

## Contrastive analysis of the idiomaticity of idiomatic expressions in French and Chinese

I propose a communication aiming at the comparative analysis of the idiomaticity (民族性 *mínzúxìng*) of French idiomatic expressions (EI) with their Chinese counterparts : 成语 *chéngyǔ*, both characterized by a high degree of fixity. It is “a construction specific to a language, which has no exact lexical or syntactic equivalent in another language, and which cannot be translated literally” (Neveu, 2004).

Our theoretical methodological analysis focuses on three aspects of idiomaticity: linguistic, cultural and stylistic. I have already obtained the following results:

**Linguistically**, IEs and *chéngyǔ* are characterized by their polylexicity, semantic non-compositionality, lexical and syntactic fixity. However, the idiomaticity (intra- and inter-linguistic) of IEs and *chéngyǔ* presents some differences. Indeed, the former do not present such a specific structure as in Chinese where the quaternary rhythm (or quadrisyllabism) dominates.

From the **cultural** point of view, IEs and *shengyǔ* are loaded with implicits carrying the idiosyncrasy of a culture, a state of society, a collective way of seeing things, a certain historicity and conventionality. Nevertheless, most French IEs come from a popular and oral tradition. They have inherited all the connotations that this implies: familiarity and banality, among others (González Rey, 1997: 291). The *chéngyǔ* on the contrary are mainly in the bookish realm (Shi 1979, Doan 1982, Sun 1989, Wang 2006, ), and have acquired their letters of nobility through the pen of a famous writer.

In both languages, they have a rich **stylistic value** through their use of rhetorical figures (metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, etc.), which generates a certain lexical and semantic opacity. The higher their metaphorical degree, the more difficult they are to understand. I thus study from the explicit to the implicit comparison, or “abbreviated comparison” (metaphor) according to the term of González Rey (2002).

**Keywords:** idiomaticity, idiomatic expressions, *chéngyǔ*, *french-chinese*

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