

# Metaphor of Thinking Method: An Illustration from Porcelain Ornamentation

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**Abstract:** Porcelain ornamentation is one of the important carriers of ancient Chinese traditional culture. This paper divides the decorative metaphor into two categories which are animal metaphor and plant metaphor from the perspective of cognitive linguistic metaphor to analyze and explore some sources and constraints of metaphorical thinking, and try to provide empirical research on metaphor theory from a new perspective.

**Keywords:** Porcelain ornamentation; Decorative metaphor; Metaphorical thinking

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The definition and research status of ceramic ornamentation metaphor

Decorative ornamentation is a language tool and also an important tool for human beings to express themselves and communicate with others. From the ancient ceramics to the modern ceramics, the ornamentation has experienced the process of God-plant-paint decoration. The ceramic ornamentation of different dynasties reflects different themes, including myths and legends, historical figures, religious culture, birds and beasts, flower manes, and customs. It has become an important part of the Chinese traditional culture. Its implied meanings of it include the prayers of many children and many blessings, as well as the blessings of avoiding the evils, which generally reflects the hopes and aspirations of the Chinese nation for happy life for thousands of years. The beauty of ceramics and the beauty of the body and the "table" are coordinated to achieve the speech function accurately.

Animals and plants are inseparable from human life, and they bear the brunt of the subject of ceramic ornamentation. By describing the metaphor of human behavior, the source model of animals and plants is used to map to the concept of its own abstract target. By saying that animals and plants, but actually say human beings, such a technique, we can call it a decorative metaphor. In order to describe its typical source, the metaphorical category can be subdivided into animal metaphor and plant metaphor. According to the perspective of cognitive metaphor, metaphor is a cross-domain mapping, with animals and plants as the source domain and human as target domain. By human association, the cognitive way of mapping the original source domain to the target domain is the ornamentation metaphor.

Overview the foreign metaphor research, we can summarize the following characteristics: Firstly, metaphor is not just a research object in the field of rhetoric any more.

It has become the research object of many disciplines based on cognitive science, such as psychology, semiotics, logic, anthropology, etc. Secondly, the study of metaphor has broadened the horizon. Secondly, the study of metaphor has broadened the horizon, no longer limited to the study of lexical metaphor, but liberated metaphor and entered the sentence level for further study. Thirdly, metaphor is regarded as a cognitive phenomenon, not just a deviation of language, and a fundamental change from the point of entry into metaphor. The famous linguists Lakoff and Johnson put forward a subversive assertion about metaphor in their book "The Metaphor We Live by": "Metaphor is not only a rhetorical device, but also a cultural reflection and thinking method. It is a powerful tool for people to learn about the world. Therefore, the study of ceramic ornamentation metaphor is a cognitive and a way of thinking. Therefore, the study of ceramic ornamentation metaphor is cognitive and also a way of thinking.

With the introduction of Western cognitive science, a number of scholars who have achieved certain accomplishments in metaphor research have emerged in China. The representative research works are Mr. Shu Dingfang's Metaphor Research, Mr. Hu Zhuanglin's Cognition Metaphorology, Zhao Yanfang's Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics, etc. Their research promoted the transformation of metaphor research in China from the field of rhetoric to the field of cognition.

The study of ceramic ornamentation metaphor is still the first case in the study of Chinese cognition. We hope that it can be used as a reference for the future research.

## 2. Typical Source of Ceramic Ornamentation Metaphor

### 2.1. Ancient myth

In the primitive society, human beings have insufficient cognitive ability for natural phenomena. The fear of natural phenomena such as thunder, lightning and earth mov-

ing make the divination popular. The human mind has produced supernatural powers, they pinned the spirit of their hopes on certain animals, then deified and worshipped them, and finally produced totem. Typical totem animal metaphors include dragons, phoenixes, tortoises, unicorns, etc. They have evolved into a symbol of exorcism and disaster relief, and nafford welcoming symbol. After passing through the culture of different periods, it has gone beyond the scope of decoration, and carries the cultural spirit of China.

## 2.2. Harmonic for luck

The homophonic phenomenon of Chinese is common in people's daily life and folklore literary creation, and it is caused by witchcraft or its transformation. People believe that language has supernatural abilities and that by dictating the pronunciation of the language, they can be associated with them or by the things they represent to make changes in the desired direction. The homonym reflects the implicit and introverted national psychology of the Chinese, and is good at applying rich associations in painting and poetry to create a far-reaching artistic conception. Harmony in the ceramic decoration as a carrier fully reflects the people's desire for a happy and happy life and auspicious happiness, such as the harmony every year (ear, lotus and crane), wealth fill home (Goldfish full pond).

## 3. Limitation of Ceramic Ornamentation

Pursuing the ceramic ornamentation that "the imitation must have meaning, the meaning must be auspicious", all of them are written with words, and the paintings must be intentional, such as dragon and phoenix ornamentation, plant ornamentation, animal ornamentation, mythological story ornamentation, historical figure ornamentation, miscellaneous treasure pattern ornamentation, natural scenery ornamentation, text patterns and auspicious patterns ornamentation (moire, wishful, auspicious). The mapping of the ornamentation metaphor is not a transfer of any feature from the original concept to the target concept. It reflects our conceptual experience in dealing with the world in which it is located and is limited by three factors: cultural, psychological and social.

### 3.1. Cultural

Nature worship: the three gods of fortune, prosperity and longevity is originated from China's ancient adoration of the stars. The three gods belong to Taoism, and has become a true portrayal of the ideals of folk secular life. The picture has "Tristar illuminates high" symbolizing happiness, wealth and longevity. Sometimes it is Dong fangshuo with peach branch on shoulder or holding the peach in hand, sometimes it is the old birthday star of the high skull.

Religious factor: Taoism reflects the richness of porcelain ornamentation, and cranes with pine trees, The Eight Immortals, and gourd ornamentation are all conveying Taoist culture. Emperor Shizong was a long-lived creature, and pine trees are long-lived in the decoration of birthday porcelain and are given a high-quality image. The crane is regarded as the creature of the world, and it is the symbol of the famous scholar Gao Zhiyuan. The cultural symbols introduced to the Han dynasty in Buddhism are distinct from the tradition, and the patterns are decorated with eight treasures and treasure patterns. The two methods absorb the fading method of Buddhist art in the design method. The shallow set is changed layer by layer, and the shape is processed by the multi-faceted symmetrical radial format. It is more common in porcelain decoration, and with Buddhist atmosphere.

National cultural factors: The "Dragon" and "Phoenix" in Chinese studies that best reflect the cultural significance of the clan is a fictional mythical animal. There is no source model and source concept in reality. The dragon and phoenix ornamentation is rich in cultural phenomena and gradually becomes a symbol, the symbol of the Chinese clan. Xianglong ornamentation mostly matches the decoration of Haitao, symbolizing the emperor. That represents strength, wealth, prosperity and peace. Jifeng ornamentation, symbolizing the empress, "Show peony fung" is a phoenix figurine, call one thing with its beauty, for marriage love. The complementarity and correspondence of divinity, the establishment of the beautiful relationship like "lively and vigorous in calligraphy" and "prosperity brought by the dragon and the phoenix", reflecting the ancient yin and yang view, which is the object of people worship and prayer. This combination makes the ceramic decorative composition balanced and symmetrical, continuing into the contemporary.

### 3.2. Psychological factors

The "Thinking Hygiene Hypothesis" believes that due to the limitations of thinking ability, two kinds of things that are actually different are treated as the same thing, thus creating a metaphor. People use an existing word to express a particular conceptual result and form a large number of metaphorical vocabularies. The generation of metaphor is related to express the human desire in their own subconscious. Ethical education on porcelain ornamentation is usually expressed in a metaphorical way. For example, the painting of the blue-and-white lotus pattern symbolizes the integrity and integrity, the painting of the plum symbolizes endurance, the painting of the chrysanthemum symbolizes nobleness.

### 3.3. Social factors

The fundamental attribute of human beings is social, so is the language. In social communication, people will make their expression more proper by different expressions.

The social attributes of porcelain ornamentation are outstanding in the family and business gift ceramics. Goldfish means treasures fill the home (moving to a new home), pine, bamboo and chrysanthemum imply a long-lasting friendship (leaving friends), prosperity brought by the dragon and the phoenix and affectionate couples symbolizes happiness (new wedding congratulations).

We can see that the original concept of porcelain ornamentation is mainly divided into two categories, namely plant concept and animal concept. Most of them are derived from the life of human beings, and they are the concrete models that are usually visible. Therefore, the study of porcelain ornamentation metaphor is derived to the study of plant metaphor and animal metaphor.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on cognitive metaphor theory, this paper expounds the formation mechanism of metaphor, the source and constraints of the creation of metaphorical metaphor, and tries to sort out the animal metaphor and plant metaphor in porcelain ornamentation. The author believes that the study of the mapping mechanism of porcelain ornamentation metaphor and the study of Chinese man, language, totem and symbol are mutual influenced and mutual interpretation. The decorative metaphor mainly comes from the metaphor of the ancient myths and legends, and also reflects the euphemism characteristics of Chinese language. Metaphor is the cognitive ability of human

beings, and the factors affecting the metaphor of the ornamentation, including national culture, psychology and social factors. In a limited space, porcelain ornamentation maps out the infinite meaning through metaphors, it's a precious cultural heritage. But the ceramic ornamentation is so vast that it increases the difficulty of collecting corpus. The research on the ornamentation model of this study is not classified by region and dynasty. Only the classical representative model is used for research. It is inevitable that there will be one-sided words, and I hope to make up for it in future research.

#### 5. Acknowledgment

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