoff & Turner (1989), and Hsieh's (2006) approach of semantic molecules. The focus is on a cognitive, social and pragmatic view in order to establish that metaphoric and metonymic –mappings are cognitive mechanism which yield sets of explicature and form the origin of implicature. The findings reveal that in both languages the proverbs have the same functions and refers to the same intended meaning. Thus implying the same mental mechanism, for metaphor and metonymy. Hence, it can be said that both dogs and horses have nearly the same semantic molecules in both languages. They indicate the same contents, that is, dogs' proverbs usually indicate something bad and scruffy while those containing horse expressions indicate something good and noble. Sameer's (2016) study and the present study are both on animal proverbs. They however differ in that the former compares proverbs on dogs and horses in English and Arabic but the later compares idioms on chicken in Igbo and Chinese. Also the approaches differ; Sameer's (2016) study focuses on cognitive, social and pragmatic views while the current study uses CMT approach.

Aderinto's (2014) study is on the social implications of some Nigerian proverbs on carefulness. The aim is explore the social features of the use of such proverbs on carefulness within the Yoruba and Igbo people's cultural terrain. Therefore, they focus on Yoruba and Igbo proverbs to express the need for the people to be careful in whatever they do in life. Examples of such proverbs are;

(a) **Yoruba proverb:** *eni a bire kin rin l'oru*

Meaning: it is bad for someone well brought-up to walk in the night.

Interpretation: in the Yoruba culture, it is expected that one should avoid walking in the night, so as to avoid the dangers therein.

(b) **Yoruba proverb:** *a kii fi ise igba ose ran omo eni.*

Meaning: it is not good to expose children to anything that is not good in all ramifications.

Interpretation: the Yoruba people are of the opinion that children are innocent, they are not to be exposed to certain things that may corrupt them.

- (a). **Igbo proverbs:** *Agadi nwaayi da ada ugbolo abua, o guo ihe o bu n'isi.*

Meaning: when an old woman falls twice, she counts the things she is carrying on her head.

Interpretation: the Igbo people believe that it is good for one to learn from experience.

- (b). **Igbo proverb:** *ukwu ka e ji acho ihe danyere na mmiri.*

Meaning: one should use leg to look for something that falls into the water.

Interpretation: the belief among the Igbo people is that one should not dabble into a venture without investigation. That is, look before you leap.

From the findings, both the Yoruba and Igbo people of Nigeria are of the opinion that carefulness is very important for one to prolong his/her life and is an aspect of wisdom.

Belkhir (2014) carries out a contrastive cognitive study of some animal proverbs in English, French, Arabic, and Kabyle. The animals include; dog, ass, ox, and camel. The work employs CMT & CCT approaches. The findings show that conceptual mappings vary across the four languages and cultures due to cultural influences. The two works are related given that they both look at animal proverbs from cross- cultural and cognitive perspectives using the same approaches. They however differ in the numbers of languages and animals under study. Belkhir (2014) contrasts animal-related proverbs in four languages (English, French, Arabic & Kabyle). The present study compares Igbo and Chinese idioms on chicken. They also differ in terms of the objectives employed.

Estaji & Nakhavali (2011) discuss semantic derogation in Persian animal proverbs, using semantic cognitive frame. The major aim is to determine if there is semantic derogation in Persian and determine if it applies to both male and female sexes. The results show that sex and semantic derogation are not shown in Persian structures and proverbs as much as other languages, but in the case of semantic derogation, the metaphorical meanings of the female proverbs connote inequalities than those communicated by the male proverbs. On the other hand, the work of Pourhossein (2016) is on a cognitive linguistic study of animal metaphors in Persian and Turkish. The study adopts the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to investigate how Persian and Turkish conceptualize the world around them by metaphorical use of animal in their proverbs. The findings show variations and similarity; also, the results support the significance of cultural and geographical environs on how both folks use the animals metaphorically in order to conceptualize human and other domains of experience.

Milicǎn's (2019) research is on animal metaphors as revealed by a small Corpus of English and Romanian proverbs. The data includes six basic-level categories; bear, fox and wolf in superordinate category wild animal and dog, ox and pig of the superordinate category of domestic animals. The Corpus was gotten from three monolingual dictionaries and one multilingual dictionary: Iuhu Zenne, *Proverbele romǎnion*, 10 volumes 1895-1903 reprinted by Edihira Scara 2003-2004, William George Smith, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, Clarendon Press, 1935, Wolfeng Maeder (editor in Chief), *A dictionary of Arnencem Proverbs*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996 and Emmanuel Struass, *Dictionary of European Proverbs*, 3 volumes; Routledge, New York, 1994. The Findings reveal that animal metaphors reveal the animal for human cognitive perspective where the conceptual mapping frames the animal domains as the source domains. The cognitive perspective reflects the human for animal, here the conceptual mapping frames the domain as the target domain. The research concludes that the figurativeness of the proverb is based on the semantic contrasts of the constituents rather than being acquired in a certain context. This he calls explicit figurativeness. Milicǎn's (2019) research which is on animal proverbs shares something in common with the current study; in terms of the cognitive perspective.

They however differ in that Milicăn (2019) compares English and Romanian proverbs on bear, fox and wolf, the current study compares Igbo and Chinese idioms on chicken.

From the above reviews, it is obvious that not much work, to the best of our knowledge has been done on comparative study of desirable characters in Igbo and Chinese chicken idioms, this is the gap the current study is out to fill.

Data presentation and Analysis

The following twenty (20) Igbo and Chinese desirable chicken idioms are hereby presented and analyzed

1 *Íhé òkúkò bù mmírí àchú ò yá m̀kpà.*

2 *Òkúkò sìrì ùmụ yá há t̀r̀r̀ j̀ há t̀r̀r̀kwá m̀kpòrògwù, màkà ónyé nwē j̀ émèè gwúrú jí yá.*

3 *Òkúkò-bù mmírí àkpá n̄r̀ sì nà kámà áfò gà-èré, kà òkúkò yá réé.*

4 *Òkúkò-chí-ùmụ ánághí-èfè élū.*

5 *Úkwù òkúkò-zòrò nwá yá ánághí-ègbú yá.*

6 *Ónyé h̄r̀r̀ nwā òkúkò ébé ó nà-àbò n̄s̄ ch̀ỳ yá, n̄'ìh̄ nà ò mághí-mà ò bù yá gà-àtá ís̄ yá mà ò bù úkwù yá mà émésíá.*

7 *M̀má òkúkò ò yá n̄'àb̀b̀.*

8 *N̄k̀t̀ àjìdènwùghí òkúkò, ò wèré àkwá yá ná-édì.*

9 *Ùr̀m̀ òkúkò ánághí-àgákwù nwá égbè òr̀r̀.*

10 *Òkúkò òtù úkwù nà-èbù n̄d̄ òz̄-úzo àgá áh̄.*

11 独鹤鸡群。Dú hè jī qún.

12 鸡口牛后。jī kǒu niú hòu.

13 木鸡养到。Mù jī yǎng dào.

14 宁为鸡首，不为牛后 Níng wéi jī shǒu, bù wéi niú hòu

15 笼络人心。lóng luò rén xīn

16 鸡犬不惊。jī quǎn bù jīng.

17 一只鸡斗酒。zhī jī dòu jiǔ.

18 金鸡独立。Jīn jī dù lì

19 鸡肥不肥，看你喂 Jī fēi bù fēi, kàn nǐ wéi.

20 闻鸡起舞。Wén jī qǐ wǔ.

Data Analysis

The above Igbo and Chinese Chicken Idioms are hereby analyzed according to the desirable human traits they possess.

Desirability

1. *Íhé òkúkò bù mmírí àchú ò yá m̀kpà.*

That which the chicken is chasing under the rain is important.

Commitment to a task is appropriate. The chicken is chasing that which is important under the rain. This is similar to a person who is committed to an important task, without minding the circumstances.

2. *Òkúkò sìrì ùmụ yá há t̀r̀r̀ j̀ há t̀r̀r̀kwá m̀kpòrògwù, màkà ónyé nwē j̀ émèè gwúrú jí yá.*

The fowl told her chicks that when they eat yam, they should eat the roots as well, in case the owner of the yams harvests the yams.

Experience is the best teacher since no condition is permanent. The fowl advising her chick to eat yam as well as the root in case the owner of the yams harvest the yams is getting them ready for hard times, this is a desirable behaviour.

3. *Òkúkò-bù mmírí àkpá n̄r̀ sì nà kámà áfò gà-èré, kà òkúkò yá réé.*

The fowl that is looking for food under the rain said that instead of its stomach to decay let its wings decay.

Risk taking makes someone to maximize opportunities. Looking for food under the rain affords the fowl the opportunity of preventing the stomach from decaying. Taking risk is a fowl behaviour that is desirable as is a similar human behaviour because both are worthy of rewards.

4. *Òkúkò-chì-ùmù-ánāghì-èfè-élū.*

A hen with chicks does not fly up to sleep on the tree.

It is right to look after family members that is why a hen cannot leave its chicks to sleep on the tree. It is proper for parents to protect and care for their family members.

5. *Úkwù-òkúkò-zòrò-nwá-yā-ánāghì-ègbù-yā.*

The stepping on a chicken by the mother hen does not kill the chicken.

Discipline has great value. It is good for the chicken just as what is done for someone's welfare will not pain him/her.

6. *Ónyé-hūrū-nwā-òkúkò-ébé-ó-nà-àbò-ńsì-chuò-yā, n'ìhì-nà-ò-mághì-mà-ò-bù-yá-gà-àtá-ísí-yā-mà-ò-bù-úkwù-yā-mà-émésìá.*

He that sees the chicken scavenging in the faeces should chase it away, per adventure, he may be the one to consume the head or legs.

It is praiseworthy to protect and show concern towards others welfare. He that chases the chicken away from the faeces may later benefit one way or the other. This is as advantageous as someone who protect others.

7. *Mmá-òkúkò-dì-yá-n'àbùbà.*

The beauty of the fowl is in its fat.

Beauty is praiseworthy as it gladdens the heart. The fat fowl is more desirable than the thin one. Similarly, a person with admirable character is a piece of beauty.

8. *Ńkítà-éjìdènwùghì-òkúkò, ò-wéré-àkwá-yā-ná-édì.*

If the dog cannot catch the hen, it will make do with its eggs.

Contentment is praiseworthy. The dog that missed to catch the hen should be contented with the eggs. It is mapped to the saying that a man should be contented with what he has.

9. *Úrìòm-òkúkò-ánāghì-àgákwù-nwá-égbè-òrírí.*

The little chick does not pay a friendly visit to the baby kite

Avoiding danger is needful for there is need to keep distance from source of danger.

Similarly, it is better not to get involved with wicked people to avoid harm. There is wisdom in every boundary.

10. *Òkúkò-ótù-úkwù-nà-èbù-ńdí-òzò-úzó-àgá-áhìā.*

The fowl with one leg goes to the market before others.

It is important to know the value of punctuality It is important that the fowl with one leg move early to the market in order to be punctual.

It is mapped onto early preparation gets one ahead, this is desirable.

Desirability

11. 独鹤鸡群。Dú hè jī qún.

A single crane, a flock of chicken.

Being outstanding is praiseworthy. A single crane in the midst of chicken is as favourable as someone who is outstanding, manifesting superiority.

12. 鸡口牛后。jī kǒu niú hòu.

Prefer to be a small and clean chicken's mouth, rather than a big and filthy cow's rear.

It is more beneficial to speak decently rather than obscenities. Small and clean chicken mouth is better than a big filthy cow's rear that is filled with obscenities. It is similar to the favourable attitude of someone to others.

13. 木鸡养到。Mù jī yǎng dào.

The hen has cultivated/ raised [chickens].

Attitude towards family members or familiar persons is obviously favourable. The hen raising chicken is a desirable behaviour. It is similar to the favourable attitude that a person has towards family members or someone close.

14. 宁为鸡首，不为牛后 Níng wéi jī shǒu, bù wéi niú hòu.

I'd rather be the head of a rooster than the behind of an ox.

Leadership is desirable. The head of a rooster is a mark of leadership which is better than the tail of ox. This is mapped unto the leadership quality of some people.

15. 笼络人心。lóng luò rén xīn

Gather and win people's hearts. This is to build teamwork and unity

Having important skill in business and diplomacy. It is a desirable trait for a good leader to build unity by gathering people and winning their hearts.

16. 鸡犬不惊。jī quǎn bù jīng.

Fowls and dogs not frightened / disturbed

Peace and tranquility are beneficial as they promote teamwork. Fowls and dogs are not frightened because of peace is mapped unto people maintaining discipline and peaceful co-existence. Also said of excellent army discipline or a state of peace and tranquility

17. 一只鸡斗酒。zhī jī dòu jiǔ.

A chicken and a bottle of wine.

Preparedness is of utmost importance. A chicken and a bottle of wine is mapped unto someone's readiness to entertain guests, that is, to face the task before him/her.

18. 金鸡独立。Jīn jī dú lì

Golden rooster standing on one leg.

This means a person who is stable, confident and unique. This is to praise someone who can handle things alone. A very desirable trait for leadership.

- 19 鸡肥不肥，看你喂 Jī fēi bù fēi, kàn nǐ wéi.

Whether the chicken is fat depends on how you feed it. This shows that results depends on your effort. It teaches that responsibility is a desirable ethic in business.

- 20 闻鸡起舞。Wén jī qǐ wǔ.

hear the chicken crow and rise to dance. Be diligent and seize the day. This highlights the most desirable element of hard work and ambition

The above desirable characters in Igbo and Chinese chicken idioms are mapped into desirable human characters/behaviors in the table below:

S/ N	Desirable Igbo & Chinese Chicken Idioms	Desirable Human Characters/ Behaviors
1	Íhé òkúkò bù òmírì àchú ò yá mkpà.	Commitment to task, responsibility.
2	Òkúkò sìrì òmù yá há tìrù jì há tìrùkwá mkpòrògwù, màkà ónyé nwè jì émèè gwúrú jí yá	Making provision for difficult times ahead, planning
3	Òkúkò bù òmírì àkpá nírì sì nà kámà áfó gà-èré, kà òkù yá réé.	Taking risk to maximize opportunities.
4	Òkúkò chí òmù ánághì èfè élú.	Taking responsibility, care for family members.

S/ N	Desirable Igbo & Chinese Chicken Idioms	Desirable Human Characters/ Behaviors
5	Úkwú òkúkò zòrò nwá yā ánāghī ègbú yā.	Discipline
6	Ónyé hūrū nwā òkúkò ébé ọ nà-àbọ́ ñsị́ chụọ́ yā, n'ìhì nà ọ́ mághī mà ọ́ bù yá gà- àtá ísì yā mà ọ́ bù úkwú yā mà éméjá.	Protecting and showing concern for others.
7	Mmá òkúkò dì yá n' àbùbà.	Admirable and beautiful character
8	Nkítà èjìdènwùghì òkúkò, ọ wèré àkwá yā ná-édi.	contentment
9	Ùrìom òkúkò ánāghī àgákwú nwá égbē òrírí.	Avoiding dander
10	Òkúkò ótù úkwú nà-èbú ndí ọzọ́ ụzọ́ àgá áhíá.	Punctuality, early planning and preparation
11	独鹤鸡群。Dú hè jī qún.	Outstanding, superiority
12	鸡口牛后。jī kǒu niú hòu.	Decent behaviour
13	木鸡养到。Mù jī yǎng dào.	Sense of responsibility
14	宁为鸡首，不为牛后 Níng wéi jī shǒu, bù wéi niú hòu	Leadership quality
15	笼络人心。long luo ren xin	Leadership, diplomacy, good business skill
16	鸡犬不惊。jī quǎn bù jīng.	Peace, tranquility, peaceful co-existence,
17	一只鸡斗酒。zhī jī dòu jiǔ.	preparedness
18	金鸡独立。Jīn jī du lì	Stable leadership, confident, unique
19	鸡肥不肥，看你喂 Jī fei bu fei, kan ni wei.	Hard work, responsibility
20	闻鸡起舞。Wen jī qǐ wu.	Diligence, motivation, study

The above is the summary of the desirable chicken idioms mapped into desirable human behaviours. They include; commitment, responsibility, planning, discipline, concern for others, beautiful character, contentment, leadership, peaceful co-existence, diligence.

The findings above reveal amongst other things that almost 90% of the idioms used in different cultures are equivalent. This attributes their similarity to universal tendencies which are present in all languages. while the chicken idioms refer to specific situations, the content of human reaction is similar, i.e. almost universal. This is in line with Corder (1977: 24) who notes 'the members of different cultures live in the same world, but they categorize it differently, also, that the description of proverbs form two- plane perspectives of linguistics as well as semiotic structure provide much better insight with their nature than any single- plane description'.

Igbo and Chinese chicken mapping is the metaphor realized in the above idioms. The conceptual source domain is the Igbo and Chinese *chicken* while the target domain is the *human*. The metaphorical sense in the idioms is the conceptualization of the *human* as the '*chicken*' whose characteristics are mapped below:

METAPHOR

SOURCE -----TARGET

a chicken ----- a person

Conceptualization of human behavior as chicken characteristics:

Source Domain: Chicken	Target Domain: Human behaviours
chicken	commitment
chicken	responsibility

Source Domain: Chicken	Target Domain: Human behaviours
chicken	planning
chicken	discipline
chicken	concern for others
chicken	beautiful character
chicken	contentment
chicken	leadership
chicken	peaceful co-existence
chicken	diligence.

The above metaphorical mapping of chicken onto human beings requires the application of both the Great Chain and the Generic is Specific metaphor: the Great Chain connects natural occurrences with human behaviours, and the Generic is Specific metaphor maps the generic-level information about natural occurrences onto the corresponding generic-level information about human behaviours. Liu (2013) in his work attributes the similarities and differences in animal-related proverbs' metaphor in English and Chinese to similar and different faith, value, and ways of thinking and aesthetic orientation. This in essence means that different animal images can convey the same metaphorical meanings and the same animal image can convey different metaphorical meanings. He affirms that understanding this phenomenon is very important in order to promote inter-cultural communication and avoid language barriers. The conclusion here is that idioms are a conceptual universal phenomenon with high communicative and cross-cultural values. The study recommends that further research be carried out in the areas of undesirable chicken idioms in other languages and culture.

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