



A Study on Chinese LIFE Metaphors from Corpus-Based Approach

Ruifeng LUO

ABSTRACT

Corpus linguistic is an area which focuses on a set of procedures or methods for studying language and is not directly about the study of any particular aspect of language. Corpus-based approach is an effective way to research many areas of linguistics, which offers empirical data to the researchers and makes the research more convincing. The paper makes use of corpus and extracts the real data from CCL Corpus (Center for Chinese Linguistics Corpus) to investigate LIFE metaphors of Cognitive linguistics.

Key Words: Corpus Linguistic, Corpus-based Approach, Metaphor, CCL

DOI Number: 10.14704/nq.2018.16.5.1240

NeuroQuantology 2018; 16(5):67-75

Introduction

Corpus refers to a large collection of well-sampled and processed electronic texts, on which language studies, theoretical or applied, can be conducted with the aid of computer tools. Corpus linguistics is using Corpus in linguistic research and has the potential to reorient the entire approach to the study of language and can enable the researchers to use theories of language which were at best difficult to explore prior to the development of corpora of suitable size and machines of sufficient power to exploit them.

The conceptual metaphor theory is the study of metaphor from the cognitive perspective. Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just language but in thought and action, our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature, and it is a cognitive phenomenon whereby the specific things are used to understand and refer to abstract things, and its working mechanism is the mapping process from the known conceptual domain (source domain) to the unknown domain (target

domain)(Lakoff and Johnson,1980).There are four types of integrated theory of primary metaphor that human beings acquire a large system of primary metaphor automatically and unconsciously simply by functioning in the most ordinary ways in the everyday world from our earliest years and naturally think using hundred primary metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson,1999).

From the birth to death, every man must have undergone a wonderful or painful life. LIFE is an important philosophical issue to which countless philosophers, historians, writers and even the common people always pay many concerns. The concept LIFE has many facets to it: a particular living being or living beings in general, the active force that makes living beings alive, the state or period of living, a way or manner of living, the activity or spirit that constitute the living existence as social life and relationships, and so on. Its applicability ranges from the micro level of individual plants, animals or humans to the macro level of organizations, nations or societies. For this reason, LIFE is understood metaphorically via a variety

Corresponding author: Ruifeng LUO

Address: ¹School of English Studies, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, China; Foreign Languages Department, Sichuan Vocational and Technical College, Suining, Sichuan, China

e-mail ✉ 93448900@qq.com

Relevant conflicts of interest/financial disclosures: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Received: 21 February 2018; **Accepted:** 16 March 2018



of source concepts: PRECIOUS POSSESSION, FIRE, LIGHT, DAY, JOURNEY, ATORRY, PLAY OR SHOW, among others (Kovecses, 1998). Our understanding of the concept of LIFE is rooted in the related concepts, such as action, commerce, politics, military, religion and numbers. And Life is complex and difficult to describe. The concept of life is based on the metaphor. Therefore, the essence of life metaphor is a cognitive process in which the abstract life is understood in terms of other concepts from concrete domains. All about LIFE should be understood through metaphor and these concepts. It's hard to talk about the concept of LIFE without them. Chinese people understand LIFE by means of metaphors. There are many metaphorical Chinese LIFE proverbs such as *rensheng ru xi* "Life is a play.", *rensheng ru meng* "Life is a dream", *rensheng bianma* "life encoding", *rensheng wutai* "Life is a stage", *rensheng daolu* "life paths", *rensheng jingjie* "life state", *rensheng baiwei* "tastes of life", *rensheng nanti* "life problems", *rensheng bian shang* "edge of life", *rensheng langhua* "life waves", *beijiurensheng* "Life is a cup of the wine", *shuxierensheng* "write the life" and *renshengyinjia* "life winner". Studying source domains of the modern Chinese LIFE metaphor can not only help us understand the philosophical proposition of life, but also further verify the basic point of philosophy of the mind. The source domains of LIFE reflect the generation of people's different attitudes toward the world and the life. There is no life without experience, and this view of life is constructed by metaphor, and has the characteristics of the times.

Methods

Cognitive semantic investigations into metaphor have largely based on either introspective data or examples taken from dictionaries (e.g. Lakoff, 1987; Gibbs, 1994). While an intuitive approach to metaphor may identify isolated metaphorical extensions of lexical items, intuition alone cannot answer the question of how these extensions map onto linguistic form. So this paper will use corpus-based approach to uncover various source domains of the modern Chinese LIFE.

Table1 shows that LIFE is the target domain and English LIFE has two Chinese translations, namely, *rensheng* and *shengming*. We use the Chinese lexical items *renshengshi* "Life is", *rensheng* "Life", *renshengxiang* "Life is like", *renshengru* "Life is as if", *shengmingshi* "Life is", *shengming* "Life", *shengmingxiang* "Life is like", *shengmingru* "Life is as if" to retrieve exemplars of life metaphors in CCL

corpus respectively to see how many metaphors there are in their respective total numbers and what are their source domains.

Table1. LIFE metaphors in CCL

Lexical items	English Translation	Numbers	Numbers of Metaphor	Percentage
<i>renshengshi</i>	Life is	342	42	12.28%
<i>rensheng</i>	Life	2000	48	2.4%
<i>renshengxiang</i>	Life is like	15	13	86.66%
<i>renshengru</i>	Life is as if	155	87	56.12%
<i>shengmingshi</i>	Life is	640	64	10%
<i>shengming</i>	Life	2000	28	1.4%
<i>Shengmi-ngxiang</i>	Life is like	39	32	82%
<i>shengmingru</i>	Life is as if	91	36	39.56%

In *renshengshi* "Life is", the total number of sentences containing *renshengshi* "Life is", is 342, and the number of metaphors is 42. The percentage of metaphors is 12.28%. The source domains of *renshengshi* "Life is" are *kuhai* "sea of bitterness", *dawutai* "big stage", *duanpao* "sprint", *changpao* "long-distancerun", *cmeng* "dream", *jiaoxiangyue* "symphony", *dajuan* "answer sheet", *shu* "book", *xitai xiadeshi* "things under the stage", *gongcheng* "project", *wuweizi* "seeds of different tastes", *laodong* "labour", *baizhi* "white sheet", *dayuanquan* "big circle", *haiyang* "sea", *zhanchang* "battle field", *xuexiao* "school", etc.

In *rensheng* "life", the total number of sentences containing *rensheng* "life" is 2000, and the number of metaphors is 48. The percentage of metaphors is 2.4%. The phrases of *rensheng* "life" are *gaozhiliaoderensheng* "high quality of life", *renshengzhunze* "rules of life", *fengfuderensheng* "rich life", *shu xiangrensheng* "scholarly life", *xijxingrensheng* "dramatic life", *renshengwutai* "life stage", *renshengxuema* "blood linkage of life", *renshengsuiyue* "years of life", *pingjingrensheng* "calm life", *renshenglantu* "life blueprint", *renshengzuobiao* "life coordinate", *xueleirensheng* "tragic life", *renshengbaiwei* "tastes of life", *renshenghuajuan* "picture scroll of life", *renshengdaolu* "road of life", *renshengzbiaozhun* "life standard", *pinweirensheng* "taste the life", *renshenggantian* "sweet life", *renshengruzhaolu* "Life is like the morning dew.", *renshengdianti* "elevator of life", etc.

In *renshengxiang* "Life is like", the total number of sentences containing *renshengxiang* "Life is like" is 15, and the number of metaphors is 13. The percentage of metaphors is 86.66%. The source domains of *renshengxiang* "Life is like" are *renshengxiangc* *huan* "Life is like a ship.", *renshengxiangyizhangdajuan* "Life is like a piece of answer sheet.", *renshengxiangyizhuofengbei* "Life is like a monument.", *rensh*



engxiangyigehuishubudai “Life is like a grey bag.”, *renshengxiangyishoushi* “Life is like a poem.”, *renshengxiangzhiyan* “Life is like a cigarette.”, *renshengxiangfengzheng* “Life is like a kite.”, *renshengxianglusi* “Life is like the dew.”, *renshengxiangshandian* “Life is like a lightning.”, *renshengxiangpaomo* “Life is like a bubble.”, *renshengxiangdaoying* “Life is like a shadow.”, *renshengxiangloundoudeshui* “Life is like the water in the hopper.”, *renshengxiangyichan* *gmanxingbing* “Life is like a chronic disease.”, *renshengxiangyouxi* “Life is like a game of cards.”, *renshengxianghundun* “Life is like chaos.”, *renshengxiangyichangxiyan* “Life is like a joke.”, etc.

In *renshengru* “Life is like”, the total number of sentences containing *renshengru* “Life is like” is 155, and the number of metaphors is 87. The percentage of metaphors is 56.12%. The metaphoric sentences are *renshengruhuanhua* “Life is like fantasy.”, *renshengruzhaolu* “Life is as fleeting as the morning dew.”, *renshengruxi* “Life is like a play.”, *renshengruwanhuatong* “Life is like a kaleidoscope.”, *renshengrumeng* “Life is like a dream.”, *renshengruiwianxiaoxi* “Life is like a stream.”, *renshengruiyitiaochanghe* “Life is like a long river.”, *renshengruwuweiping* “Life is like a bottle of different tastes.”, *renshengruchunhuayiyangshengkai* “Life is like a spring flower in full bloom.”, *renshengrutiancongcongguoke* “big stage”, etc.

In *shengmingshi* “Life is”, the total number of sentences containing *shengmingshi* “Life is” is 640, and the number of metaphors is 64. The percentage of metaphors is 10%. The source domains of *shengmingshi* “Life is” are *emao* “feather”, *yi yuan* “hospital”, *huameidepao* “beautiful robe”, *ranshao* “burning”, *yaoliuchulaide* “flow out”, *jiuyishangjiazi* “old clothes rack”, *duomequzhedongxi* “tortuous thing”, *yipianhuangliang* “desolate”, *yibuwei qu* “grievance”, *suankudeyipiangongke* “a bitter lesson”, *me ngdecailliao zuochengde* “the material of the dream”, *pinpaiheshengyu* “brand and reputation”, *wujiazhibao* “priceless treasure”, *linghundezaiti* “carrier of the soul”, *jian’ao* “suffering”, *jiangshou* “enjoy”, *jiiejing* “crystal”, *youshenchuangzaode zongjiaoshen gtaio* “a holy religion created by God”, etc.

In *shengming* “Life”, the total number of sentences containing *shengming* “Life” is 2000, and the number of metaphors is 28. The percentage of metaphors is 1.4%. The source domains of *shengming* “Life” are *shengmingli* “vitality”, *shengmingxian* “life line”, *shengmingzhouqi* “life cycle”, *shengmingyouxi* “life cycle”, *zhijieshengming* “dismember the life”, *shengmingzouxianxingchang* “Life goes into execution ground”, *shengmingjiagenggao* “the higher price of a life”, *yishushengming* “the art of life”, *shengmingzhihuo* “the fire of life”, *shengmingbengfa* “big stage”, *meilishengming* “big stage”, *shengmingkaige* “the triumph of life.”, *shengmingdangerxi* “take the life as a trifling matter”, *shengmingdehuohua* “the spark of life”, *shengmingzhigen* “the root of life”, *shengmingzhiyuan* “the source of life”, *shengmingdechangdu* “the length of life”, *shengmingdekuandu* “the width of life”, *shengmingdehoudu* “the thickness of life”, *shengmingzhongliang* “the weight of life”, *shengmingshuguang* “dawn of life”, *shengmingluetu* “journey of life”, *shengminggengjiaxuanli* “Life is more beautiful”, *shengminggenyuan* “the source of life”, *shengmingyongbuximie* “Life never dies”, *shengmingzhuangtaichiluoluo* “Life emerged naked”, *shengmingdeguangyao* “glorious life”, *shengmingbianzhi* “devaluation of life”, etc.

In *shengmingxiang* “Life is like”, the total number of sentences containing *shengmingxiang* “Life is like” is 39, and the number of metaphors is 31. The percentage of metaphors is 82%. The source domains of *shengmingxiang* “Life is like” are *shengmingxiangheshuiyiyang* “Life is like a river”, *shengmingxiangpianshuyeyiyangpiaopi* “Life is like a leaf floating”, *shengmingxiangxianhuayiyangzhankai* “Life is like a flower blooming.”, *shengmingxiangluo riyuhuibanturanxiaoxiexiaqu* “Life is like a sunset suddenly breaking down”, *shengmingxianghuanghuayiyangkazhe* “Life is like a fruitless flower blooming.”, *shengmingxiangdachuanzaihaishangqianhang* “Life is like a ship advancing in the sea.”, *shengmingxiangfenchenyiyangfeiyang* “Life is like dust flying”, *shengmingxiangyigenhuochai* “Life is like a match”, *shengmingxianghaipingxiandeluori* “Life is like the sunset above the sea level”, *shengmingxiangxijunyiyang* “Life is like a group of bacteria”, etc.

Table 2. Domains of LIFE

Names of domains	English translation	Total Number	Number of metaphors	Percentage
Shiwuganguanyu	Food and sensory domains	350	12	3.42%
Kejiaowenyuyu	Science, Education, Culture, entertainment domains	350	58	16.57%
Ziranwuzhiyu	Nature and material domains	350	90	25.71%
Guochengzhuangtaiyu	Process and state domains	350	162	46.28%
Jingjijunshiyu	Economy and military domains	350	13	3.71%
qingganxinyangyu	Emotional and belief domains	350	9	2.57%



In *shengmingru* "Life is as if", the total number of sentences containing *shengmingru* "Life is as if" is 91, and the number of metaphors is 36. The percentage of metaphors is 39.56%. The source domains of *shengmingru* "Life is as if" include *shengminggruzhanyi* "Life is like a battle", *shengminggruyizhucangsongyongbukuwei* "Life is like a pine never withered", *shengmingruaiabai* "Life is like vast snow", *shengminggrutongcanlandeliuxingyunluole* "Life is like a bright meteor falling", *shengminggrutongyuyan,qijiazhibuzaiyuchangduan,erzaiyuneirong* "Life is like a fable, its value is not the length, but the content", *shengminggruyehuo,qiumiechunsheng* "Life is like a wildfire dying in autumn and growing in spring.", etc.

From the Table1, we can see that the numbers of metaphor of *renshengxiang* "Life is like" and *renshengxiang* "Life is like" are highest accounting for 86.66% and 82% respectively. The numbers of metaphors of *renshengru* "Life is as if" and *shengmingru* "Life is as if" are the second highest accounting for 56.12% and 39.56% respectively. The numbers of metaphors of *renshengshi* "Life is" and *shengmingshi* "Life is" account for 12.28% and 10% respectively. The number of metaphors of *rensheng* "Life" and *shengming* "Life" is the lowest accounting for 12.28% and 10% respectively.

Results

LIFE metaphors fall into different domains, including Food and sensory domain, Science, education culture and entertainment domains, Nature and material domains, Process and state domains, Economy and military domains and Emotional and belief domains.

LIFE metaphors fall into different domains, including Food and sensory domain, Science, education culture and entertainment domains. Nature and material domains, Process and state domains. Economy and military domains and Emotional and belief domains. From the above listed 350 LIFE metaphors, metaphors are manually grouped into these six domains.

Food and sensory domains

The food is the most basic aspect of human LIFE, so its related words will become one of the means for people to express their understanding of the surrounding world. The metaphor of eating is universal in all languages. However, the eating in Chinese language and culture is most pr

ominent. The Chinese language is full of dietary vocabulary, which is not only a way of LIFE, but a means of describing the world. The study of the conceptual metaphor of "eating", "drinking" and "taste" in Chinese can reveal the importance of food in Chinese culture. Examples of LIFE metaphors related to food and sensory domain include *renshengrutongwuweizi* "Life is like seeds of five tastes", *baiwei* "different tastes", *pinweirensheng* "taste the life", *renshenggantian* "Life is sweet", *fengshengderensheng* "rich life", *renshengruwuweiping* "Life is like bottle of different tastes.", *renshengrucha*, *youdandandekucou* "Life is like a tea with a hint of suffering", *renshengrujiu* "Life is like wine", *shengmingxian* *gyiheqiaokelitang* "Life is like a box of chocolates", etc.

Renshengruwuweiping "Life is like bottle of different tastes."

(1). Life is like bottle of different tastes. It is sweet, sour, bitter, spicy and salty. In recent years, I have tasted them all.

"Taste" originally refers to the taste of food in the mouth and now is often used in Chinese LIFE metaphor to understand the complex aspects of lives. As a morpheme, "taste" has ability to construct words, such as *qingwei* "sentiment", *quwei* "interesting", *pinwei* "grade", *huiwei* "aftertaste", *fawei* "dull", *yunwei* "lingering charm", *wanwei* "pondering", *tiwei* "appreciating". The related idioms are *chouweixiangtou* "like drawn to like", *nairenxunwei* "meaningful and thought-provoking", *yuweiwuqiong* "leave a lasting and pleasant impression or aftertaste", *xingweisuoran* "have lost all interest in sth.", which are the characteristics of Chinese culture. The tongue can taste the sour, sweet, bitter, spicy and salty flavors. The sour, sweet, bitter spicy tastes have different corresponding conceptual metaphors. But only the "salty" taste has no conceptual metaphor and perhaps the salty is more neutral and has no special feeling of pleasure and excitement.

"Sour" is one of the five tastes. In Chinese, it can be used to express a person's feelings of pain and distress, such as *suanchuand xinsuan* "bitter and feeling sad", *hansuanand qionsuan* "poor and pedantic". It always refers to man's envy. For example, *dafancutanzi* "breaking vinegar jar" which means that the man or woman becomes jealous when he or she sees his or her lover has close relationship with others.



"Sweet" refers to enjoying the sweet taste or feeling good, such as gantian "sweet", ganlin, ganzhi "delicious", ganzhiruyi "bitter as if it were malt sugar", tianmei "sweet", tianzizi "sweet", tianyanmiyu "sweet words", zhangdehentan "sweet appearance".

"Bitter" always refers to suffering. And there are things with bitterness, such as bitter gourd, but in general, the bitterness is associated with unpleasant feelings. Originally bitter generally refers to bitter taste and conceptual metaphor of "bitter" is that suffering is bitter, such as: kunku "hardship", tongku "pain", kunan "suffering", xinku "hard", jianku "arduous", jianku "forced smile", kuchu "suffering", kuchai "hard and unprofitable job", kushe "bitter and astringent", chikutou "burn your fingers", kuzhong "troubles", choumeikulian "wear a sad face", kujinglanlai "All sufferings have their reward.", hanxinruku "hardships", yiduzikushu, "have a bitter stomach". "Bitter" also has the meaning of taking the trouble again and again, such as: kukoupoxin "persuading sincerely", kukuxiangqi "entreat", qifengkuy, "miserable conditions", etc.

"Spicy" is the strong stimulation to the human body when people eat onions, ginger, garlic and pepper. When the people feel the burning sensation of the body parts and will feel "hot". When a "hot" person talks and works with other people, he or she will give them the feeling of abstractness and the people will associate tasting "spicy" feeling by connecting the existing experience of life. So the metaphor is produced, such as: pola "rude and unreasonable", lameizi "Spicy Girl" which mean bold in character. "Spicy" also has "vicious" meaning, such as lashou.

The five tastes are source domains which express different flavors to illustrate that LIFE is complex and one must taste sour, sweet, bitter, spicy and salty in one's whole life even though he or she is very successful. These different tastes constitute a person's whole life.

Renshengrujiu "Life is like liquor."

The Chinese nation is a nation with a long history of the liquor culture. The latter can be summed up as the Chinese material and spiritual wealth. First, the history of technological development of the production of Chinese liquor is the process of material creation and the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chinese people. Secondly, the Chinese

liquor has penetrated into every corner of the society for thousands of years and has been exerting the extremely important influence on relations, ideology and so on. At the same time, the culture between men and the liquor also becomes richer. It can be said that the Chinese liquor culture is a typical social culture and the liquor has become indispensable spirit for the people to express feelings.

In the conceptual metaphor of "Life is the liquor", the source domain is the "liquor" and the target domain is LIFE. Through the analysis, we can see that the source domain of "liquor" maps into the structure of the target domain LIFE. Two aspects should be taken into consideration, namely, types of the liquor and brewing process of the liquor.

(2) If your heart is pure, no matter what kind of experience you have experienced, you like Fen Wine are young though you are old. If you temper is staunch, and you hate evil and worry about what your friends are anxious, you will be like the liquor of Luzhou Tequ, Luzhou Wuliangye. If you are calm and kind, justice and stand firm, you are Maotai and Langjiu. If you're gentle in feeling and considerate to others, you are liquor of Sanhua with rice aromatic flavor.

Liquors of different types map into different groups of different characters of men. Liquors of Fen and Laobaigan with mild flavor correspond to the people with lively characters. Liquors of Luzhou and Wuliangye with strong flavor correspond to people with frank and unyielding temperaments. Liquors of Maotai and Langjiu correspond to the upright character. Liquor of Sanhua with rice aromatic flavor corresponds to the delicate and tender feelings. In this way, the original abstract characters of different personalities can be expressed by the specific image. At the same time by this group of metaphor, we can also see that the different tastes of the liquors are also mapped to different lives. Luzhou, Maotai and Sanhua respectively correspond to different lives. Through the joint mapping structure between liquors and lives, the abstract life becomes easy to understand.

In the metaphor of "Life is a cup of liquor", "liquor" is taken as the source domain to conceptualize LIFE, mapping the sweetness and bitterness of liquors to the dual characteristics of LIFE that the sweetness enchant us and the bitterness make us suffering pains. Our lives not only have



happiness, success but also frustration, failure and suffering, so choosing what kind of attitude is very important. If “Life is a cup of liquor”, you think it is sweet and delicious, and it'll give you pleasure. And if you think it is bitter, you will feel sad. No matter what kind of situation you are in today, you should be responsible for your actions. Don't drink and miss the event, always remain sober minded, and remind yourself that life will become better (Mu 2006).

Science, education, culture and entertainment domains

Science, education, culture and entertainment contain various elements which might be served as source domains to map onto the target domain LIFE, such as dawutai “big stage”, duanpao “sprint”, changpao “long-distance run”, jiaoxiangyue “symphony”, dajuan “answer sheet”, shu “book” xitaixiadeshi “things under the stage”, xuexiao “school”, kecheng “curriculum”, zixiangmaodundemingci “contradictory terms”, qimuju “the seven act play”, etc.

Renshengruxi “Life is a play.”

LIFE and “play” belong to two different conceptual domains. LIFE is an abstract concept, and “play” is a concrete one. One of the characteristics of metaphor is to abstract the concept. Since it is possible to establish a connection between the two, there are similarities between them. This metaphor plays a central role in the Chinese conceptualization of events and phenomena in various domains of LIFE, constituting a core component of the Chinese cultural modal of LIFE. The conceptual metaphor “Life is a play” is manifested systematically in the Chinese language and focuses on a salient phenomenon in Chinese where linguistic expressions of performing arts are used metaphorically to denote various other aspects of LIFE. Such expressions constitute systematic linguistic instantiations of the underlying metaphorical mappings across conceptual domains. The source domain is the “play” and the target domain is the events of LIFE in general.

(3) Life is a play and every one of us plays a different role in his/her life.

(4) Life is a play and is full of pleasure.

(5) Life is a play and he has reached the climax in his life.

(6) Life is a play and she played only a major role in my life.

(7) His whole life turned out to be a tragedy.

From the above derivative metaphor, we can see that there are many similarities between life and play. The content of the play is more or less a reflection of people's daily life, because it is based on the experience of people in their daily life. A person leads his life like an actor in acting. Starting life is the beginning of play and acting process is the process of life and growth process. The climax is a lifelong climax period of the play. The closing of the play is the end of life. The play has a happy ending or tragic ending, so there is a comedy and tragedy in life.

Renshengrutongyibendashu “Life is like a big book.”

(8) Life is like a book which has a beginning and an end and is read one page by one page. The knowledge gained from the book of life is much better than all the books you have read.

(9) Life is like a book which is sometimes complicated, confusing, and sometimes like a lake of stagnant water. You are both the author and the reader. You are both reading yourself and reading others.

(10) Life is like a book in which everyone is the protagonist. Some people's fates are better while some are bad. Opportunities sometimes depend on their own efforts. Life is like a book. Leafing it through and reading word by word, sentence by sentence carefully will yield different effects. Only the one who read it carefully will have feeling, because he or she knows that the book can only be read once in his life.

(11) Life is like a book. When you finally say goodbye to the world, which is the end of the book. At that time, the material is of no great importance and fame and interest will disappear throughout life that the whole life gives us a memory fragment.

(12) Life is like a book in which different people constitute different book contents. Every book, every chapter, every page, every paragraph, every line is a perfect symbol of life. We read these books at the same time to understand the lives of others.

(13) Life is like a book which is like a time machine. Every night, when you are alone with, a lamp, a cup of tea, opened the book, you feel like stepping back in time suddenly.



(14)Life is like a book which is commented by the later generations. If you want to be a good book, you can not be hasty. You must understand that without flash of sentiment, there will be no ups and downs of the plot. Without hard work, there is no spectacular success.

As long as life continues, this book will be a page by you to write down, read by the world. Time is one-way highway and there is no regret medicine. Experienced things can not be repeated. Since the book of your life has been opened and it has turned over a lot of pages, and then you need not turn over the contents of the past and should pay attention to the opening of the new page. The metaphor "Life is a book" employs book to explain life and activates a series of correspondence between source domain and target domain, namely metaphor mapping, such as the author of the book referring to the people in the life, the contents of the book referring to the life experiences, reading book referring to reading life, turning over the page referring to having experienced things and a new page referring to new life. So by identifying similarities between book and life, we can better understand the metaphor "Life is a book".

Ziranwuzhiyu "Nature and material domains"

Human beings is one member of the natural and material world. Materials and statements of the nature are employed to serve as the source domain of the LIFE. The LIFE related metaphors in nature and material domain are renshengruchunhuayiyangshengkai "Life is like a flower in full bloom.", renshengruiyikeshu "Life is like a tree.", renshengruiyikeshu "Life is as the morning dew.", renshengxiangchuan "Life is like a ship.", renshengxianglushui "Life is like dew.", renshengxiangshandian "Life is like a lightning.", renshengruiwanxiaoxi "Life is like a stream.", renshengruiyitiaochange "Life is like a river.", renshengxiangpaomo "Life is like a bubble.", renshengxiangdaoying "Life is like a shadow.", renshengruiyiyangbai "Life is as white as snow.", renshengxiangloundouzhongdeshui "Life is like the water in the hopper.", renshengxiangyichangbanxingbing "Life is like a chronic disease.", renshengxianggongcheng "Life is like a project.", renshengxiangbaizhi "Life is like a white sheet", renshengxiangdayuanquan "Life is like a big circle.", renshengxianghaiyang "Life is like a

sea.", renshengxiangkuhai "Life is like a sea of bitterness.", renshengxiangliantiao "Life is like a chain.", renshengxiangwuyadecuo'eshanmai "Life is like boundless, towering mountains.", etc.

(15)Life is like a wildfire growing in spring and becoming extinct in autumn.

As one of the most important inventions in the world, fire plays a vital role in every walk of life. On one hand, it provides people with the brightness they need in daily life. On the other hand, it also works as a kind of spiritual support to encourage people to keep their lives alive in that fire means burning and passionate. If there is no passion in the process of life accomplishment, it is hard to keep a successful life. In addition, similar to fire, people's life can also be lighted, shined, and put out.

The conceptual metaphor can be simply stated as "life is fire". For the reason the passion can make some differences to people's life, which is similar to the influences of fire on human beings. More specifically, if a person has no passion, his spirit is filled with blackness, without driving force and true significance of life, just like there is no fire in his daily life. Besides, the temperature of fire and the moment of igniting the fire can stir up people's desire to advance. In Chinese word like ranqi, dianran, imply the metaphorical meaning that life realization needs passion, just as the process of dream pursuing is like fire burning. The source domain is fire, the target domain is life. The mapping relation from the source domain to the target domain is that the success of life is the burning of fire. And the word pomie is used to imply the enthusiasm and hope of life disappear, just like fire is extinguished and the environment around is in the dark. However, people usually regard brightness as the hope of life realization. Therefore, the metaphors here can be understood easily in this way. So the source domain is fire, the target domain is life. And the mapping relation from the source domain to the target domain is that the failure of life is the burning out of fire. Given all of this, fire can be used as source domain for people's conceptualization of LIFE.

Process and state domains

Life is not a static but is dynamic. The LIFE related metaphors in process and state domains are renshengruhuanhua "Life is like fantasy", ren



shengrumeng "Life is like a dream", renshengru zhengcheng "Life is like a journey", renshengru congcongguoke "Life is like a passer-by between heaven and earth.", renshengrulv "Life is a journey.", renshengrudengshan "Life is like climbing.", renshengrunishuixingzhou "Life is like riding a boat against the water", renshengrubaijug uoxi "Life is like a fleeting.", renshengruhang, zhizhuozheqianjin "Life is like a boat, the persistent one advances.", renshengruchixudeguiji, jianggezongbutongdejingliguanchuan "Life is like a continuous track and will connect different experiences together.", renshengshiduomequzh ededongxi "Life is tortuous.", renshengshiyipia nhuangliang "Life is desolate.", renshengshiyib uweiq "Life is a grievance.", renshengshimeng decailiaozuochengd "Life is made by the material of the dream.", renshengshilinghundezaiti "Life is the carrier of the soul.", renshengshijianao "Life is suffering.", renshengshixiangshou "Life is enjoy.", etc.

For example:

(16) Life is but a dream and he just tries to make one or two dreams become reality.

(17) Life is like a dream and is unbelievable. Though it is dispirited and negative, is not its essence a kind of reactionary reality?

The dream is a physiological phenomenon and everybody dreams. It is the spontaneous psychological activity when a person sleeps. Although the duration of the dream is very short, the content of dreams is various. In the dream, one may dream of achieving great success and earning large sum of money, or being promoted in their careers while the other will dream of suffering and meeting misfortunes. When one dreams of happy things, after waking up, he or she will be very pleasant. When one dreams of unpleasant things, he or she is anxious to forget them soon.

So the dream is short, unpredictable and has various contents which include happy things and sad things. The same is true of life and a person's life is very short, in the growth process we will encounter many things, there are happy things, there are unpleasant things. For those unhappy things, people want to be able to forget it all. So the source domain "dream" map its characteristics of shortness, unpredictability and contents to the target domain of LIFE.

Economy and military domains

Economy and military play important roles in people's lives. All people, consciously or unconsciously, participate in economic and military activities. The characteristics of economy and military mapped onto LIFE. The LIFE related metaphors in economy and military domain are renshengrughanchang "Life is the battlefield.", renshengrughandou "Life is a fighting.", renshengrudamaichang "Life is a market.", renshengruboyi, quanfujingshenquduifu "Life is like a game and you should have full spirit to deal with.", shengmingjiagenggao "Life has high price", shengmingbianzhi "devaluation of life.", renshengrupipaiheshengyu "Life is brand and reputation.", renshengshiwujiazhibao "Life is priceless treasure.", renshengshiziben "Life is the capital.", shengmingshiyigepaodan "Life is a shell.", shengmingzouxianxingchang "Life goes into execution ground.", zulaidefangzi "Life is rented house.", zhengguiderensheng "precious life", etc.

Gambling can be seen everywhere in modern society. It can be taken an economic phenomenon as well as the fighting activity with military spirit. More stakes you invest, the more you may win or lose. You don't even know if you'll lose or win. The same is true of life. If you want to achieve something, you must have the spirit of adventure. Gambling will cost you high. In renshengshiyichangdubo "Life is a gambling", there are some examples,

(18) The situation is against him

(19) I've got an ace up my sleeve.

(20) If you play your cards right, you can do it.

(21) He won a big sum.

(22) That's my ace in the hole.

(23) Those are high stakes.

The concept of "gambling" generates a large number of phrases and idioms which are closely related to the fate of people. There are "draw", "luck", "fortune telling", "good luck" and "bad luck" in Chinese "A cat has nine lives" and "escape from death" and "a close call", etc. This is life, no matter how you are, no matter how full, it is still just a gamble. It does not guarantee that you can recover the investment of life under the capital, but it is an exciting adventure that maybe you can pay for you to win the future and of course you may be likely to lose everything. In the life of this gamble, you have no right to give up. In fact, as long as in life, you will have to face all kinds of changes, although unknown but full of adventure and



excitement. Everyone must explore the process trying to get the true meaning of life.

Emotional and belief domains

The LIFE related metaphors in emotional and belief domains are renshengde zheli “philosophy of life”, kantourensheng “see through life”, baoguidexintiao “precious creed”, zuijibendedaode guifanhexingweizhunze “the most basic moral norm”, renshengbiaozhun “life standard”, renshengzhunze “rules of life”, etc.

“Chan” belongs to the category of Buddhism while “Cross” belongs to the category of Christian. “Practice” is related to a variety of religious ceremonies and the concepts of religious belief such as cause and effect are the source domain mapping onto the life to guide people to do good things. For example:

(24) Life is like “Chan”, and it can be understood by introspection not by words.

(25) In fact, everyone carries the cross of life crawling forward and the difference may be just the severity.

(26) Practice is not a patent of religion, not learning, but their practice of and the practice of life.

Conclusions

From the CCL Corpus, we can see that the understanding of the concept LIFE depends on other related concepts such as food, book, wine, dream, religion, economy, etc. All the understanding of life must be connected with these concepts by means of metaphor. It is difficult to talk about the concept of LIFE without these elements in source domains. These domains can help us understand the philosophical proposition of LIFE. The reason why life is so rich in metaphorical expression is that metaphorical mapping is a process of feature focus and feature suppression. Every focus of the metaphor of life can only highlight the characteristics of a certain aspect, and all aspects of LIFE need to be understood.

Acknowledgments

This research was financially supported by the Fund of Education Department of Sichuan Province, China (Grant NO.15SB0255), by the Fund of 2018 year’s Academic Project of Sichuan Vocational and Technical College and by the Fund of 2018 year’s Teaching and Reforming project of Sichuan Vocational and Technical College.

References

- Blumenberg H. Money or life: metaphors of Georg Simmel’s philosophy. *Theory, Culture & Society* 2012;29(7-8):249-62.
- Dolliver M. Pick a life metaphor. *Brandweek* 2009; 50(38): 17.
- Gibbs RW. *The poetics of mind: Figurative thought, language, and understanding.* Cambridge University Press; 1994: 200.
- Hoffman E, Catalina A-O. Life-Metaphors among Colombian Leadership Students: Core Values and Educational Implications. *College Student Journal* 2015; 49 (3): 438-46.
- Kövecses Z, Radden G. Metonymy: Developing a cognitive linguistic view. *Cognitive Linguistics* 1998; 9:37-77.
- Lakoff G, Johnson M. *Metaphors we live by.* University of Chicago press, 1980: 4.
- Lakoff G, Turner M. *More than cool reason: A field guide to poetic metaphor.* University of Chicago Press, 1989:102.
- Lakoff G, Johnson M. *Philosophy in the Flesh.* New York: Basic books, 1999:48.
- Lengelle R, Meijers F, Hughes D. Creative writing for life design: Reflexivity, metaphor and change processes through narrative. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 2016;97:60-67.
- Mindell DP. The tree of life: metaphor, model, and heuristic device. *Systematic Biology* 2013 ;62(3):479-89.
- Silverman WA. The “Save-a-Life” Metaphor. *The Hastings Center Report* 1982;12(1):45.
- Yu N, Jia D. Metaphor in culture: life is a show in Chinese. *Cognitive Linguistics* 2016; 27(2):147-80.

