

Animal Conceptual Metaphors in Kotowaza: A Cognitive Linguistic Study

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to examine the cognitive linguistic perspective of Japanese culture in relation to animal-related kotowaza. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze 15 kotowaza from the comic book dictionary "Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten." The objective is to determine the grammatical and idiomatic meanings of these kotowaza, as well as to comprehend the mental metaphor of animals present in them. The research findings suggest that Japanese society employs animal kotowaza as metaphors to convey implicit messages about an individual's character. The kotowaza conveys intricate messages regarding moral principles in everyday life, as well as a profound comprehension of flawed circumstances, through the use of conceptual analogies. Various animal metaphors, including fish, horse, bird, cat, and monkey, are employed to symbolize different facets of existence and human nature.

Keywords: *animal; cognitive linguistics; conceptual metaphor; kotowaza*

INTRODUCTION

Language has a significant role in the everyday process of communication. Language serves as a medium for the transmission of messages among individuals. The form of language in the communication process is intricately linked to the contextual factors that shape it, frequently influenced by the cultural background of the language user. There are two

primary hypotheses in the cultural context: low-context culture and high-context culture. According to Hall (as cited in Jackson, 2019), cultures with low context prefer to employ explicit language messages, wherein the majority of the information is included within the message itself. In contrast, high-context societies exhibit a tendency to employ language messages implicitly, relying on preexisting information.

An instance of high-context culture can be observed in the utilization of proverbs, known as *kotowaza* in Japanese. According to Yohani (2015), *kotowaza* refers to local wisdom expressed through a language that is now infrequently employed, posing challenges for learners to comprehend. *Kotowaza* has been passed down through generations and serves as a reflection of the moral significance and personal experiences of its inhabitants. It plays a crucial role in mirroring the culture and mindset of Japanese society. The language employed in *kotowaza* has a profound impact on an individual's mindset, as it serves as the primary medium for conveying information and stimulating interpretation in human beings.

According to a study done by Arimi (2005), the utilization of *kotowaza* in everyday routines is prevalent. The findings of his study on 87 Japanese participants revealed that a few 6 respondents (6.9%) infrequently or abstained from using proverbs, however these respondents remained cognizant of their significance. Conversely, 81 additional participants (93.1%) indicated that Japanese individuals frequently utilize *kotowaza*. These findings demonstrate that Japanese individuals possess the ability to comprehend the significance of *kotowaza* and implement it in their daily routines.

As an example of the use of *kotowaza* in daily activities, the following is a fragment of conversation from *Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten*:

ドラえもん: 寝てるひまがあるなら、勉強したら...

Doraemon: If you have time to sleep, it's better to study...

のび太: ひまじゃないよ.....。

Nobita: I don't have free time...

これからしずかちゃんと遊ぶだろ...、部屋のそうじに、物置きの整理...、猫の手も借りたいよ。

After this, I'm going to play with Shizuka... It's time to clean the room and organize the warehouse... The cat wants to borrow a hand.

そうだ!

Oh, I see!

僕(ぼく)はしずかちゃんと遊(あそ)ぶから、後(あと)よろしく...。

Since I'm going to play with Shizuka, please finish...

ドラえもん: ちょっと...。

Doraemon: Wait...

(*Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten*, 1991)

In this conversation, the character Nobita employs the saying *Neko no Te mo Karitai*, which translates to "a cat's hand," and expresses a desire to borrow it. The significance of this proverb is akin to being excessively occupied, prompting one to seek assistance from another individual. In *kotowaza*, Japanese individuals hold the belief that cats are inactive creatures whose sole purpose is to slumber.

It can be inferred from this conversation that comprehending a *kotowaza* requires knowledge of the definition of each term. To comprehend the significance of *kotowaza*, one must grasp the meaning of each individual word. Merely possessing knowledge of the grammatical meaning of *kotowaza* is insufficient; it is important to comprehend the significance of the proverb by considering the social and cultural context of the community, as well as understanding the origins of *kotowaza* speakers.

Kotowaza, being a manifestation of indigenous knowledge, is a subject of fascination for scholars in the field of linguistics. Discussions pertaining to *kotowaza* frequently emerge as a captivating subject of scholarly investigation. An illustration of an endeavor to gain a comprehensive understanding of *kotowaza* can be observed in the research undertaken by Yohani (2015, 2016, and 2017) and Mafrukha, et al. (2021). In his analysis, Yohani employs a

cognitive linguistic framework to examine the semantic significance of kotowaza and establish its associations with metaphor, synecdoche, and metonymy. In their analysis of kotowaza, Mafrukha et al. direct their attention towards conceptual metaphor theory. Mafrukha et al. (2021) conducted a study wherein they identified a range of animal species present in kotowaza, such as mice, horses, bees, storks, chickens, and dogs. The animals in question assumed symbolic significance, serving as representations of specific characters that were subsequently employed by the Japanese to communicate particular messages.

Nevertheless, there is a dearth of study that particularly examines the utilization of terms found in kotowaza to represent animal aspects and establishes a correlation with the interpretations of Japanese individuals' attitudes towards kotowaza. Furthermore, prior studies have examined the significance of kotowaza through a cognitive linguistic methodology, although they have not specifically concentrated on the conceptual metaphor of animals in kotowaza. The primary objective of this study is to delve deeper into the correlation between the utilization of vocabulary in kotowaza depicting animal aspects and the prevailing mindset inside Japanese culture. Consequently, the design of this study problem encompasses: To what extent does the animal element kotowaza in Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten possess grammatical and proverbial significance? 2) The mental metaphor of animals in kotowaza is a topic of inquiry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research incorporates a literature review that encompasses both related and linear research. The subsequent information pertains to this research.

The research conducted by Yohani (2016) provides a comprehensive analysis of kotowaza through the examination of the figurative lexical meaning of Japanese proverbs. This analysis employs synecdoche as a cognitive linguistic technique. This study employs qualitative methodology, specifically utilizing a cognitive linguistic approach. The findings of the study indicate that synecdoche can be employed as a means of examining the relationship between lexical meaning and proverbs that convey comprehensive or specific meanings, such as kotowaza pertaining to geographical attributes or numerical values.

Mafrukha et al. (2021) undertook a study with the objective of elucidating the correlation between lexical meaning and idiomatic meaning in kotowaza, while also examining their significance in the context of socio-cultural values within Japanese culture. The study employs a qualitative descriptive research methodology to elucidate the significance of kotowaza by utilizing a cognitive linguistic approach and conceptual metaphor theory. Data for this study was collected from Japanese books that were included in the Aozora Bunka. The findings of the study indicate that the incorporation of animal elements in kotowaza serves as a conceptual framework for understanding attitudes, actions, judgments, states, and emotions. Moreover, it reflects socio-cultural values that hold significance within Japanese culture, including the values of diligence, accountability, and attentiveness.

Arfianty and Pakpahan (2023) did a study on kotowaza, examining its significance through the incorporation of animal aspects and its association with comparable animal behavior or characteristics. The present study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing data derived from Japanese kotowaza books as the primary sources. Subsequently, the data underwent analysis through the identification of counterparts throughout Indonesian proverbs. A total of 22 Japanese kotowaza and Indonesian

proverbs were identified in the investigation, exhibiting comparable connotative meanings. Nevertheless, the utilization of animals in certain kotowaza exhibits variations that are shaped by cultural disparities or indigenous knowledge exclusive to each nation.

Semantics, as defined by Keraf (1982), encompasses the examination of meaning within a language, encompassing the analysis of word, phrase, and sentence meanings, as well as the historical progression of their evolution. According to Chaer (2013), semantics is a crucial component of language analysis, alongside phonology and grammar, which examine the meaning of different language components. The comprehension of semantics plays a crucial role in grasping metaphorical notions within language, particularly conceptual metaphors. These metaphors serve to depict comprehension of the world by drawing analogies with more tangible concepts, such as the expression "TIME IS MONEY" or "THOUGHTS ARE OCEANS".

The foundation of study in cognitive linguistics is rooted in semantic understanding, which, as posited by Sutedi (2003), arose as a reaction to prior methodologies, particularly generative grammar. The primary emphasis lies in comprehending the cognitive processes of individuals in relation to language comprehension and the utilization of conceptual metaphors for the purpose of representing thoughts. The examination of conceptual metaphors holds significance in comprehending the interplay of language, cognition, and culture, as elucidated by Lakoff and Johnson (2003). They underscore the notion that the majority of human concepts are comprehended metaphorically and are subject to cultural influences.

The broad culture serves as a reflection of every human experience, encompassing both physical and emotional aspects. The experience is metaphorically structured, even within the realm of basic spatial conceptions encountered in everyday life. These conceptions not only contribute to physiological processes, but also constitute integral components of the human

cognitive framework, exemplified by the hierarchical orientation linked to metaphorical notions, such as the phrase "HAPPINESS IS UP." Conceptual metaphors serve the purpose of organizing abstract comprehension in a more tangible manner, elucidating the way language not only articulates ideas, but also influences them.

The composition of metaphors comprises two primary elements, specifically the target domain and the source domain. The source domain refers to the fundamental concept upon which conceptualization is built, typically characterized by its concrete nature, whereas the target domain tends to be more abstract in nature. Nirmala (in Kinanti and Rachman, 2019) asserts that the correlation between the target domain and the source domain is not solely determined by their resemblance, but rather by the alignment of their conceptualizations. Metaphorical expressions in cognitive processes are manifested through conceptualizations that rely on physiological experiences, qualities, traits, functions, and strengths of the source that corresponds to the target.

METHOD

Descriptive qualitative research methodologies are employed in this study. In addition, this inquiry is a semantic investigation that specifically examines cognitive linguistic studies. The focus of the study is the utilization of animal metaphors in kotowaza. Researchers engage in a series of activities, commencing with data collection, followed by data analysis, and culminating in the presentation of the findings. The data is presented in the form of kotowaza phrases. Qualitative research endeavors to ascertain a comprehensive understanding. This study pertains to subjective aspects of an individual's opinions, ideas, viewpoints, and beliefs that are not quantifiable. Data gathering was conducted by a comprehensive review of existing literature. The info pertaining to Kotowaza is sourced from Doraemon no

Kotowaza Jiten. Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten is a comic-based proverb dictionary that presents pertinent information, including explanations of the proverbs and their contextual usage. The gathered kotowaza were chosen based on their inclusion of proverbs that incorporate animal characteristics. There are 15 kotowaza in Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten that contain animal elements. Therefore, the data utilized in this research consists of 15 kotowaza. In this study, the researcher conducted three distinct steps, which are outlined as follows:

Initial phase of preparation

The initial phase of data collection involved the acquisition of information from the literary work titled "Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten." During the data collection process, the author documented proverbs that had animal features, so ensuring that the acquired data consisted of specific instances within a particular context (jitsurei). The note-taking approach employed in Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten is utilized. Researchers assume a direct role as research instruments during the data collection procedure.

Stage of Implementation

The acquired kotowaza data will initially undergo analysis to determine its grammatical significance. Once the semantic significance of each word has been ascertained, the proverb will be examined through the utilization of the Kodowaza dictionary. Furthermore, the cognitive linguistic studies will establish a connection between the grammatical and proverbial meanings. The data analysis method employed is the matching method, specifically the technique of identifying tools that are external and not part of the language under investigation. Following this, the researcher will proceed to perform a comprehensive examination employing conceptual metaphors.

Presentation

The dissemination of analysis findings is conveyed through a narrative format. According to Sudaryanto in Kinanti and Rachman's (2019) study, story presentation may be categorized into two distinct types: informal and formal. The findings of this research are given in an informal manner, as they employ common language that is readily comprehensible for the purpose of describing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition and Proverbial Significance of the Animal Element Kotowaza

Researchers have compiled a collection of 15 kotowaza that incorporate animal elements, as documented in the Doraemon no Kotowaza Jiten proverb dictionary. Table 1 displays comprehensive data derived from study findings pertaining to the animal element kotowaza. The grammatical and semantic meanings of the proverbs in the kotowaza are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Grammatical meaning and proverbial meaning in animal element *kotowaza*

No.	Animal Element Kotowaza	Grammatical Meaning	Proverbial Meaning
1	立つ鳥後をにごさず <i>Tatsu Tori Ato o Nigosazu</i>	Don't muddy the traces of a standing bird	It is taught that when someone moves from one place to another, that person should clean and tidy up the place they leave behind
2	一石二鳥 <i>Isseki Ni Chou</i>	Kill two birds with one stone	By doing one effort you can get two good things at once
3	魚心あれば水心 <i>Uogokoro Areba Mizu Kokoro</i>	If you have a fish heart, you have a water heart	If we are good with other people, then other people will also feel the same feeling

No.	Animal Element Kotowaza	Grammatical Meaning	Proverbial Meaning
4	水心あれば魚心 <i>Mizu Kokoro Areba Uogokoro</i>	If you have a water heart, you have a fish heart	It is like to responding to other people's feelings and attitudes
5	釣り落とした魚は大きい <i>Tsuri Otoshita Sakana wa Ookii</i>	The fish I caught was big	If the thing you don't get looks better than the original thing
6	鰹節を猫に預ける <i>Katsuobushi o Neko ni Azukeru</i>	Leave the bonito flakes to the cat	It is said that problems that cause disasters are due to lack of preparation
7	腐っても鯛 <i>Kusatte mo Tai</i>	Sea bream even if it rots	Goods that are good and luxurious, even though they are worn out, will still be valuable
8	海老で隊を釣る <i>Ebi de Tai o Tsuru</i>	Catch a group with shrimp	It is like getting a valuable item to a worthless item
9	猫に小判 <i>Neko ni Koban</i>	Small size for cat	Even if it is a valuable item, according to people who do not understand the price of the item, they will not be interested or know its use
10	猫の手も借りたい <i>Neko no Te mo Karitai</i>	I want to borrow the cat's hand too	It's like being very busy so you want someone else to help you
11	天高く馬肥ゆ <i>Tentakaku Uma Koeyu</i>	Umahiyu high in the sky	The fresh autumn weather makes people want to eat a lot
12	馬耳東風 <i>Bajitoufuu</i>	horse ear dongfeng	Like someone who is difficult for others to advise
13	馬の耳に念仏 <i>Uma no Mimi ni Nenbutsu</i>	Nembutsu in the horse's ears	Even if warned several times, it would have no effect, and the person being warned pretends not to know
14	将を射んとせばまず馬を射よ <i>Shou o Intoseba mazu Uma o Iyo</i>	If you want to shoot a general, shoot the horse first	If someone wanted to target that person, it would be best to seize his valuables
15	猿も木から落ちる <i>Saru mo Ki kara Ochiru</i>	Even monkeys fall from trees	No matter how smart someone is, they will always experience failure

Animal Conceptual Metaphor in *Kotowaza*

A comprehensive analysis will be conducted on 15 animal element kotowaza, as indicated in Table 1. The kotowaza results encompass five distinct animal species, specifically: avian species, piscine species, prawns, felines, equines, and primates. The predominant animal species observed in

kotowaza is the fish, which is present in a total of five kotowaza. Among the 6 kotowaza, the term 'fish' is mentioned in a generic sense, specifically referring to 'red snapper'.

Table 2. Animal Conceptual Metaphor in *Kotowaza*

No.	Animal Element Kotowaza	Source	Target
1	腐っても鯛	Red Snapper	High quality things
2	海老で隊を釣る	Red Snapper	High quality things
3	海老で隊を釣る	Shrimp	Low quality things
4	将を射んとせばまず馬を射よ	Horse	Solid foundation
5	一石二鳥	Bird	Favorable results
6	釣り落とした魚は大きい	Fish	Big trouble
7	鯉節を猫に預ける	Cat	A person who does not know understand the art of giving
8	立つ鳥後をにごさず	Bird	Opportunity
9	猫に小判	Cat	Less valuable things
10	猫の手も借りたい	Cat	Unskilled people
11	天高く馬肥ゆ	Horse	Great challenges
12	馬耳東風	Horse	Stubborn
13	馬の耳に念仏	Horse	Stubborn
14	猿も木から落ちる	Monkey	Human beings
15	魚心あれば水心	Fish	Sincereness
16	水心あれば魚心	Fish	Sincereness

According to the data presented in Table 2, the creatures frequently observed in kotowaza are those that are commonly met in daily existence. It can be inferred that the selection of vocabulary in kotowaza is intricately linked to the surrounding environment of the speaker.

The essay focuses on a kotowaza that incorporates animal motifs. The animal element is employed to depict an individual's inherent qualities or traits, and can also be utilized to express specific circumstances or settings.

The investigation of the conceptual metaphor of animals in kotowaza yields the following results.

***Kotowaza* Conceptual Metaphor in Red Snapper**

In kotowaza 腐っても鯛 (Kusatte mo Tai) and 海老で隊を釣る (Ebi de Tai o Tsuru), the conceptual metaphor RED SNAPPER IS A THING OF HIGH QUALITY. With the following information:

***Kotowaza* 腐っても鯛 (Kusatte mo Tai)**

Source Domain: RED SNAPPER

Target realm: HIGH QUALITY THINGS

This metaphor highlights the notion that despite the deterioration or lack of freshness of red snapper, it continues to be regarded as possessing superior quality or value. Within this domain, the red snapper serves not simply as a representation of a specific fish species, but rather as a symbol of something that possesses significant worth or excellence, even amid flawed or adverse circumstances.

***Kotowaza* 海老で隊を釣る (Ebi de Tai o Tsuru)**

Source Domain: RED SNAPPER

Target realm: HIGH QUALITY THINGS

This metaphor demonstrates that employing shrimp as bait for red snapper fishing signifies the elevated value or superior quality of red snapper. While shrimp is commonly regarded as a substandard bait, the utilization of shrimp in red snapper fishing serves as a testament to the esteemed reputation of red snapper due to its exceptional quality.

Therefore, both kotowaza employ the red snapper as a metaphor to

communicate a same conceptual significance, specifically the perception of red snapper as of superior quality. The usage context varies between rotting fish and fishing. Nevertheless, the imparted message remains unwavering, namely about the value or superior quality of red snapper.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Shrimp

In kotowaza 海老で隊を釣る (Ebi de Tai o Tsuru), the conceptual metaphor SHRIMPS ARE THINGS OF LOW QUALITY. With the following information:

Source Domain: SHRIMP

Target realm: LOW QUALITY THINGS

In the present context, shrimp is regarded as a substandard or inferior bait employed for the purpose of fishing red snapper, often known as tai. Shrimp, as a form of bait, is typically regarded as a secondary or final option in fishing, in contrast to superior or superior bait options like worms or minnows. Hence, this metaphor effectively communicates the notion that shrimp, within this particular framework, represents something of inferior quality or seen as less desirable. While shrimp is generally regarded as a delectable and high-grade dish in reality, within the framework of this kotowaza, the term "shrimp" is employed to denote something that is deemed to possess diminished value or inferior quality.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Horse

In the kotowaza 将を射んとせばま馬を射よ (Shou o Intoseba mazu Uma o Iyo), 天高馬馬肥ゆ (Tentakaku Uma Koeyu), 馬耳東風 (Bajitoufuu), and 馬の耳に念仏 (Uma no Mimi ni Nenbutsu), conceptual metaphor HORSE IS A STRONG FOUNDATION, HORSE IS A GREAT CHALLENGE, and HORSE IS A Stubborn PEOPLE. With the following information:

Kotowaza 将を射んとせばまず馬を射よ (Shou o Intoseba mazu Uma o Iyo)

Source Domain: Horse

Target Domain: Strong foundation

This metaphor illustrates that the horse is a strong foundation. In this context, the horse is used as a symbol for something basic or solid. This analogy implies that before attempting to capture or achieve something big, it is important to ensure that the foundation or base is strong and stable, just as a horse is the foundation for controlling or capturing a larger goal.

***Kotowaza* 天高く馬肥ゆ (*Tentakaku Uma Koeyu*)**

Source Domain: Horse

Target Domain: Great challenges

In this metaphor, the horse is used as a symbol to express that when the sky is high, horses eat well. This refers to the condition of everything going well or a state of prosperity. In this context, the horse can be understood as a symbol of great challenge. When the sky is high and the horse is eating well, this indicates that we are facing big challenges in life, but we are ready to face them with strength and courage.

***Kotowaza* 馬耳東風 (*Bajitoufuu*) dan 馬の耳に念仏 (*Uma no Mimi ni Nenbutsu*)**

Source Domain: Horse

Target Domain: Stubborn people

In both kotowaza, the horse is used as a metaphor to convey that someone who is stubborn or unwilling to listen to advice will often not change their mind, much like 'saying a prayer into the horse's ear'. This analogy highlights the stubbornness and stubbornness of a person who is difficult to change and influence.

Thus, through the use of HORSE as a source domain, the kotowaza succeeded in conveying a variety of different conceptual meanings related to strong foundations, great challenges, and stubbornness.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Bird

In kotowaza 一石二鳥 (Isseki Ni Chou) and 立つ鳥後をにごさず (Tatsu Tori Ato o Nigosazu), the conceptual metaphors BIRD IS A PROFITABLE OUTCOME and BIRD IS AN OPPORTUNITY.

Kotowaza 一石二鳥 (Isseki Ni Chou)

Source Domain: BIRDS

Target domain: FAVORABLE RESULTS

This metaphor illustrates that like getting two birds with one stone, describes a situation where one action or effort can produce two profitable and beneficial things simultaneously. Birds in this case do not only represent living creatures, but are more a symbol of opportunity or profit that comes from an action or decision.

Kotowaza 立つ鳥後をにごさず (Tatsu Tori Ato o Nigosazu)

Source Domain: BIRDS

Target domain: OPPORTUNITY

This metaphor illustrates that opportunities come and go quickly, like birds that fly away without leaving a trace. In other words, we should take opportunities when they arise and not wait too long because the opportunity may simply disappear. The bird here is not just a living creature, but rather a symbol of fleeting and unpredictable opportunity.

Thus, both kotowaza use birds as metaphors to convey different conceptual meanings, namely favorable outcomes and opportunities. Even though they use the same element, namely birds, the target domain or concept expressed in the two kotowaza is different.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Fish

In kotowaza 魚心あれば水心 (Uogokoro Areba Mizu Kokoro) and 水心あれば魚心 (Mizu Kokoro Areba Uogokoro), the conceptual metaphor FISH IS SINCERENESS. With the following information:

Kotowaza 魚心あれば水心 (Uogokoro Areba Mizu Kokoro)

Source Domain: FISH

Target Domain: SINCERENESS

This metaphor illustrates that fish is a symbol of sincerity. When someone has a 'fish heart' (uogokoro), it means that someone has deep and sincere sincerity. Fish in this context represent honesty and sincerity in one's feelings.

Kotowaza 水心あれば魚心 (Mizu Kokoro Areba Uogokoro)

Source Domain: FISH

Target Domain: SINCERENESS

The metaphor in this kotowaza remains unchanged from the preceding one. The 'fish heart' (uogokoro) continues to serve as a representation of genuineness. Nevertheless, within this particular framework, the intended meaning is that the genuineness of an individual can evoke the genuineness of another individual, akin to how water might impact the emotions of a fish. This exemplifies the notion that an individual's genuine and benevolent demeanor has the potential to inspire others to exhibit greater sincerity.

By utilizing FISH as a source, the two kotowaza effectively communicated a message regarding the significance of genuineness in life and interpersonal connections. Despite the variations in terminology between the two kotowaza, their underlying message remains consistent, emphasizing the significance of possessing a genuine and virtuous disposition.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Cat

In kotowaza 鯉節を猫に預ける (Katsuobushi o Neko ni Azukeru), 猫に小判 (Neko ni Koban), and 猫の手も借りたい (Neko no Te mo Karitai), the conceptual metaphor CAT IS A PERSON WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF GIVING, CATS ARE LESS VALUABLE THINGS, AND CATS ARE UNSKILLED PEOPLE. With the following information:

Kotowaza 鯉節を猫に預ける (Katsuobushi o Neko ni Azukeru)

Source Domain: CAT

Target Domain: A PERSON WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF GIVING

In this kotowaza, cats are used as a representation of people who do not appreciate or understand the value of a gift. In this context, giving something of value, such as katsuobushi (dried fish shavings used as a seasoning), to a cat is considered wasteful because the cat may not appreciate it or even throw it away. This is a metaphor for a person who cannot appreciate or understand the value of what is given to him.

Kotowaza 猫に小判 (Neko ni Koban)

Source Domain: CAT

Target Domain: LESS VALUABLE THINGS

In this kotowaza, cats are considered a symbol of something less valuable or worthless. The parable of 'giving gold coins to a cat' depicts a wasteful and senseless act because the cat would not appreciate it. This reflects something given to a party who is unable to utilize it properly and does not have a value commensurate with what was given.

Kotowaza 猫の手も借りたい (Neko no Te mo Karitai)

Source Domain: CAT

Target Domain: UNSKILLED PEOPLE

This kotowaza states that the person 'even wanted to borrow a cat's hand', describing the situation of someone who is so desperate and so lacking in help that they want to accept help from anyone, including from those who are considered unlikely to provide help. It reflects a situation where someone feels desperate and is ready to accept whatever help is available, even if it is not ideal and is considered inferior.

By looking at various Japanese proverbs that use cats as a metaphor, it can be concluded that in Japanese culture, cats are often seen as a symbol of lack of appreciation, lack of value, and incompetence in something. This reflects certain views and assessments of the nature and behavior of cats in Japanese culture. Cats are used in these proverbs to convey messages about inadequacy and helplessness, both in terms of valuing gifts, the value of objects, and skills. Therefore, cats in this context are not always considered positive and highly valued creatures, but often represent something that is underappreciated.

Kotowaza Conceptual Metaphor in Monkey

In kotowaza 猿も木から落ちる (Saru mo Ki kara Ochiru), the conceptual metaphor MONKEYS ARE PEOPLE. With the following information:

Source Domain: Monkey

Target Domain: PEOPLE

By relating the behavior and events that occur in monkeys to humans, this proverb conveys the message that mistakes or failures are not exclusive to humans, but can happen to anyone, including animals like monkeys.

Through this proverb, Japanese culture teaches humility and self-knowledge that humans are not perfect and make mistakes just like other creatures in nature. It also reflects the understanding that humans and animals have similar traits and behaviors, even in different contexts.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of 15 kotowaza in Japanese culture has yielded intriguing patterns pertaining to many natural elements, including fish, horses, birds, cats, and monkeys. These materials serve as symbols to communicate intricate information regarding humans and moral principles in daily existence.

The utilization of animals in kotowaza demonstrates a profound comprehension of inherent principles in flawed circumstances. For instance, the animal metaphor of fish, particularly the red snapper, is employed as a representation of superior quality, despite the existence of kotowaza that assert that spoiled red snapper still holds significant worth. This underscores the significance of transcending superficial attributes and valuing underlying traits. Moreover, the utilization of the animal metaphor of the horse serves as a representation of robust underpinnings, formidable obstacles, and unwavering determination in many kotowaza, so exemplifying the profound admiration that Japanese culture holds for these characteristics. The bird animal metaphor serves as a symbolic representation of advantageous results

and prospects, conveying the notion that opportunities manifest in diverse ways and necessitate prompt seizing. The utilization of the cat animal metaphor serves to elucidate a deficiency in the recognition and valuation of values and talents, whereas the monkey animal metaphor portrays human errors and setbacks, imparting the significance of humility and the acquisition of knowledge from such mistakes. In its whole, kotowaza serves as a manifestation of Japan's profound cultural comprehension of moral and philosophical principles within the realm of daily existence.

The examination of these conceptual analogies elucidates the profound and intricate nature of Japanese cultural comprehension about human beings, the natural world, and the interplay between them. Kotowaza effectively communicates profound moral and philosophical concepts by employing natural symbols, so offering a distinctive perspective on life and the esteemed ideals within Japanese society.

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