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Understanding and classifying two-part allegorical sayings: Metonymy, metaphor, and cultural constraints

Abstract:

Examining two-part allegorical sayings—a unique discourse form pervasive in many Asian languages—this study has two purposes: to establish an appropriate taxonomic framework to categorize this discourse form, and to explicate the knowledge schemas involved for its successful construal. While displaying most of the idiomatic characteristics observed in English or Dutch idioms, two-part allegorical sayings are different in that they cannot succinctly fit into the four-way classification by the conceptual apparatus—*isomorphism* and *motivation*. The criteria of classification require not only form-meaning mappings but also conceptual and phonological associations. Four types are therefore identified: homophonic association with Thing or Situation, and conceptual association with Thing or Situation. Furthermore, the prevalent cultural model, the Great Chain Metaphor, together with specific local folk knowledge schemas, provides us with systematic regularities and strong cultural constraints both for the linguistic choice of surface forms and for the inferred interpretations.

Key words: two-part allegorical sayings, metonymy, metaphor, homophonic association, conceptual association, the Great Chain Metaphor, folk knowledge schemas

摘要：

本計畫研究客語歇後語，提出分類架構及詮釋原則。歇後語雖然具有一般諺語的部分特質，但更有其獨具的特色，分類標準需包含語意及語音兩個面向。本計畫提出四類的歇後語類型，分別透過聲音機制或概念機制，而前兩項又分別涵蓋藉助物件或情境。同時，本文也提出透過生命物種的大鏈隱喻及客語獨特的文化知識體系，我們可以瞭解歇後語在語言形式及詮釋上所展現的系統規律以及文化限制。

關鍵詞：歇後語、轉喻、隱喻、語音機制、概念機制、生命物種的大鏈隱喻、客語文化知識體系

1. Introduction

Contrary to the traditional view of idioms as unanalyzable, the cognitive view of idioms holds that most idiomatic expressions are analyzable with their meanings motivated by conceptual mechanisms (Gibbs 1995, Kövecses and Szabó 1996, Nunberg et al. 1994, Geeraerts 1995, 2003, among others). Lakoff (1993), and Lakoff and Turner (1989) further argue that cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, and the interactions of the two are highly involved in the interpretations of poems, fables, allegories, and proverbs. Several cognitive and psychological experiments conducted have also evidenced not only that idioms are compositional but also that conceptual links between idiomatic expressions and their figurative interpretations can be activated by speakers (Gibbs 1990, 1995). Using Dutch examples for illustration, Geeraerts (1995, 2003) categorizes figurative specialization of idioms by proposing a conceptual apparatus that examines idioms from both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic dimensions.

Among idiomatic expressions, two-part allegorical sayings are unique both in form and in interpretation. A quite pervasive colloquial form in Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese Southern Min, and Hakka, among other Asian languages, a two-part allegorical saying contains two parts—one portraying an image of an object, an event, or a situation, and the other indicating the intended meaning derived from the first part.¹ In general, a two-part allegorical saying contains two formulaic expressions, carries opaque figurative meanings that need to be derived through conceptual mechanisms, and is often associated with evaluative connotations (cf. Nunberg et al. 1994, Gibbs 1995, Kövecses and Szabó 1996). However, because their linguistic features are so distinctive that they cannot neatly fit into typical categories of idioms, an appropriate categorization of such a discourse form is worth formulating. Moreover, since the emergence of sayings, two-part allegorical sayings included, is closely connected with the folk knowledge rooted in a culture, an examination of cultural elements is also a crucial issue for the understanding of such a linguistic form. This study therefore aims to structure a taxonomic framework for this special discourse form and to explicate the knowledge schemas as well as the cultural constraints involved for its successful construal. Following this introduction, section 2 presents Geeraerts' (1995, 2003) model of classification of idioms as a starting point to be followed by the introduction of the analytical tools of cognitive semantics, metonymy, metaphor and their interaction in section 3. Section 4 then proposes a taxonomic framework for the classification of two-part allegorical sayings, highlighting specific features adherent to them as well as their metonymic and metaphoric interaction patterns. Then, section 5 explicates the major elements in the cultural models that are employed to portray two-part allegorical sayings. Finally, section 6 concludes the paper and points out residual issues for future exploration.

¹ The term “two-part allegorical sayings” (called 歇後語 *xie1-hou4-yu3* in Mandarin Chinese) is adopted from Wang (1991). According to Cliff Goddard, Malay also has this kind of discourse form where there are two fixed expressions involved to obtain intended idiomatic meanings, while Inger Moen remarks that there is no such a discourse form in Norwegian. Investigation into cross-linguistic comparisons will be left for future endeavor, however.

2. Geeraerts' (1995, 2003) model of idioms

In classifying kinds of figurative specialization in idioms, Geeraerts (1995, 2003) proposes two criteria—*isomorphism* and *motivation*—to examine idioms from both paradigmatic and syntagmatic dimensions. *Isomorphism* refers to syntagmatic transparency whereby there is a correlative correspondence between the syntactic construction and its semantic structure. *Motivation*, on the other hand, is defined as paradigmatic transparency in which the semantic extension that relates the original meaning of an idiom to its idiomatic meaning is observed. Based on this model, four types of idioms are given in Geeraerts (1995, 2003), using Dutch examples:

- (1) *de koe bij horens vatten*
to take the cow by the horns >
'to take the bull by the horns, to grasp the nettle'

- (2) *met spek schieten*
to shoot with bacon >
'to tell a tall story, to boast'

- (3) *met de handen in het haar zitten*
to sit with one's hands in one's hair >
'to be at one's wit's end, to be in trouble'

- (4) *als puntje bij paaltje komt*
when point reaches pole >
'when it comes to the crunch, when all is said and done'

Example in (1) is isomorphic and motivated with the cow metaphorically mapping to the whole problem and the horns metaphorically indicating the most problematic situation. Example in (2) is isomorphic—the telling corresponding to *spek* and the tall tales corresponding to *schieten*. However, it is not motivated, since it is opaque why shooting with bacon should come to denote boasting. Example (3) is nevertheless metonymically motivated since it is easy to come up with an image about what a person might do when frustrated by a difficult problem. Yet, it is not isomorphic due to a lack of direct mapping between the literal meaning and the idiomatic one. Finally, example (4) is neither isomorphic nor motivated: first, no one-to-one correspondence can be detected between the syntactic structure and the semantic structure; second, it is unclear why a point reaching a pole is related to becoming serious. Such a classification is presumably applicable to English idioms: isomorphic and motivated (e.g., *spill the beans*), isomorphic and nonmotivated (e.g., *face the music*), nonisomorphic and motivated (e.g., *wring one's hands*) and nonisomorphic and nonmotivated (e.g., *shoot the breeze*).

While the model, with the combination of isomorphism and motivation, provides a basic classification of the specialized nature of prototypical idioms, it cannot be extended to unravel all idiomatic expressions. In fact, example (3), when scrutinized closer, can be considered isomorphic once we develop the expression metonymically: the bodily posture mapping onto the full situation where a person takes the posture when faced with challenging difficulties. Such an image serves as the source of a metaphorical mapping in which the posture maps onto any external sign of despair in a person who is in trouble. Furthermore, as pointed out by one of the reviewers of this paper, in the English saying ‘A friend in need is a friend indeed’, for example, there is virtual homophony between the pronunciation of ‘in need’ and ‘indeed’, and the notion of a needy friend stands for the true kind of friend. Another illustration is the saying ‘An apple a day keeps the doctor away’, with an evident rhyme, where ‘apple’ may metonymically stand for any kind of health food and “keeping the doctor away” stands for avoiding unnecessary health challenges.²

These English sayings demonstrate that such a succinct four-way classification cannot extend to cases where more than one layer of conceptual apparatus needs to be evoked for idiomatic meanings. Nor can it be extended to cover cases that rely on sounds to trigger their intended meanings. To illustrate, let us see an example of a Hakka two-part allegorical saying first:

- (5) *fo*³¹ *seu*²⁴ *zu*²⁴-*teu*¹¹ --- *suk*⁵-*mian*⁵⁵ (*suk*⁵-*mian*⁵⁵)
 fire burn pig’s head cooked face (looking familiar)
 ‘Burning a pig’s head—looking familiar’

Example (5) contains a typical two-part allegorical saying found in Hakka or Taiwanese Southern Min. The first part of the expression indicates an event—burning a pig’s head. After being burned by fire, the face is cooked. The second part hence indicates the result of the event—cooked face. The most intriguing feature of such an expression lies in the interpretation of the intended meaning. Specifically, the first part—the source domain—captures both a vivid object and a concrete event and the second—the target domain—identifies the intended interpretation by identifying both the most salient part of the object and the result of the event through metonymy. To draw the intended meaning, a speaker needs to employ another strategy, the association of two homophones in Hakka—‘cooked face’ [*suk*⁵ *mian*⁵⁵] and ‘looking familiar’ [*suk*⁵ *mian*⁵⁵]. Such a sound association presents a distinctive feature of two-part allegorical sayings.³ In general, several observations can be noted. Most conspicuously, although isomorphism does not seem to play a crucial role, all interpretations of two-part allegorical sayings are motivated from the literal meaning to the intended interpretation. In addition, some cases require not only more than one layer of derivations but also intricate interactions of

² I am deeply indebted to one of the reviewers for the remarks here.

³ This strategy often brings forth pragmatic-discourse functions such as humor, teasing or sarcasm, or exaggeration. Lakoff and Turner (1989) point out exhortation or description as two major functions of proverbs. While both readings are possible with a proverb, whether exhortation can be induced from a two-part allegorical saying needs further exploration.

metaphor and metonymy in order to derive the intended meanings; still others depend on the activation of both phonological and semantic mechanisms to get the associated meanings. Furthermore, two-part allegorical sayings often deeply involve diversified local practices heavily embedded in a particular cultural model. To lay a better groundwork, let us now turn to metaphor, metonymy, and their interaction.

3. Metonymy, metaphor, and their interaction

Metaphor and metonymy, two fundamental mental strategies of conceptualization, have been demonstrated to be pervasive throughout a wealth of linguistic data, from daily linguistic usage to fixed expressions such as idioms, proverbs, and the like (cf. Lakoff 1993, Radden and Kövecses 1999). Metaphor has been investigated as a set of correspondences from a source to a target domain whereby the source allows us to comprehend the target in terms of its conceptual structure. For example, metaphorical expressions such as *He's over the hill*, *I'm at a crossroads in life*, *He's without direction in his life*, and other related ones, delineate various aspects of life in terms of our knowledge about journeys. Lakoff (1993) proposes the metaphorical system LIFE IS A JOURNEY, whereby a set of correspondences are established: the person leading a life is a traveler, a purposeful life is a journey, goals in life are destinations on the journey, one's actions form a path to a destination, and difficulties in life are impediments to motion. In addition to conceptual metaphor with many correspondences, image metaphors are one-shot metaphors which utilize only one correspondence (cf. also Ruiz de Mendoza 1998). For instance, in the metaphorical expression *Achilles is a lion*, the typical attribute of lions, their courage, is used to describe Achilles (Lakoff & Turner 1989: 195f). Hence, in PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS, attributed animal behavior is mapped onto human behavior.

Whereas metaphor involves a mapping across two conceptual domains, metonymy involves conceptual mapping within one single domain. Kövecses and Radden propose a working definition of metonymy as follows (cf. also Barcelona 2003a):

Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same idealized cognitive model. (1999:21)

According to the definition, other than prototypical referential instances of metonymy such as *She's just a pretty face*, where the most salient part is used to stand for an individual, various kinds of metonymy are covered. For instance, in the example *The book is very entertaining to read*, the whole domain BOOK is mapped onto its sub-domain SEMANTIC CONTENT, which is mentally triggered; in the example *The book is quite heavy to carry around*, the PHYSICAL OBJECT sub-domain is activated within the source domain BOOK. In addition, according to the definition, metonymy happens whenever we have conceptualized idealized cognitive models, which include not only things but also events. For example, *to author a book* illustrates AGENT FOR ACTION

metonymy, and *to landscape the garden* exemplifies RESULT FOR ACTION metonymy.

While an array of features is often listed to distinguish metaphor and metonymy, recent studies have shown that they formulate a continuum with prototypical cases lying in the two extreme poles but with more intertwined cases in between (cf. Dirven 2003, Radden 2003). Radden (2003:409, Table 1), for example, demonstrates different usages of *high* and its gradual transition from literalness through different stages of metonymy and metaphor:

literal		metonymic		metaphoric
(a) <i>high tower</i>	(b) <i>high tide</i>	(c) <i>high temperature</i>	(d) <i>high prices</i>	(e) <i>high quality</i>

Table 1: Literalness-metonymy-metaphor continuum

Not only do metonymy and metaphor form a continuum, but these two processes also interact in a complex way as studies probing into the intricacies of composite expressions have brought to light (cf. Goossens 2003, Geeraerts 1995, 2003, Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez 2003). Regarding conceptual interaction between metonymy and metaphor of idiomatic expressions, Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2003), identify five interaction patterns in which input spaces are combined by setting up a metonymy into either the source or the target of a metaphor: metonymic expansion (source in target) of a metaphoric source (e.g., *to beat one's breast*), metonymic expansion of a metaphoric target (e.g., *to knit one's brows*), metonymic reduction (target in source) of one of the correspondences of the target domain of a metaphor (e.g., *to win one's heart*), metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of the target domain of a metaphor (e.g., *to catch one's ear*), metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of the source domain of a metaphor (e.g., *to bite the hand that feeds you*).⁴

In brief, metaphor and metonymy and their interaction offer us a systematic set of conceptual apparatus for the interpretation of a rich array of linguistic expressions, especially for the comprehension of opaque expressions such as idioms, proverbs, or sayings. With the analytical tools in hand, we can come to the categorization of two-part allegorical sayings in the next section.

⁴ Explicit figures are provided for the five interaction patterns in Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2003). The reader is referred to their work for reference. The source-in-target and target-in-source metonymies, instead of the more standard ones of whole-for-part and part-for-whole, are adopted in the current study as the former system provides a more schematic representation and a better analytical tool for the analysis of two-part allegorical sayings.

4. A taxonomic framework for two-part allegorical sayings

A total of 885 items from Hakka are examined for classification.⁵ The data are motivated either through activation of metonymy, metaphor and their interaction, or through activation of phonological apparatus. Some of the items involve homophonic association both through objects or states of affairs (type 1 and type 2), whereas most of them involve conceptual association both through objects or states of affairs (type 3 and type 4).⁶ Hence, cross classification of two-part allegorical sayings will give us the following four types:

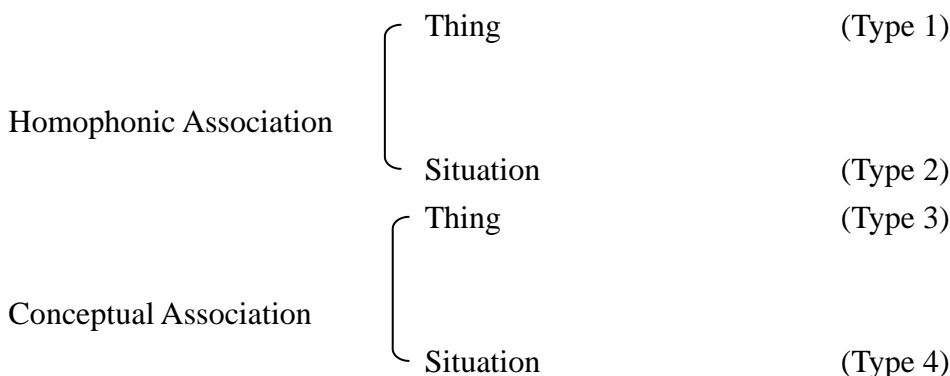


Figure 1: Types of two-part allegorical sayings

In what follows, each of the four types will be illustrated with Hakka examples.⁷ Section 4.1 discusses those that involve homophonic association and section 4.2 examines those that involve conceptual association.

⁵ A total of 793 items of Taiwanese Southern Min are also examined by the study. The data are taken from the following sources: 台灣俗諺語典 [Dictionary of Taiwanese Sayings], 台灣智慧歇後語 [Two-part Allegorical Sayings of Taiwanese Wisdom], 台灣歇後語語典 [Taiwan Two-part Allegorical Sayings Dictionary], and 歇後語趣味集 [Collections of Interesting Two-part Allegorical Sayings]. Nevertheless, only Hakka examples will be utilized for illustration unless there is a need for cross reference. The Hakka data are taken from the following sources: 客家師傅話 [Hakka Master's Proverbs], 客家諺語歇後語選集 [Collections of Hakka Proverbs and Two-part Allegorical Sayings], 客家諺語拾穗 [Selections of Hakka Proverbs and Sayings], 苗栗縣客語諺語謎語集 [Collections of Miaoli Hakka Sayings and Riddles], and 客諺一百首 [One-hundred Hakka Proverbs and Sayings].

⁶ Out of the 885 items in Hakka, 21% involve homophonic association (51 tokens of type 1 and 134 tokens of type 2) whereas 79% involve conceptual association (121 tokens of type 3 and 579 tokens of type 4). Out of the 793 items in Taiwanese Southern Min, 36% involve homophonic association (73 tokens of type 1 and 210 tokens of type 2) whereas 64% involve conceptual association (100 tokens of type 3 and 410 tokens of type 4). The distribution of the data in terms of the four types is given in appendix A.

⁷ The data used in this study come from Hakka in Taiwan. According to the data documented by 客委會 [Council for Hakka Affairs] in Taiwan in year 2006, there are approximately 6,800,000 Hakka people in Taiwan, about 27% of the total population (www.hakkayahoo.com.tw). Phonological and morphological differences can be observed between various sub-dialects including 海陸 [Hailu Hakka], 北部四縣 [Sixian Northern Hakka], 南部四縣 [Sixian Southern Hakka], 大埔 [Dapu Hakka], and 詔安 [Zhaoan Hakka]. *Hanyu Pinyin* romanization system is rendered for the data. The tone diacritics in the data follow the system used in 台灣客家話辭典 [Hakka Dictionary of Taiwan]. The number 5 is the highest, and 1 is the lowest. 55 is 陰去 *yinqu* (high tone), 11 is 陽平 *yangping* (low tone), 24 is 陰平 *yinping* (rising tone), 31 is 上聲 *shangsheng* (falling tone), 2 is 陰入 *yinru* (short high), and 5 is 陽入 *yangru* (short low). The following abbreviations are used for the grammatical functions: NEG, negation; NOM, nominalizer; PF, prefix; SF, suffix. The corresponding character versions of the examples are given in appendix B.

4.1 Homophonic Association: Thing or Situation

There are 186 tokens of the Hakka data that exhibit homophonic association—either through an object or through a state of affairs. For type one, target-in-source metonymy is invoked in the saying, with the first part as the source and the second part, the target, highlighting one of the biological or inherent attributes of the object. The target then serves as a prompt for a homophonic expression that denotes the intended meaning of the saying. Let us consider the following examples:

- (6) *cun¹¹-tien²⁴ ge⁵⁵ go³¹-ien¹¹ -- yu¹¹ to¹¹ li¹¹ (yu¹¹-to⁵⁵-li²⁴)*
 spring NOM orchard exist peach plum make sense
 ‘Orchards in spring—making sense’
- (7) *lan⁵⁵ fung¹¹-ca²⁴ -- con⁵⁵ gau³¹ (con⁵⁵-gau³¹)*
 broken windmill earn twine earn (time to) fool around
 ‘A broken windmill—with some spare time to fool around’
- (8) *siip⁵-ngi⁵⁵-ngiet⁵ gie⁵⁵-coi⁵⁵ -- song²⁴ sim²⁴ (song²⁴-sim²⁴)*
 December Chinese green mustard grow center stalks sad
 ‘Chinese green mustard in December—feeling sad’
- (9) *sam¹¹-ngiet⁵ to¹¹-fa¹¹ -- do¹¹ cia⁵⁵ (do¹¹ cia⁵⁵)*
 March peach blossom most wither thanks a lot
 ‘Peach blossom in March—thanks a lot’

In all the cases, the surface forms serve as ways of making a conceptual connection between the two homophonic expressions—the second part of the saying and the expression for the idiomatic meaning. In example (6), a target-in-source metonymy is observed. The first component with the expression depicts a vivid image—*cun¹¹-tien²⁴ ge⁵⁵ go³¹-ien¹¹* ‘an orchard in spring’, which we can understand is a place where peaches and plums grow abundantly. Such a salient attribute is indicated in the second part of the saying--*yu¹¹ to¹¹ li¹¹* ‘full of peaches and plums’. However, such an image does not lead to the intended interpretation without a very crucial apparatus—sound association. In Hakka, *full of peaches and plums* [yu¹¹ to¹¹li¹¹] is pronounced closely to *making sense* [yu¹¹-to⁵⁵-li²⁴]—with the same segmental combinations but different tone patterns. The two near homophones, belonging to two independent frames, are linked together within the context of the first part of the saying. The frame of plant then shifts to the frame of human affairs, in this case, to make comments of a certain situation. The way interaction takes place in this expression is captured by Figure 2:

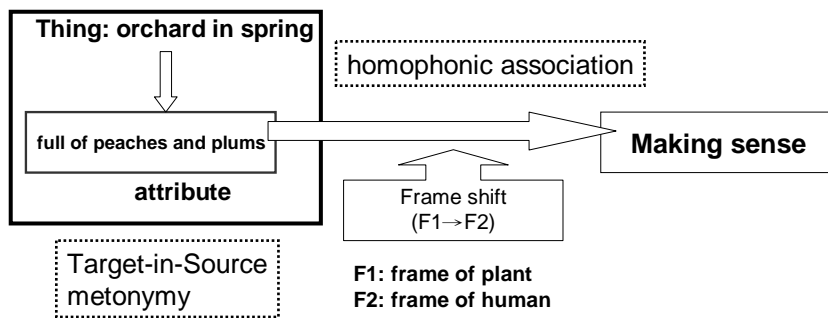


Figure 2: Orchards in spring—making sense

The same reasoning is detected in the other three examples. In example (7), *lan⁵⁵ fung¹¹-ca²⁴* ‘a broken windmill’ is a complex object that has certain essential structural attributes that will determine how the windmill will function. When it is broken, it can not function as expected. The first component of the saying hence brings up a context in which the two homophonic expressions--[con⁵⁵ gau³¹] ‘to have the wheels constantly twined’ and [con⁵⁵ gau³¹] ‘to have some spare time to fool around’ are connected. Both examples (8) and (9) involve the natural features of particular plants in particular seasons. Chinese green mustard grows in the winter. In December the leaves are blooming and the center stalks are growing stronger, ready for harvest. Likewise, peach flowers bloom from February until March, when they begin to wither. Both of the biological traits of the plants are used to create the contexts for the conceptual connection of the two homophonic expressions in question. In example (8), [song²⁴ sim²⁴] ‘grow center stalks’ is articulated the same as [song⁻²⁴ sim²⁴] ‘sad’; in example (9), [do¹¹ cia⁵⁵] ‘most (of the peach flowers) wither’ is pronounced the same as [do⁻¹¹ cia⁵⁵] ‘thanks a lot’. In general, in this type, a target-in-source metonymy is identified in the saying to highlight the salient features of the thing, which in turn establishes the context for the conceptual connection of the homophonic elements in question—one being the second part of the saying and the other the evoked expression of the intended meaning. An abstraction of this type of examples can be represented by Figure 3:

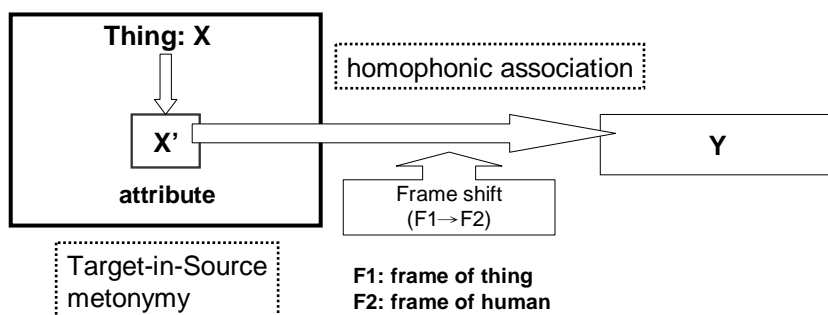


Figure 3. Homophonic association: Thing

In addition to a thing, a situation can serve as the source of the saying as indicated by the examples from (10) to (13) of type 2:

- (10) *fo*³¹ *seu*²⁴ *zu*²⁴-*teu*¹¹ --- *suk*⁵ *mian*⁵⁵ (*suk*⁵-*mian*⁵⁵)
 fire burn pig's head cooked face (looking familiar)
 'Burning a pig's head—looking familiar'
- (11) *zu*¹¹-*li*⁵⁵-*teu*¹¹ *bong*³¹ *ziu*³¹ -- *sung*¹¹ *sat*⁵ (*sung*¹¹ *sat*⁵)
 pig's tongue go together wine two tongues double loss
 '(Eating) a pig's tongue together with wine—double loss'
- (12) *mak*⁵-*gon*³¹ *coi*¹¹ *seu*²⁴-*e*³¹ -- *seu*³¹ *hi*⁵⁵ (*seu*³¹-*hi*⁵⁵)
 straw blow bamboo vertical flute-SF small air (stingy)
 'Blowing air into a straw as if playing a bamboo vertical flute—being stingy'
- (13) *bak*⁵-*gung*²⁴ *teu*³¹ *tai*⁵⁵ *hi*⁵⁵ -- *siin*¹¹-*hi*⁵⁵ (*siin*¹¹- *hi*⁵⁵)
 God of Earth let out big breath divine atmosphere (very proud)
 'God of Earth letting out strong breath—being very proud'

All the examples delineate an imaginary state of affairs—the first part the action and the second part the result. Example (10) activates whole-for-part metonymy from *zu*²⁴-*teu*¹¹ 'pig's head' to *mian*⁵⁵ 'face' and action-for-result metonymy from *fo*³¹*seu*²⁴ 'fire burn' to *suk*⁵ 'cooked'. Both target-in-source metonymies in the first component help set up a conceptual association of the two homophonic elements in question—one indicating the result of the action, [*suk*⁵*mian*⁵⁵] 'cooked face', and the other denoting the intended meaning of the saying [*suk*⁵*mian*⁵⁵] 'looking familiar'. Such an imaginary situation making use of the animal frame evokes the frame of human through sound association. The way interaction takes place in this expression is captured by Figure 4:

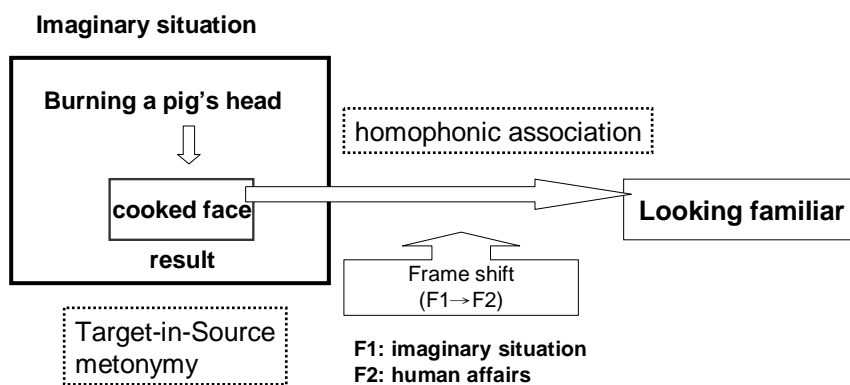


Figure 4. *Burning a pig's head—looking familiar*

The same reasoning works in the other three examples. Example (11) fabricates a situation where a person is eating a pig's tongue together with wine. The scene sets up a link between the two expressions of the same pronunciation [*sung*¹¹ *sat*⁵]
 —one meaning 'two tongues' referring to the

pig’s tongue and the person’s tongue and the other meaning ‘double loss’ What is intriguing is that because of the sound association between *sat*⁵ ‘tongue’ and *sat*⁵ ‘loss’, *a pig’s tongue*, which should be pronounced as [zu¹¹ sat⁵], is never called that way by pork dealers. To diverge from such negative imagery of loss in business, a euphemistic expression *zu*¹¹-*li*⁵⁵-*teu*¹¹, literally meaning ‘pig profit head’, is coined by them instead. The coinage of this expression with *li*⁵⁵ ‘profit’, completely antonymous of *sat*⁵ ‘loss’, hence serves as a symbolism of converging to positive imagery of making a lot of profit by selling this particular part of a pig’s head. In a similar vein, in example (12), since *mak*⁵-*gon*³¹ ‘a straw’ is small and hence the air coming from blowing a straw as if it were a vertical bamboo flute must be small. Such an action-for-result metonymy brings up a link between the two homophonic expressions—[seu³¹ hi⁵⁵] ‘small air’ and [seu³¹ hi⁵⁵] ‘being excessive carefulness about money’. Similarly, in (13), the big breath God of Earth is letting out is literally divine atmosphere [siin¹¹ hi⁵⁵], which sounds the same as being very proud, [siin¹¹ hi⁵⁵]. In general, an imaginary situation is created by the saying that involves a target-in-source metonymy; the target, the result of the situation, is then linked to an expression of the intended meaning. Two independently unrelated frames are being connected due to sound association—the imaginary situation of the saying setting up a scene for the interpretation of human affairs. An abstraction of this type of examples can be characterized by Figure 5:

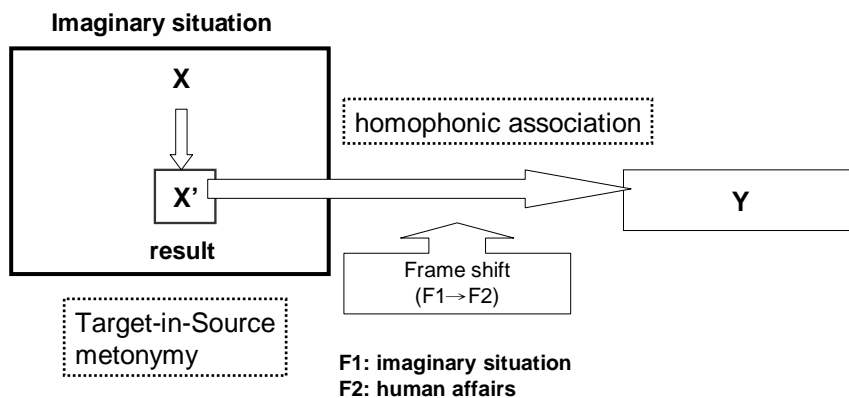


Figure 5. Homophonic association: Situation

To summarize, in the first two types of sayings, target-in-source metonymy is activated by the saying, which creates a context for the sound association between the second part of the saying and the intended meaning of the saying. Whether the surface forms denote objects or states of affairs, they are all for the purpose of understanding human beings.

4.2 Conceptual association: Thing or Situation

Next, let’s turn to the other two types that involve conceptual association. A bigger chunk of two-part allegorical sayings utilizes this mechanism—either through a thing (type 3) or through a situation (type 4). First, consider the following examples of type 3:

- (14) *bun*⁵⁵-*gong*²⁴-*du*³¹ *ge*³¹ *sak*⁵-*teu*¹¹ -- *yu*⁵⁵-*cu*⁵⁵-*yu*⁵⁵-*ngang*⁵⁵
manure pit inside NOM stone-SF both smelly and hard
‘A stone inside a manure pit—extremely unpleasant and stubborn’
- (15) *zuk*² *bien*¹¹ *ge*⁵⁵ *ap*²-*e*³¹ -- *mo*¹¹ *sim*¹¹ *gon*²⁴
bamboo weave NOM duck-SF NEG heart liver
‘A duck woven of bamboo—heartless’
- (16) *den*²⁴-*co*³¹ *da*³¹-*giet*² -- *sim*²⁴ *m*¹¹ *koi*²⁴
rush knotted knot NEG untied
‘Knotted rushes—unhappy or depressed’
- (17) *siip*⁵-*ngi*⁵⁵-*ngiet*⁵ *gam*¹¹-*za*⁵⁵ -- *liong*³¹ *teu*¹¹ *tiam*¹¹
December sugar cane two ends sweet
‘Sugar cane stems in December—a person trying to please both sides’
- (18) *liuk*²-*ngiet*⁵ *gie*⁵⁵ *cot*⁵⁵ -- *ga*³¹ *yu*¹¹ *sim*²⁴
June Chinese green mustard pretend have center stalks
‘Chinese green mustard in June—pretended sympathy’
- (19) *su*²⁴-*doi*²⁴-*du*³¹ *ge*⁵⁵ *zu*⁵⁵-*cung*¹¹ -- *ngau*²⁴-*vun*¹¹-*ziok*²-*sii*⁵⁵
books-piles-inside NOM worms bite texts chew words
‘Worms in piles of books—paying excessive attention to wording’

In all the six examples, the first part signals an object and the second part identifies metonymically the most salient attribute of the object. But we understand sayings as providing us means of conceiving the complex faculties of human beings, although on the surface they look as if they concern other forms of being such as stone, sugar cane, or worms. Take (14) for instance. We have the following rationale for the saying: a stone is typically hard. If a stone is inside a manure pit, it will additionally become a disgusting smelling object. What the saying does is to have a source domain with a stone in a manure pit, indicated by the first part of the saying; however since the saying is meant to comment on a person, the central features, hard and smelly, are indicated in the second part of the saying to work out the connection to a person’s characteristics—being stubborn and unpleasant. If being figuratively hard is a negative property of a person, being as unpleasant as the smell of manure only makes matters worse. The target-in-source metonymy identified in the source domain of a metaphor is also observed in the target domain of the metaphor, with two specific attributes highlighted in terms of a person’s characteristics. After the complex object domain evoked in the source is mapped to the target of human being domain by Great Chain Metaphor, we can hence effectively infer the negative

character associated with the person who is being unpleasant and stubborn.⁸ The interaction that takes place in the expression can be captured by Figure 6:

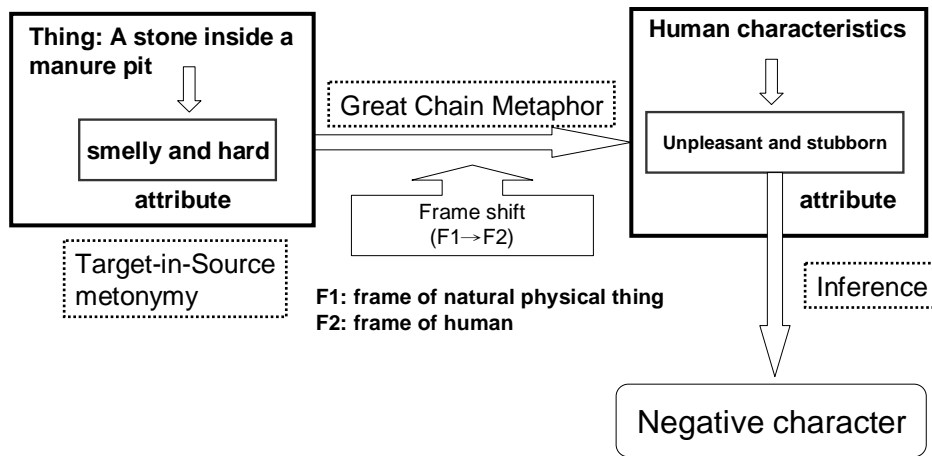


Figure 6. A stone in a manure pit—extremely unpleasant and stubborn

In the same manner, in example (15), *zūk² bien¹¹ ge⁵⁵ ap²-e³¹* ‘a duck woven of bamboo’ does not have internal organs but only the structured shape. The literal description of such a hand-crafted complex object as without heart and liver is metaphorically utilized to portray a person’s character of heartlessness or ruthlessness. In example (16), knotted rushes, which are tied and twisted together, are employed to depict an unhappy person with a wrung heart. Likewise, example (17) illustrates a case whereby the essential biological nature of a plant is engaged in the source domain, sugar cane in December. Folk knowledge tells us that sugar cane is extraordinarily sweet in December when the stems are to be harvested. Such an attribute is used to characterize a person who is not trustworthy since he tends to sweet talk both sides in order to please them. Example (18) contains the plant Chinese green mustard that does not grow in summer. If the center stalks grow in June, they must be unreal. Therefore, the literal depiction of the typical physical attribute of a plant is metaphorically delineating a person’s pretended sympathy. Finally, in example (19), a person who pays excessive attention to wording is metaphorically characterized as a worm buried inside piles of books that bites and chews the books. In general, a target-in-source metonymy is identified in the saying that usually depicts typical features of a thing. The description serves as a source of a metaphor which maps to a target that mirrors the same metonymic pattern. The domain of other forms of being is mapped to the domain of human beings due to the Great Chain Metaphor—ready for the speaker’s inference of the intended meaning. An abstraction of the examples of this type can be represented by Figure 7:

⁸ The metaphor that is working here follows the Great Chain Metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989). More details will be discussed in the next section.

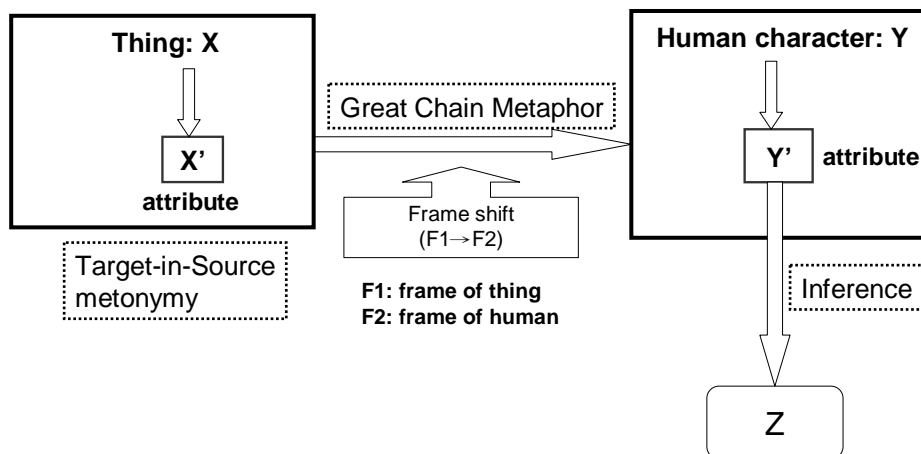


Figure 7: Conceptual association: Thing

Next, let us examine cases of the last type, whereby the source domain involves a situation. Consider examples from (20) to (25):

(20) *cok⁵ sui¹¹-yi¹¹ giu⁵⁵ fo³¹-- ngia²⁴-fo³¹-song⁵⁵-siin²⁴*
 wear coir raincoat fight fire put fire onto body
 ‘Trying to fight a fire with a coir raincoat on—asking for trouble’

(21) *zok² heu¹¹ ngip⁵ san²⁴ -- dien²⁴-do³¹ zo⁵⁵*
 bring monkey into mountain reverse do
 ‘Bringing monkeys into the mountain—putting the cart before the horse’

(22) *sak⁵-teu¹¹ dang³¹ zung⁵⁵ coi⁵⁵-- nan¹¹ sang²⁴ gin²⁴*
 stone-SF top grow vegetable hard grow root
 ‘Growing vegetables on the stone—hard to put down roots’

(23) *lo³¹-fu³¹ zia⁵⁵ zu¹¹-yu²⁴ zia⁵⁵ mo¹¹ van¹¹*
 PF-tiger borrow pig have borrow NEG return
 ‘Tigers borrowing pigs—never returning what are borrowed’

(24) *den²⁴-zan³¹ mo¹¹ yu¹¹ -- fi⁵⁵-sim²⁴*
 oil lamp NEG oil burn wick
 ‘An oil lamp without oil—requiring mental exertion’

(25) *nei¹¹ bak⁵-gung¹¹ go⁵⁵ ho¹¹ -- zii⁵⁵-siin¹¹-nan¹¹-bo¹¹*
 earth God of Earth cross river self body hard protect
 ‘Earth-made God of Earth crossing a river—unable even to protect oneself’

Instead of an object, a state of affair is described in the saying with the first part indicating an action and the second part signaling the result. Take example (20) for instance. The saying depicts an imaginary absurd situation in which someone tries to fight a fire wearing a coir raincoat for protection. A person who tries to fight a fire when wearing a highly flammable coir raincoat is asking for trouble for himself because he is going to end up burning his own body. Such an imaginary situation is used to suggest a real-life situation that is equally absurd and that carries relevant implications with the imaginary one in terms of the protagonist's reckless or foolish behavior. The semantic derivation of this expression can be represented by Figure 8:

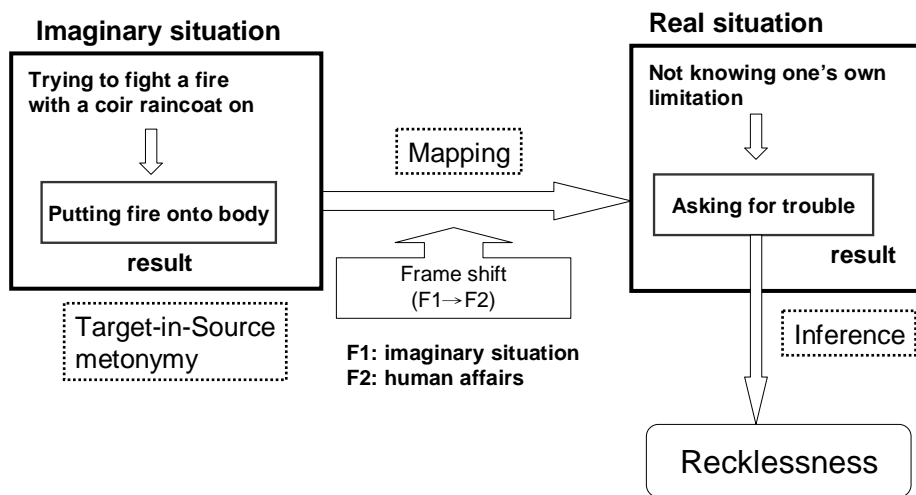


Figure 8. Trying to fight a fire with a coir raincoat on—asking for trouble

The same reasoning can be applied to the other five cases. Example (21) illustrates another unreasonable situation with an action-result relationship between the two components. Hakka ancestors used to live in mountainous areas, which are the habitats of monkeys. To experience a more civilized life, they needed to come down the mountain to the town where they could take more chances both for doing business and for acquiring an education. In this case, monkeys are used to refer to mountainous people, who often strive to get out of the mountain to obtain a better life. Hence, from Hakka people's common sense knowledge, someone who brings monkeys into the mountain is doing something in a reverse order—taking people back into a less developed place. This saying is therefore used to remark on an equally unreasonable real-life situation where a person does things in the wrong order—namely putting the cart before the horse—as indicated by the English idiom. Example (22) illustrates another causal relationship between the first part and the second part. This case brings up an inventive situation where a person is trying to grow vegetables on stone. Folk knowledge tells us that it is highly unlikely for vegetables to grow roots when they are planted on stone. Without deep roots, vegetables will not grow strong. The saying is hence used to refer to a real-life situation when a person finds it hard to fit in because he cannot put down roots somewhere; hence he does not feel the place where he lives to be home; nor does he have friendly relationships between the people there. Next, example (23) describes a scenario involving animal behavior. In this case, an animal's behavior is used to metaphorically evaluate a

person's behavior. Since a tiger is carnivorous and fierce by nature, there is no chance that a pig borrowed by a tiger will be returned. Hence, this scenario of an animal's behavior is metaphorically used as a remark on a person who is being not trustworthy since he never returns what he has borrowed. In addition, example (24) involves a situation of burning an oil lamp without oil. Since the wick of an oil lamp serves to suck up oil so that the lamp can burn, an oil lamp without oil will have to burn its own wick. A wick that is in the middle of a lamp is analogically compared to the heart of a person that is also located in the center of his body. Hence, *burning the wick* can be conceptually mapped to a situation of *burning a person's heart*. The target-in-source metonymy is observed both in the source and in the target of a metaphor. Since 'heart' metonymically maps onto 'effort' or exertion', we can successfully infer the intending meaning 'requiring mental exertion'. Lastly, example (25) contains *bak⁵-gung¹¹* 'God of Earth', whose statue is made of earth instead of stone or metal. The God of Earth, the most often worshipped god by Hakka, is believed to be the protector of their lands and crops. This example creates a humorous scenario where the God of Earth is crossing a river. Since earth dissolves in the river, the situation is used to depict a real-life situation where an incompetent person, who cannot even protect himself, is trying to help others out. In general, cases of this type involve a description of an imaginary situation with a target-in-source metonymy. The invented situation is mapped to a real situation with the same metonymic pattern. Since sayings are usually concerned about human affairs, we can effectively infer the intended meanings of the sayings. An abstraction of these cases can be characterized by Figure 9:

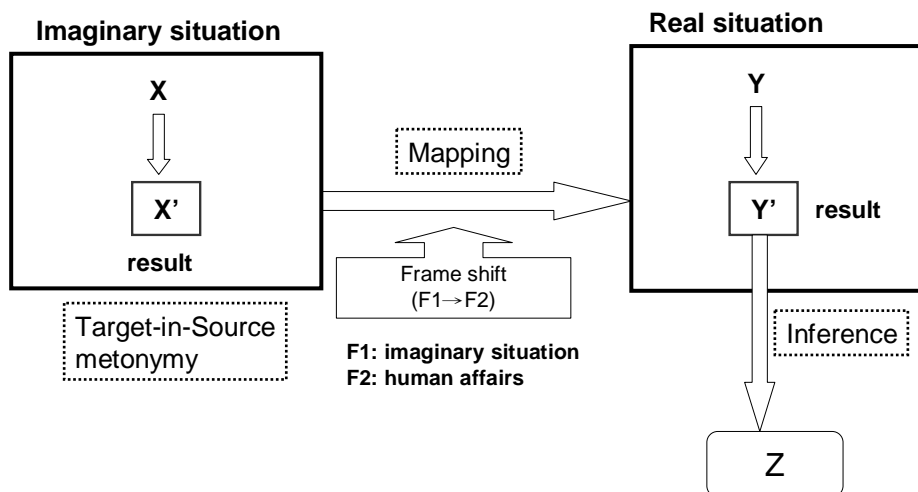


Figure 9. Conceptual association: Situation

To summarize, four types of two-part allegorical sayings have been identified. While some of the sayings activate homophonic association for their interpretation, most evoke conceptual association with metonymy and metaphor interacting in a systematic way. Target-in-source is always triggered by the surface form—either highlighting the essential attributes of a thing or specifying the result of a state of affairs. The attributes of a thing are mapped to the attributes of a person through the Great Chain Metaphor. The imaginary situation is metaphorically mapped to a

real-life situation of human affairs that mirrors the same metonymic pattern. Speakers can hence effectively obtain the intended meanings through inference. Such a successful inference has been claimed to be heavily founded on cultural models, which is the topic we now turn to.

5. Knowledge schemas and cultural constraints

The explication of two-part allegorical sayings in Hakka demonstrate that frame adjustment is highly involved in their interpretation, either through sound association or through conceptual association. For cases that rely on homophonic association, the first part of the saying creates a context for the connection of the second part and the intended meaning, which are homophonic or near homophonic to each other. Although the saying usually delineates other forms of being, the intended meaning is leaning toward human affairs. For cases that depend on conceptual association, the saying fabricates an imaginary scene; through the Great Chain Metaphor, the invented situation is mapped onto a real situation involving human beings, ready for the inference of the intended meaning. In general, two-part allegorical sayings often evoke a vivid image based on objects or events surrounding folks' daily life experience. Yet, the intended meaning is geared toward human features or human behavior to tease, to mock, or to instruct. Hence, these questions that arise are: what are the pertinent frames or idealized cognitive models (ICMs), following Lakoff (1987), that serve as the foundation for the activation of the cognitive mechanisms for such a wealthy array of data? Specifically, what are the cultural constraints on the interpretation of two-part allegorical sayings? Exploration of the cultural models, following Lakoff (1987) and Lakoff and Turner (1989), offer us an insight into the resolution of these questions.

What is represented by two-part allegorical sayings mostly accords with what is discussed about proverbs in Lakoff and Turner (1989:170ff). In particular, they propose the Great Chain Metaphor, which include four components—the Nature of Things, the Great Chain, the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor and the Maxim of Quantity. The Nature of Things and the Great Chain consist of a vertical hierarchical ranking of forms of being—humans, animals, plants, complex objects, and natural physical things. A scale of the features that delineate these forms of being is formulated accordingly, since the inherent features of forms of being result in their behavior and functions. Next, the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor allows us to comprehend a whole category of situations in terms of one particular situation. With a particular situation and a particular proverb, GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor presents a means of perceiving that situation metaphorically in terms of the schema induced by the proverb.

The combination of the first three elements formulates a powerful tool for analysis, as maintained by Lakoff and Turner. We can therefore understand general human quality in terms of attributes of lower forms of being such as animals, plants or objects; contrarily, we can also understand various aspects of the nature of animals, plants, and objects in terms of human features. Such a wide scope of potential knowledge we can generate would run wild if it were not for the Maxim of Quantity, the pragmatic principle of conversation that guarantees strong constraints on the application of the Nature of Things, the Great Chain, and the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor.

We therefore can assume that speakers, obeying the Maxim of Quantity, will single out only the most relevant information at each level for the application.

As Lakoff and Turner declare, such unconscious cultural knowledge dominates the comprehension of language, especially that of opaque linguistic forms such as proverbs. Take the proverb ‘Big thunder / little rain’ given in Lakoff and Turner (1989:174ff) for example. The surface form depicts a natural event with two sub-events, thunder and rain. The combination of the Great Chain, the Nature of Things, and the Maxim of Quantity allows us to single out specific parts of our commonsense knowledge about thunderstorms. We therefore understand this expression as an uncommon case—a lot of thunder with surprising little rain. Subsequently, the relevant information of the source domain is conceptually mapped onto the target domain of human being by the Great Chain and the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor. Therefore, although the surface form does not say anything about humans, it is to be comprehended as a comment about a person, given the fact that proverbs concern matters about human life. In general, successful inference of the intended meaning of a proverb lies heavily on speakers’ cultural knowledge schemas and the Great Chain Metaphor.

Indeed, the Great Chain Metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989) provides a great explanatory power—explicating not only systematic conceptual regularities but also strong cultural constraints for the interpretation of proverbs. Two-part allegorical sayings, just like proverbs, offer speakers ways of understanding the intricate faculties of human beings through other forms of being. The model proposed by Lakoff and Turner hence works fairly well for two-part allegorical sayings, particularly for cases that involve conceptual association. Like the answer of a riddle, which is deeply embedded in linguistic expressions, the targeted meaning of a two-part allegorical saying needs to be drawn by an inference from the speakers. Such an inference requires the evocation of knowledge schemas profoundly grounded in the cultural models. In general, the ICMs induced by the first form involve things or states-of-affairs. Things depicted by the first part, conforming to the pattern of the Nature of Things and the Great Chain, come from domains ranging from animals or plants to complex objects or natural physical things. Often, the inherent features or their essential attributes are metonymically specified for things whereas the results are metonymically specified for situations. We understand the relevant information of the saying due to the Maxim of Quantity. Then, the Great Chain and the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor allow us to interpret the saying as involving human beings.

Two-part allegorical sayings differ from proverbs in an important aspect, however: the former contains cases that involve sound association (type 1 and type 2). While the conceptual mechanisms activated by these cases are the same as those involving conceptual association (type 3 and type 4), sound mechanism needs to be activated with the first component of a two-part allegorical saying fashioning a scene, under which the second part of the saying and the intended meaning are connected phonologically through homophones or near homophones. Such a unique feature of these cases of two-part allegorical sayings is not found in proverbs.

Nevertheless, all four types of two-part allegorical sayings need to trigger specific local

cultural practices of Hakka, on top of the universal Great Chain Metaphor. Most Hakka people inhabited less developed areas when they first moved to Taiwan.⁹ Their way of life vigorously fostered their cultural conceptions. They learned to make use of the natural resources around them to live through hardships. With astute observations of the weather and the climate, they practiced farming, raising animals for business or food, and growing vegetables to add to their staple diets. Hence their language—the most salient product of a culture—strongly reflects their cultural conceptions. Sayings, statements with wise advice on life, especially echo the folk knowledge established through their way of life.

Take the domain of plants, for example. Chinese green mustard is one of the staples of Hakka cuisine. Because winter is too cold for rice to grow, during the winter, rice fields are used to grow Chinese green mustard instead, which is often processed in several ways—pickling, drying, etc.—for later use. This vegetable is therefore a four-season staple for Hakka people. Owing to its importance, it is frequently employed in their language. Hence its salient attributes—flourishing in the cold winter, but withering in the hot summer—are often highlighted in sayings to symbolize human character. Likewise, expressions based on our folk knowledge of sugar cane, bamboo, celery, scallions, and radishes are often found in two-part allegorical sayings for the same reason. Domains of animals and complex objects exhibit similar generalizations—expressions from farming are used. Hence, domestic animals such as dogs, cats, chickens, ducks, cows, or pigs are often highlighted to signal positive characteristics of human beings. On the other hand, animals such as mice, foxes, tigers, or snakes, which usually come to steal their crops or domestic fowls, are utilized to represent evil behaviors. In the same vein, expressions of complex objects often come from instruments for farming such as windmills, coir raincoats, oil lamps, or bamboo baskets.

Whereas most pertinent ICMs of Hakka two-part allegorical sayings accord with the universal basic Great Chain proposed in Lakoff and Turner (1989)—with the lower forms of being signifying human affairs—some of them employ expressions related to gods. Although Lakoff and Turner (1989: 204ff) state that the extended Great Chain, which concerns gods or the universe, is central to western tradition, the linguistic expressions observed in two-part allegorical sayings evoke such extended Great Chain. Gods, especially the God of Earth and the God of Death, are often made use of in this discourse form. The God of Earth, who is believed to protect their lands and crops, is highly respected by Hakka. Nevertheless, because the temple of the God of Earth is often built right around their fields, he is like ‘a member of the family’, who can be

⁹ Symbolizing the social status of the Hakka people, the word *Hakka* [hak⁶ ka¹] literally means ‘guest people’. Two views are held so as to the formation of Hakka people. One view holds that originating from the Central Plains of China, Hakka people, because of foreign invasions, civil wars and other historical reasons, moved southwards to mainly the areas of southern China. Subsequently, after a couple of major moves, some Hakka people finally migrated all the way down to Taiwan around the middle of the 19th century (Hashimoto 1973, Luo 1998). Another view holds that the Hakka developed from southern Gan in the Song Dynasty, with the Hakka dialects bearing features similar to non-Chinese languages such as She and Yao. Afterwards, Hakka migrated southwards to Taiwan in the early Qing Dynasty (Chappell 2001). Refer also to Chappell and Lamarre (2005) for more detailed descriptions.

teased or ridiculed. On the other hand, God of Death, who is believed to dominate the world after death, is paid great reverence to. Since death is both unknown and inauspicious, expressions involving the God of Death are, however, often employed to instruct or to curse.

That local cultural knowledge is deeply involved in the expressions of this discourse form can be further evidenced by the following examples. Both Hakka and Taiwanese Southern Min employ the expression of Chinese green mustard in December in their sayings, as indicated in (26) and (27). However, the intended interpretations of the two languages are very different due to the different perspectives these two languages take:

(26) *siip⁵-ngi⁵⁵-ngiet⁵* *gie⁵⁵-coi⁵⁵* -- *song²⁴* *sim²⁴* (*song²⁴-sim²⁴*)
 December Chinese green mustard grow center stalks sad
 ‘Chinese green mustard in December—feeling sad’

(27) *Chap⁸-ji⁷-geh⁸* *koa³-chhai³* -- *u⁵* *sim⁵* (*u⁵-sim⁵*)¹⁰
 December Chinese green mustard have center stalks (sincere)
 ‘Chinese green mustard in December—being sincere’

Both cultural models observe the same biological nature of Chinese green mustard in December. Nevertheless, whereas Hakka emphasizes the feature of growing center stalks, Taiwanese Southern Min focuses on the state of having center stalks. Consequently, the sound associations of both languages lead to completely different intended meanings even though the source domains and the evoked commonplace knowledge are exactly the same.

6. Concluding remarks

Two-part allegorical sayings, although carrying the main characteristics of idioms identified by previous studies (cf. Nunberg et al. 1994, Gibbs 1995, Kövecses and Szabó 1996, Geeraerts 1995, 2003), display uniqueness of their own. All the intended meanings are motivated metonymically or metaphorically, with some of them additionally involving sound association. A taxonomic framework is hence established to categorize this discourse form succinctly into four types—Homophonic association / Thing, Homophonic association / Situation, Conceptual association / Thing and Conceptual association / Situation. Four schematic representations are given for the four types. To recapitulate, target-in-source metonymy is always prompted by the first part of the saying. For cases that involve things, essential or inherent attributes are highlighted; for those involving situations, results are fashioned by fictitious scenarios. Moreover, sound mechanism is involved—with the first part creating a context for the connection of the second part of the saying and the intended meaning through homophonic association for type 1

¹⁰ The spelling of this Taiwanese Southern Min example is based on the Church romanization, adopted from Chen (2004).

and type 2. For cases of type 3 and type 4, the Great Chain Metaphor is activated, mapping the imaginary scenario established by the first part onto a real-life situation, ready for inference of the intended meaning. While expressions of other forms of being are often found in the sayings, we understand them as involving human affairs.

In other words, in line with Lakoff (1987) and Lakoff and Turner (1989), this study maintains that the relevant ICMs of two-part allegorical sayings, just like those of proverbs, are closely related to the cultural models made up by the four elements of the Great Chain Metaphor—the Nature of Things, the Great Chain, the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor, and the Maxim of Quantity. Moreover, the study further claims that the evoked knowledge schemas are also deeply grounded in local cultural practices, on top of the prevalent Great Chain Metaphor. Hakka examples investigated in this study clearly demonstrate how their language mirrors their cultural conception.

Although it is claimed that two-part allegorical sayings are similar to proverbs in their employment of the knowledge schemas and cultural constraints maintained by Lakoff and Turner (1989), unlike proverbs, some cases of two-part allegorical sayings need to resort to sound association for their intended meanings. Furthermore, this study takes a step further in contributing explicit representations of the mechanisms for the intended meanings of two-part allegorical sayings. In particular, the interaction patterns of metonymy and metaphor provoked by Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2003) and his associates are utilized to capture the intricate layers of derivations for the interpretation of such a linguistic form. However, their five interaction patterns cannot capture the phenomena exhibited by two-part allegorical sayings. Specifically, metonymic reduction (target in source) is activated. Secondly, sound association is then triggered for those special type 1 and type 2 cases. Otherwise, a mirror image of metonymic reduction is also observed in the target domain of the metaphor. These interaction patterns are not found on their list. Because of the uniqueness of this discourse form, the study hence makes both empirical and theoretical contribution. The four schematic representations not only elucidate the typological interaction patterns for two-part allegorical sayings but also add to the list of the patterns in Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2003) for idioms in English. A plausible theoretical question to pursue is the level of exhaustiveness of possible interaction patterns of metonymy and metaphor, an endeavor that requires support from both theoretical and empirical investigation in the future.

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Appendix A: The distribution of Hakka and Taiwanese Southern Min examples

Hakka			
Homomorphic association		Conceptual association	
Thing	Situation	Thing	Situation
51 tokens (6%)	134 tokens (15%)	121 tokens (14%)	579 tokens (65%)
Subtotal: 186 tokens (21%)		Subtotal: 647 tokens (79%)	
Total: 885 tokens			

Taiwanese Southern Min			
Homomorphic association		Conceptual association	
Thing	Situation	Thing	Situation
73 tokens (9%)	210 tokens (27%)	100 tokens (12%)	410 tokens (52%)
Subtotal: 283 tokens (36%)		Subtotal: 510 tokens (64%)	
Total: 793 tokens			

Appendix B: The character versions of Hakka examples

Type 1: Homophonic association: Thing

- (6) 春天个果園—有桃李（有道理）。
- (7) 爛風車—賺絞（賺搞）。
- (8) 十二月芥菜—上心（傷心）。
- (9) 三月桃花—多謝（多謝）。

Type 2: Homophonic association: Situation

- (10) 火燒豬頭—熟面（熟面）。
- (11) 豬利頭傍酒—雙舌（雙蝕）。
- (12) 麥管吹蕭仔—小氣（小氣）。
- (13) 伯公透大氣—神氣（神氣）。

Type 3: Conceptual association: Thing

- (14) 糞缸肚个石頭—又臭又硬。
- (15) 竹編个鴨仔—無心肝。
- (16) 燈草打結—心毋開。
- (17) 十二月甘蔗—兩頭甜。
- (18) 六月芥菜—假有心。
- (19) 書堆肚个蛀蟲—咬文嚼字。

Type 4: Conceptual association: Situation

- (20) 著蓑衣救火—惹火上身。
- (21) 捉猴入山—顛倒做。
- (22) 石頭頂種菜—難生根。
- (23) 老虎借豬—有借無還。
- (24) 燈盞無油—費心。
- (25) 泥伯公過河—自身難保。

Comparison of Hakka and Taiwanese Southern Min:

- (26) 十二月芥菜—上心（傷心）。
- (27) 十二月芥菜—有心（有心）。