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Грамматические структуры и метафорическое содержание в китайских идиомах

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Аннотация. Цель данного исследования заключается в выявлении типологии и взаимодействия грамматических структур и метафорических выражений в китайских идиомах. В рамках исследования был собран корпус из 30000 китайских идиом из различных словарей идиом, из которых было отобрано 1000 идиом, после чего были аннотированы и категоризованы их внутренние синтаксические структуры, грамматические функции в предложениях, типы метафор и метафорическое содержание для проведения статистического анализа. Научная новизна данного исследования заключается в проведении количественного анализа распространенных грамматических структур и наиболее распространенных типов метафорического использования в китайских идиомах с применением корпусного анализа, а также в исследовании количественных взаимосвязей между ними. Полученные результаты указывают на то, что параллельная структура, атрибутивная структура и структура подлежащего-сказуемого являются наиболее распространенными внутренними синтаксическими структурами в китайских идиомах, в то время как структурная метафора представляет собой наиболее широко используемую концептуальную метафору. Тем не менее значительной корреляции между внутренней синтаксической структурой и метафорическим содержанием, грамматической функцией китайских идиом в предложениях выявлено не было.

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Grammatical structures and metaphorical content in Chinese idioms

Jia Junwen

Abstract. The aim of this research is to clarify the typology and relationship of grammatical structures and metaphorical expressions within Chinese idioms. In this study, a corpus of 30,000 Chinese idioms was compiled from various idiom dictionaries, and 1,000 idioms were randomly selected, annotated, and categorized based on their internal syntactic structures, grammatical functions in sentences, metaphor types, and metaphorical content for statistical analysis. The innovation of the research lies in employing a corpus to conduct a quantitative analysis of the prevalent syntactic structures and the most common types of metaphorical usage found in Chinese idioms, as well as to explore the quantified relationships between them. The findings reveal that Parallel Structure, Attributive Structure, and Subject-Predicate Structure are the most prevalent internal syntactic structures of Chinese idioms, while the structural metaphor is the most widely used conceptual metaphor. However, no significant correlation was observed between the internal syntactic structure of Chinese idioms and metaphorical content, grammatical function in sentences.

Introduction

The relevance of the study lies in clarifying the significance of exploring the typology and interaction of grammatical structures and metaphorical expressions within Chinese idioms by quantitative analysis in contemporary linguistics. Revealing the grammatical structures and metaphorical expressions not only deepens our understanding of language usage but also elucidates the intricate interrelationship between linguistic form and conceptual meaning. Chinese idioms, as repositories of cultural and linguistic heritage, offer a distinctive way for understanding how linguistic structures convey meaning and cultural nuances. The scrutiny of these linguistic intricacies can contribute to a broader comprehension of language as a means of communication and cultural representation. By unravelling the patterns of grammatical configurations and metaphorical usages, we gain insights into the cognitive processes underpinning language production and comprehension. Furthermore, given that idiomatic expressions are deeply embedded in cultural contexts, the implications of this research extend beyond linguistics, encompassing cross-cultural communication and the field of translation studies.

Research hypotheses. The hypotheses of this research are as follows: (1) the internal syntactic structures of Chinese idioms exhibit notable variation, with Parallel Structures accounting for the largest proportion; (2) structural metaphors, grounded in China's philosophical traditions, provide significant empirical support for the formation of Chinese idioms among the three conceptual metaphors; (3) correlations exist between the internal syntactic structure, grammatical function, and metaphors of Chinese idioms.

Research tasks. This study aims to (1) elucidate the structural characteristics of Chinese idioms and summarize their grammatical functions within sentences; (2) classify associated metaphors and clarify the metaphorical content of Chinese idioms; (3) investigate potential connections between their internal syntactic structure, grammatical functions, metaphorical types, and content.

Research methods:

1. Corpus Source

Over 18,000 Chinese idioms from the Chinese Idiom Dictionary, and more than 50,000 idioms from the electronic dictionary "Hanci Net" (http://www.hydcd.com/), were compiled to establish a large corpus of 30,000 Chinese idioms.

Dictionaries:

Printed dictionary	18,000 Chinese idioms	Wang Tao. Chinese Idiom Dictionary. Shanghai: Shanghai Dictionary Publishing House, 2007.
Online electronic dictionary	50,000 Chinese idioms	Hanci Net. http://www.hydcd.com/

2. Data Collection and Quantitative Analysis

a. Random Selection of Corpus: using simple random sampling, 1,000 idioms were selected from this established corpus.

b. Annotation of Corpus: 1,000 Chinese idioms classified based on their internal syntactic structure, grammatical function in sentences, and metaphorical types of Chinese idioms.

c. Categorization and Statistical Analysis of Corpus Data: frequency and correlation statistics were conducted using SPSS 26.

Theoretical Framework. Idiomatic expressions have been the focus of research for many linguists, encompassing both their literal and figurative meanings (Estill, Kemper, 1982; Glass, 1983; Gibbs, 1985; Fraser, 1970), as well as their structural composition (Gibbs, Gonzales, 1985; Gibbs, O'Brien, 1990) and associated metaphors (Gibbs, Bogdanovich, Sykes et al., 1997). However, while much attention has been paid to English idioms, relatively little research has been conducted on Chinese idioms, metaphorical content classification in particular. Currently, there exists no comprehensive inventory of the types of metaphors used in Chinese idioms, nor is there data available that would ascertain the most commonly employed metaphor in Chinese. Furthermore, the relationship between the internal syntactic structure of Chinese idioms and the associated metaphors remains ambiguous.

Chinese idioms are a focal point and a challenge for learners of Chinese language, as they contain cultural information that is conveyed through their distinct content and form. To better comprehend and utilize these expressions, it is crucial to elucidate the relationship between their form and content.

Practical Significance. The research findings can be applied in humanities departments of universities for specialized courses and seminars on theoretical, practical, and comparative analysis of grammatical construction and semantic content of Chinese idioms. The obtained data can be utilized in educational and methodological activities for the development of textbooks, teaching materials, and the organization of classes focused on translating Chinese idioms.

Results and Discussion

Idioms are multiword expressions with a figurative meaning that differs from the literal meaning of their constituent words (Feeney, 2020). Their syntactic structure is relatively fixed, resulting in a high information density and effective expression, which makes them purposefully used in First Language (L1) interactions (Pitzl, 2018; Kovaliuk, 2022). Idioms exist in almost every language, including Chinese idioms known as "Chengyu", and they are widely used in various discourses (Li, 2023).

These long-standing stereotyped phrases or short sentences have received less research attention than English idioms, especially on the cognitive level. Understanding idioms involves recognizing context, predicting new information and relies on conceptual metaphor understanding (Barreto, Marcilese, Oliveira, 2018; Gibbs, 2013), where comprehension skills influence idiom comprehension (Levorato, Nesi, Cacciari, 2004).

Metaphor serves not only as a linguistic mode but also as a fundamental cognitive mechanism (Lakoff, Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2005; Gibbs, 2017). Interestingly, the study of metaphors comes from the study of idioms, and the production of new idioms is recreated based on the metaphorical cognition of "standardized" idioms (Naicker, 2019; Gibbs, 1992). While some scholars argue that idiom metaphor comprehension entails reorganizing the semantic content of idioms, it should be noted that metaphorical cognition is distinguished and predicated on semantics and grammar, reproducing semantics based on previous meanings with no significant difference (Burbules, Schraw, Trathen, 1989).

This multi-information encompasses not only semantic information but also sociocultural context (Fairclough, Jessop, Sayer, 2002). The high information density of idioms complicates their comprehension in Second Foreign Language learning, with experiments demonstrating that the emotion field in brain is motivated while learning idioms (Citron, Cacciari, Funcke et al., 2019; Zempleni, Haverkort, Renken et al., 2007). However, this emotional response, combined with the complexity of comprehending idioms, presents a challenge for Second Language (L2) learners (Baldo, 2020).

Research on the meanings and grammatical analysis of Chinese idioms remains underdeveloped (Wang, Luo, 2021), especially regarding the clarity of idiom semantics, which is more critical for second language learners than frequency of use (Carrol, Conklin, 2014) and is closely related to the structure of idioms.

Furthermore, understanding metaphor of Chinese idioms becomes a research issue that warrants further attention as it is a difficult point for Chinese idiom readers (Li, Lewis, 2019). This gap in knowledge impedes the development of comprehensive and systematic approach to teaching Chinese idioms, as the full range of metaphorical meanings conveyed by these expressions and grammatical structures is not fully understood.

The current research focuses primarily on comparative analysis of Chinese and English idioms (Chen, 2010) as well as the implementation of multimedia teaching methods (Wong, Chin, Tan et al., 2010; Yang, Xie, 2013; Ku, Huang, Hus, 2015) for Chinese idioms. Addressing this issue through targeted empirical investigation and pedagogical intervention could hold great promise for improving the acquisition of Chinese idioms. Therefore, this research aims to analyse Chinese idiom grammatical construction (internal syntactic structures), grammatical functions in sentences, metaphorical content and metaphorical types based on Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) conceptual metaphor theory.

Internal syntactic structure of Chinese idioms

The most prevalent types of lexemic idioms in Standard American English have been categorized as follows: Phrasal Verb Idioms, Tournure Idioms, Irreversible Binomial Idioms, Phrasal Compound Idioms, Incorporating Verb Idioms, and Pseudo-Idioms (Makkai, 1972). While English idiom composition is not limited to four-character phrases like Chinese idioms, there are several similarities in the structure of the two languages' idioms, such as Phrasal Compound Idioms ("实事求是") and the use of prepositions like "up-down" and "in-out" ("吃里扒外"; "七上八下").

According to the "Study of Chinese Idioms", the internal syntactic structure of Chinese idioms can be divided into seven categories: Subject-Predicate Structure, Predicate-Object Structure, Attributive Structure, Parallel Structure, Verb-Adverb Structure, Correlative Structure (predicate-object(subject)-predicate), and Predicate-Compliment Structure (赵丽坤, 2009, p. 43). Additionally, "The Nine Chapters of Idioms" (倪宝元, 姚鹏慈, 1990) suggests that the structural types of Chinese idioms can be roughly divided into nine types, including Subject-Predicate Structure, Predicate-Object Structure, Predicate-Compliment Structure, Attributive Structure, Parallel Structure, Correlative Structure (predicate-object(subject)-predicate), Verb-Adverb Structure, Compact Structure, and Compound Sentences Structure. Based on these two classifications, Chinese idioms can be broadly divided into Subject-Predicate Structure, Predicate-Object Structure, Predicate-Complement Structure, Attributive Structure, Parallel Structure, Correlative Structure (predicate-object(subject)-predicate), Verb-Adverb Structure, Predicate-Compliment Structure, Compact Structure, and Compound Sentences Structure in research.

- Subject-Predicate Structure

Composition	Examples
This category of Chinese idioms comprises a subject and a predicate verb. The subject may encompass individuals, animals, objects, or even abstract concepts.	哀兵必胜 (A grieving army is bound to triumph); 暗箭伤人 (A hidden arrow wounds a person); 百鸟朝凤 (Hundreds of birds are paying homage to a phoenix), etc.

- Predicate-Object Structure

Composition	Examples
This structure typically comprises predicate verbs and objects, lacking a subject.	饱经风雨 (Have experienced many hardships); 搬弄是非 (Stir up enmity; carry tales); 既往不咎 (Forgive somebody's past misdeeds); 暗送秋波 (Make eyes at a man [woman] (while others are not looking); leer at), etc.

- Verb-Adverb Structure

Composition	Examples
Adverbial content offers a description of verbs, usually indicating measure and degree.	逼人太甚 (Push too hard); 赞不绝口 (Laud … to the skies); 喋喋不休 (Chatter without stop; chatter [rattle] away); 悲不自胜 (Abandon oneself to grief; deeply lamentable); 火冒三丈 (Fly into a rage; burst into a fury), etc.

- Attributive Structure

Composition	Examples
This structure is a common pattern in Chinese idioms, typically composed of modified elements and modifiers. The modified elements can either be a noun or an event.	嗷嗷待哺 (Sb. crying out in hunger); 白面书生 (An inexperienced youth); 百年好合 (A harmonious union lasting a hundred years); 点头之交 (An incidental acquaintance).

- Parallel Structure

Composition	Examples
The structure consists of two similar components, both sharing identical grammatical structures and conveying similar or contrasting semantic content.	半生不熟 (Half cooked; half raw); 磕磕绊绊 (Stumble; bumpy); 昂首阔步 (Keep one's head high and march ahead); 阿猫阿狗 (Cats and dogs; tun town), etc.

● Predicate-Compliment Structure

Composition	Examples
This type of idiom is composed of two parts, encompassing a predicate and a complement, with the complement indicating purpose, result, or other additional meanings.	拔刀相助 (Swiftly assist; take up the cudgels against an injustice); 闭门谢客 (Bid farewell to guests by shutting the door; shut one's door to chance visitors); 一见倾心 (Strike up an acquaintance at once); 知难而退 (Shrink back from [before] difficulties), etc.

● Correlative Structure (predicate-object(subject)-predicate)

Composition	Examples
This is a complex structure, formed by the combination of a predicate-object structure and a subject-predicate structure. However, the preceding object transitions into the subsequent subject, sharing the same semantics but assuming different grammatical roles.	等米下锅 (Wait for rice to cook; await urgently the necessary condition), etc.

● Compact Structure

Composition	Examples
The type of idiom originates from a sentence and is condensed into a concise four-character expression.	爱莫之助 (Love without the power to help); 马到成功 (Gain an immediate victory); 战无不胜 (Be all-conquering), etc.

● Compound Sentences

Composition	Examples
This type of idiom consists of compound sentences, but due to their fixed expression, they are treated as idioms.	比上不足，比下有余 (Less than the top, more than the bottom); 丁是丁，卯是卯 (Apples are apples and oranges are oranges), etc.

Grammatical structures of Chinese idioms

In our investigation of the internal structure of 1,000 Chinese idioms, we discovered a diverse range of structural patterns. Specifically, our analysis revealed that Parallel Structure was the most prevalent (39.23%), followed by Attributive Structure (18.45%) and Subject-Predicate Structure (18.20%) (as shown in Table 1).

Table 1. *Internal syntactic structure of Chinese idioms*

Structure	Frequency	Percentage
Parallel Structure	470	39.23%
Attributive Structure	221	18.45%
Subject-Predicate Structure	218	18.20%
Predicate-Object Structure	107	8.93%
Correlative Structure	68	5.68%
Compact Structure	38	3.17%
Compound Sentences	32	2.67%
Verb-Adverb Structure	31	2.59%
Predicate-Compliment Structure	13	1.08%

In this study, we conducted a grammatical analysis of idioms in sentences and classified them based on their functions. Specifically, we statistically derived the distribution of each function and assigned a binary value of 1 or 0 to each idiom depending on whether it exhibited the given function or not (Table 2). Our findings indicate that idioms primarily function as predicates and attributives in sentences (Table 2; Figure 1). However, we also observed many idioms that exhibit multiple functions in sentences, with the most common being the role of both an object and an attributive (Table 3).

Table 2. *Grammatical function of Chinese idioms in sentences*

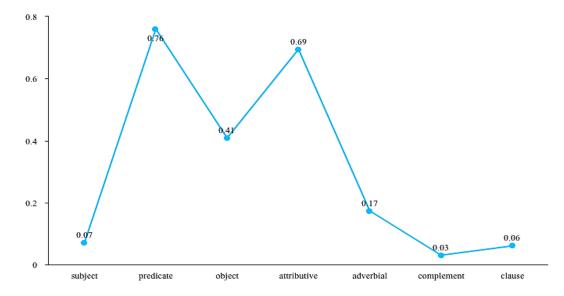| Grammatical function in sentences	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Subject	0.0	1113	92.90%
	1.0	85	7.10%
Predicate	0.0	288	24.04%
	1.0	910	75.96%
Object	0.0	709	59.18%
	1.0	489	40.82%
Attributive	0.0	366	30.55%
	1.0	832	69.45%
Adverbial	0.0	991	82.72%
	1.0	207	17.28%
Complement	0.0	1162	96.99%
	1.0	36	3.01%
Clause	0.0	1126	93.99%
	1.0	72	6.01%

Figure 1. *Grammatical function of Chinese idioms in sentences*

Table 3. *Multi-functions of Chinese idioms*

Combination	Frequency
Object + Attributive	106
Attributive + Adverbial	29
Subject + Object + Attributive	28

Metaphor types of Chinese idioms

Metaphor is not just a rhetorical device, but rather a fundamental cognitive mode (Lakoff, Johnson, 2003, p. 1). The concept of conceptual metaphor has gained significant importance in the fields of cognition and linguistics. Lakoff and Johnson's classification of metaphors consists of three types.

Structural metaphors, where "one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another" (Lakoff, Johnson, 2003, p. 15). Chinese idioms provide numerous examples of structural metaphors, such as "安如泰山" (steadfast as Mount Tai) and "白面书生" (inexperienced youth; pale-faced scholar).

Orientational metaphors, it is a type of conceptual metaphor that helps us understand abstract concepts by mapping them onto spatial or directional experiences (Lakoff, Johnson, 2003, p. 15). Common examples of orientational metaphors in Chinese idioms are "低人一等" (inferior to others) and "不分上下" (without distinction of rank or status).

Ontological metaphors, where understanding of abstract concepts occurs through actions, experiences, and sensations (Lakoff, Johnson, 2003, p. 27). Examples of ontological metaphors in Chinese idioms include "半信半疑" (half in doubt) and "备尝辛苦" (undergone hardships).

Chinese idioms exhibit extensive use of metaphors, and it is apparent from the data (Table 4) that structural metaphors have become the dominant form of metaphorical expression in Chinese idioms.

Table 4. *Metaphorical types of Chinese idioms*

Metaphors	Frequency	Percentage
Ontological	320	26.71%
Orientational	38	3.17%
Structural	840	70.12%

Our study reveals that structural metaphors are the dominant type of metaphorical expression among idioms in Chinese, with more than half of all metaphorical types falling into this category (Table 4). These results underscore the importance of structural metaphors as a primary mechanism for generating metaphorical meaning in Chinese.

Table 5. *The proportion of the source domain in structural metaphors in Chinese idioms*

Structural metaphor	Frequency	Percentage
Nature	133	15.83%
Item	120	14.28%
Number	115	13.69%
Organ	115	13.69%
Location	88	10.48%
Animal	61	7.26%
Character	50	5.95%
Time	34	4.05%

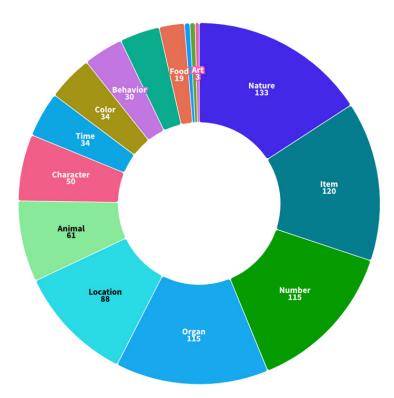| Structural metaphor	Frequency	Percentage
Color	34	4.05%
Behavior	30	3.57%
Concept	30	3.57%
Food	19	2.26%
Substance	4	0.48%
Legend	4	0.48%
Art	3	0.36%

Figure 2. *Source domain of structural metaphors in Chinese idioms*

As indicated by Table 5 and Figure 2, structural metaphors in Chinese idioms frequently draw upon nature, item, number and organ as source domains for metaphorical expression. This tendency reflects the Chinese philosophical thought the unity of nature and humanity, highlighting the ways in which cultural and intellectual traditions shape language use.

Table 6. *Ontological metaphors in Chinese idioms*

Ontological	Frequency	Percentage
Specialization	173	54.06%
Container	76	23.75%
Measure	60	18.75%
Personification	11	3.44%

Table 7. *Orientational metaphors in Chinese idioms*

Orientational	Frequency	Percentage
Up-Down	19	50.00%
Front-Back	8	21.05%
High-Low	5	13.16%
Horizontal Line	3	7.90%
Deep-Shallow	2	5.26%
Left-Right	1	2.63%

Based on Table 6 and Table 7, it is evident that the ontological and orientational metaphors in Chinese idioms frequently employ the concepts of "specialization" and the spatial orientation of "up-down", respectively.

Correlation between the content and forms of Chinese idioms

As indicated by Table 8-1, there appears to be no apparent correlation between the grammatical function of Chinese idioms within sentences and their internal structure (p > 0.05). Additionally, it can be inferred with 95% confidence that the adverbial function of idioms in sentences is not significantly associated with their internal structure

(correlation coefficient: 0.081; p < 0.01). Furthermore, the types of metaphors and metaphorical content featured within idioms demonstrate no significant correlation with their internal structures (p > 0.05), suggesting that there may be little relation between metaphorical types and idiom internal structures (Table 8-2). To sum up, the resulting data reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the internal structure of idioms does not exhibit an evident link with the grammatical function in sentences or the metaphorical types of the idioms.

Table 8-1. *Correlation between the internal structure of Chinese idioms and grammatical function in sentences*

Pearson correlation		
Grammatical function		Internal structure
Subject	correlation coefficient	0.014
	p	0.616
Predicate	correlation coefficient	-0.013
	p	0.657
Object	correlation coefficient	-0.024
	p	0.398
Attributive	correlation coefficient	0.070*
	p	0.015
Adverbial	correlation coefficient	0.081**
	p	0.005
Complement	correlation coefficient	0.015
	p	0.597
Clause	correlation coefficient	-0.04
	p	0.165
* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01		

Table 8-2. *Correlation between the internal structure of Chinese idioms and metaphorical types*

Pearson correlation		
		Structure
Metaphor	correlation coefficient	0.033
	p	0.253
* *p* < 0.05 ** *p* < 0.01		

In summary, the present study utilized simple random abstraction and data statistics to yield the following results: among the nine types of internal syntactic structures within Chinese idioms, Parallel Structure (39.23%), Attributive Structure (18.45%), and Subject-Predicate Structure (18.20%) were most prevalent. This can be attributed to the characteristics of ancient Chinese, which featured a greater number of monosyllabic words. As such, a two-character structure like 'adverbial (one character) + noun (one character)' became an important information unit in ancient Chinese. To convey more information with cognitive economy, pairs of information (four characters) emerged, with similar structure and content to form a structure metaphor. These pairs of information without perfect symmetry appeared as an attributive structure.

Additionally, structural metaphors were found to be more commonly employed in Chinese idioms than ontological and orientational structures, with concepts such as "nature", "item", "number". The Chinese language is replete with idiomatic expressions that encapsulate the philosophical wisdom of multiple generations and embody a distinct mode of cognition specific to Chinese people. These expressions are rich in metaphors, which can be found throughout the vast array of Chinese idioms. This is consistent with Chinese philosophy and cognitive thinking. Compared to Western philosophy, the transcendental world of Chinese philosophy they construct derives from the empirical world and can be corroborated in the empirical world. Therefore, nature becomes one of the ways of philosophical reflection. Numerical symbols are closely related to the study of Chinese philosophy, such as I Ching, and influence people's perception. Chinese idioms are also an embodiment of national culture, with idioms featuring the word "dragon" frequently appearing in Chinese. In contrast, in English, "dragon" often has a pejorative connotation and can refer to an "aggressive woman". Furthermore, both Chinese and English idioms contain many concepts about location "up-down" and numbers, suggesting their inherent nature in human cognitive thinking.

Findings from the study indicate that there is no discernible association between the internal structure and metaphorical content of Chinese idioms, the types of metaphors employed, and the grammatical function of Chinese idioms within sentences. Given this lack of correlation, it is essential to teach the content and structure separately in the teaching of idioms in L2 and idiom translation practice. Misplaced Chinese idioms are often the result of structural errors (more or fewer words) and content errors (semantic incomprehension), which are related to the internal structure of Chinese idioms, the function of Chinese idioms in sentences, and the understanding of the metaphorical content of Chinese idioms. The learning process can only be organized separately because of the absence of an apparent connection between these aspects, making the teaching of Chinese idioms more challenging. In-depth understanding of the internal structure of Chinese idioms and the metaphorical types and content of Chinese idioms makes it easier for second language learners of the subject language to master Chinese idioms.

The teaching of Chinese idioms presents a formidable challenge in Chinese language education and is regarded as an advanced level of mastery for foreign students. The study of Chinese idioms can be approached from two perspectives: semantics and grammar. Semantics involves the connotations of metaphors, with Chinese idioms being replete with rich metaphors where a single word may hold diverse meanings (Chen, 2010; Li, 2010). It is thus crucial to classify the metaphors of Chinese idioms. Corpus-based classification offers a relatively comprehensive approach that yields valuable insights for pedagogical purposes. Furthermore, examining Chinese idioms from a grammatical perspective poses difficulties due to their condensed structure. A thorough grasp of the structural classification of Chinese idioms promotes a deeper understanding of their underlying meanings and practical applications. Many studies have examined Chinese language education from the perspective of instructional materials. However, the author contends that the crux of Chinese language education lies in comprehending Chinese idioms. While teaching materials undoubtedly play a role in instruction, the focus of research should first be on achieving a comprehensive understanding of Chinese, conducting cross-linguistic comparative studies, and enhancing the comprehension of learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Conclusion

The present study draws the following conclusions.

The discerned outcomes reveal that within the gamut of diverse structural attributes, the most conspicuous internal syntactic constructions exhibited by Chinese idioms encompass Parallel Structure, Attributive Structure, and Subject-Predicate Structure. Remarkably, Parallel Structure and Attributive Structure are commonly used in Chinese idioms due to their adherence to ancient Chinese syllable characteristics and lower syntactic constraints.

The prevalence of structural metaphors in Chinese idioms, which surpasses 70% of the corpus, outpaces the prevalence of alternative ontological and orientational metaphors. The incorporation of such conceptual domains as "nature", "location", and "number" within structural metaphors is intricately intertwined with the tenets of traditional Chinese philosophical thought.

In contrast to initial suppositions, our findings underscore the absence of a discernible nexus between the syntactic structure of Chinese idioms, their metaphorical content, the types of metaphors employed, and the grammatical functions these idioms undertake within sentences.

Through the analysis of the grammatical structure and metaphorical content of Chinese idioms, we intend to further investigate the function of idiomatic expressions as cohesive lexical units within discourse, as well as their reflection of social and cultural variations. This paper has certain limitations. Specifically, as our study only utilized a sample of 1,000 idioms for testing purposes, it will be necessary to obtain a larger sample size for future studies.

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