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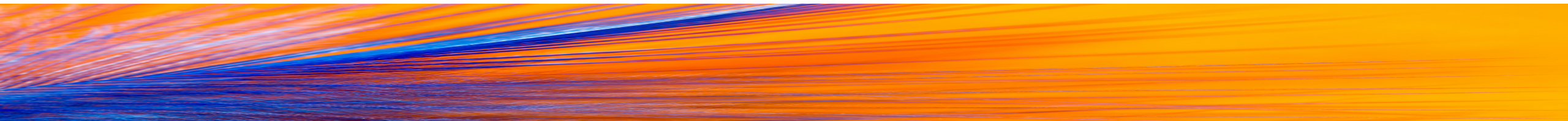
Introduction

- Being one of the most concerns of language translators.
- Formed in a particular historical period and reflects unique cultural elements such as religions, customs and habits.

→ certain hindrances to the full understanding for English learners & translation majors.

- Traditional linguistics concentrate on exploring the structural and formal aspects of idioms.
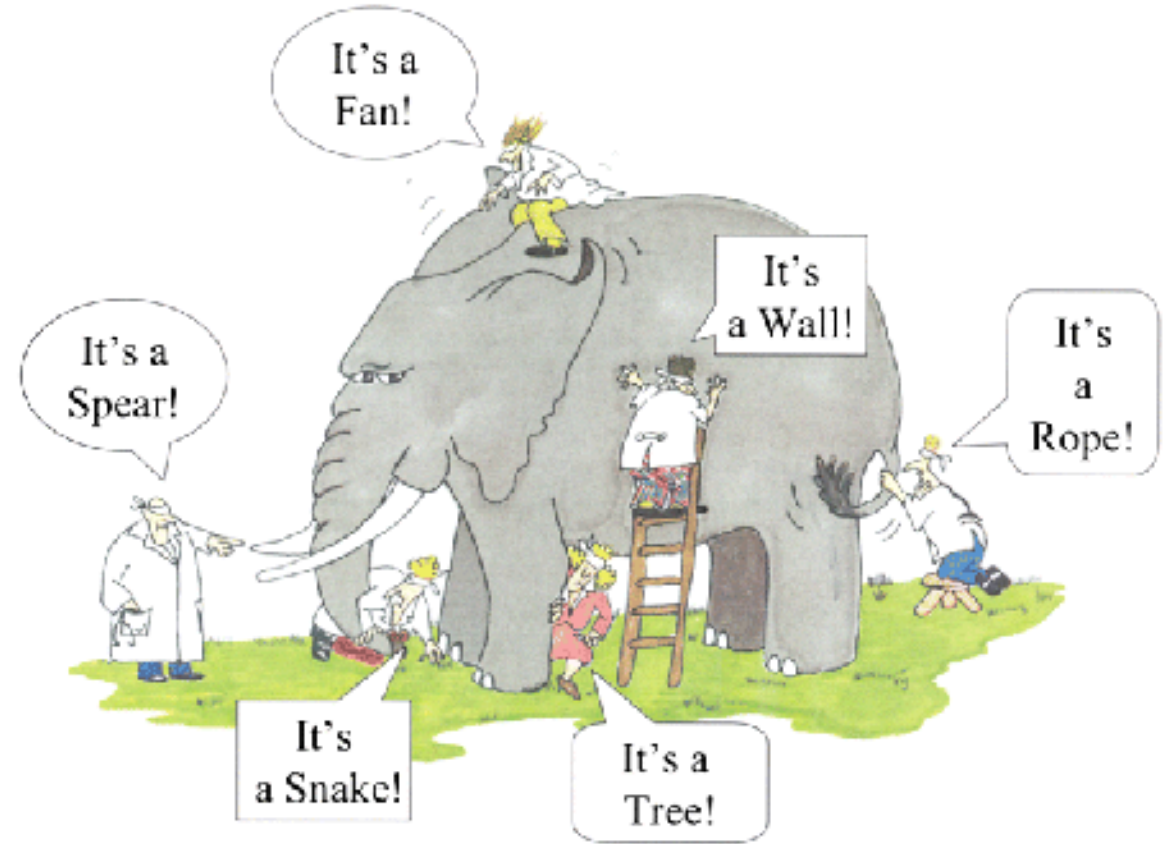- Cognitive linguistics apply a systematic method to review the nature of semantics in idioms.

→The nature of idioms is not arbitrary, and idioms are systematized by underlying principles of human language, thought and perception.

→Conceptual metaphors

Key concepts

- **Metaphority in idioms**

- **Conceptual metaphors**

- **Idiom translation**

Key concepts

- **Metaphority in idioms**

✓ One of the essential semantic features of idioms

✓ Traditional linguistics: idioms as dead, frozen metaphors that were once metaphorical, then have lost their metaphorical over time and now are equivalent to simple conventional expressions

✓ Cognitive linguistics: Many linguists confuse "dead metaphors" with conventional ones. The idiomatic meanings may be determined by the arbitrary conventions of usage (Gibbs, 1994: 273)

Lack of good knowledge of metaphorical roots of an idiom → belief that the comprehension of idioms is the same as knowing the meaning of individual words, which is based on convention.

Key concepts

- **Conceptual metaphors**

✓ "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 5)

✓ Idioms are based on conceptual metaphors (with two domains of knowledge through a set of systematic correspondences – *mappings)*

✓ **HUMANS ARE ANIMALS** (Source D = ANIMAL, Target D = HUMAN.

→ characteristics of a person (physical and mental states, spiritual and material life) = an animal's traits.

✓ **GREAT CHAIN** metaphor: humans are understood metaphorically as animals and inanimate things (***Somatic, Behavioral, and Emotional characteristics)***.

→ useful and efficient for choosing appropriate translation strategies and translation equivalents for animal idioms from English into another language.

Key concepts

- **Idiom translation**

✓ The non-literal meaning of an idiom is motivated by a certain conceptual metaphor.

✓ In idiom translation, translation strategies are employed as tools for translators to deal with any rising problems. Several strategies have been proposed: Nida and Taber (1982) - 3 strategies; Baker (1992) - 4 strategies; Ingo (1991) - 4 strategies; Svensén (1993) - 4 strategies.

✓ Svensén (1993): (1) Idioms with identical metaphors in SL and TL. (2) Idioms with related metaphors; (3) Idioms with different metaphors; (4) Translating idioms in SL with no metaphorical counterparts in TL.

→ Identify a conceptual metaphor with its source and target domains, establish its mapping system

→ Find out its equivalent conceptual metaphor in the target language, and successfully deal with difficulties in idiom translation.

Methodology

Statistical method
- Identify AI in a specific dictionary of idioms, classify & calculate their numbers
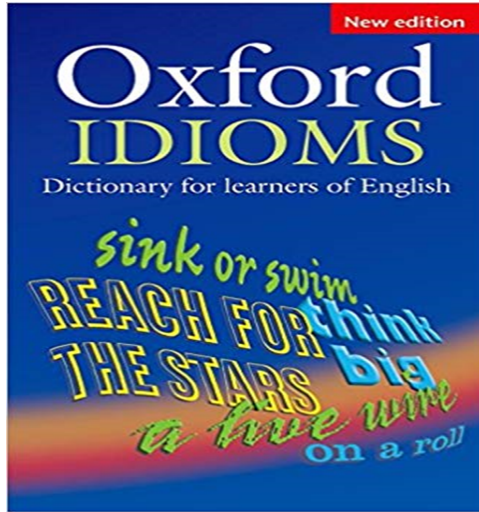
Descriptive method
- Describe linguistic features of AI in the view of CL.

Comparative method
- Find out similarities & differences in the Eng. AI & their equivalents in Vnese.

DATA SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION

Oxford Idiom Dictionary for Learners of English (2006) (2nd Ed.) with over **10,000 idioms** that are frequently used in English

221 animal idioms

Từ điển Thành ngữ Anh- Anh- Việt (Saigon Translation and Book Center, 2008), providing Vietnamese equivalents of English idioms from the *Oxford Idiom Dictionary for Learners of English*

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Categories of AI based on the animal species (vertebrates & invertebrates).

Frequencies of animal constituents

Description & analysis of AI characteristics in the Cognitive linguistics

Reference sources for better arguments

Identification of Idiom Translation strategies (Svensén, 1993) for analysis and translation product based on the mapping systems

Findings & Discussion

- **Categorization of animal idioms**

- **Construction of mapping systems**

- **A case study on the mapping of English idioms with constituents being the most productive animals**

Findings & Discussion

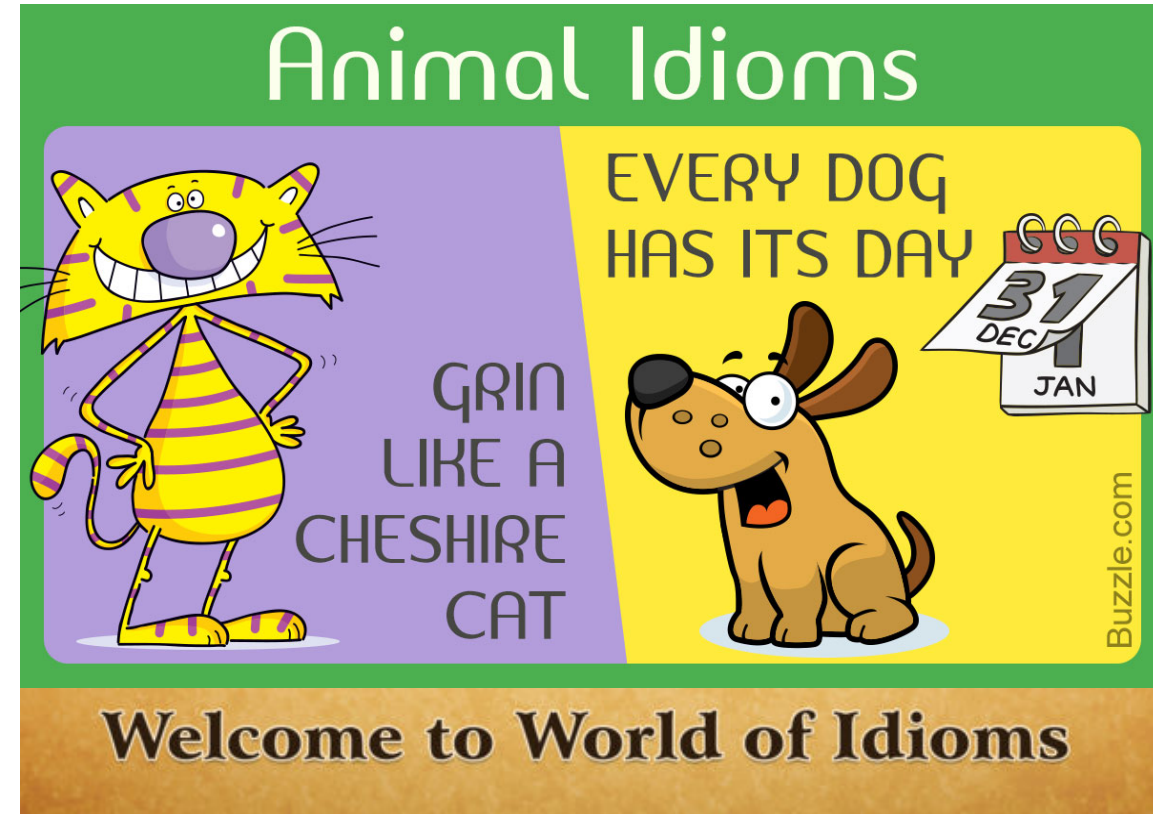- **Categorization of animal idioms**

Table 1. The distribution of the animal idioms collected from the Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English (2006)

Animal species	Quantity	Percentage
VERTEBRATES		
Amphibian (frog, newt)	2	1%
Bird (bird, chicken, cock, crow, duck, eagle, goose, hawk, hen, lark, owl, parrot, pigeon, robin, swallow)	46	21%
Fish (eel, fish, herring, mackerel, sardine, sprat)	15	7%
Mammal (ape, ass, bat, bear, beaver, bull, calf, camel, cat, cow, dog, donkey, elephant, goat, hare, horse, kitten, lamb, leopard, lion, mare, mickey, monkey, mouse, mule, pig, rabbit, rat, rhinoceros, sheep, tiger, wolf)	134	60%
Reptile (crocodile, snake, turkey)	4	2%
INVERTEBRATES		
ant, bee, bug, butterfly, flea, fly, hornet, oyster, snail, worm	20	9%
Total	**221**	**100%**

- ✓ 68 species

- ✓ 201 idioms - vertebrates, and 20 idioms – invertebrates

- ✓ Specifically, *dog* (20/221), *cat* (17/221), *horse* (17/221), *bird* (14/221), *fish* (10/221), *pig* (10/221), *ass* (10/221) are more frequently-used as the most productive in English idioms (others: 1 to 6)

- ✓ Some idioms with two-species components (two animals being opposite in characteristics or not co-existing, e.g. *cat - dog, cat - mice, bird - worm, wolf – sheep* → a remarkable feature for translators' lexical choice in their products

The early bird catches the worm
When the cat's away, the mice will play
Fight like cat and dog

A sprat to catch a mackerel
A wolf in sheep's clothing

Findings & Discussion

- ## Construction of mapping systems

Characteristics		Animal	Human	Examples
Somatic	strength and health	being strong	being healthy/unhealthy	*As strong as a horse* *Sick as a dog* *As weak as a kitten*
	motion	moving fast/ slowly	acting/reacting fast/slowly	*At a snail's pace*
	hunger	being hungry	being hungry	*Eat like a horse*
	vision	seeing well/ poorly	see well/poorly	*As blind as a bat* *An eagle eye*
Behavioral	diligence	being busy for work	being hard-working	*As busy as a bee* *An eager beaver*
	dirtiness	being dirty	living/ behaving in a bad way	*Pig it*
	roughness	being rough, clumsy	behaving unpleasantly	*Like a bull in a china shop* *Like a bear with a sore head*
	stubbornness	unwilling to perform any task	being stubborn	*As stubborn as a mule*
	greediness	eating and drinking too much	being greedy	*Make a pig of yourself*
Emotional	anger	being mad	being angry	*As mad as a March hare*
	happiness	being happy to get something	being happy	*Like the cat that got the cream*

Findings & Discussion

A case study on the mapping of English idioms with constituents being the most productive animals – DOG, CAT, HORSE

Conceptual metaphors in dog-related idioms

- ✓ ***Dog*** = an embodiment of faithfulness and guardianship
- ✓ In nomadic cultures: helping human beings with a lot of work (watch their houses, keep their farm animals...)
- ✓ In the world: "human's best friends".

HUMANS ARE DOGS

target domain   source domain

DOG'S BEHAVIORS/ACTIONS ARE HUMAN'S BEHAVIORS/ACTIONS

As sick as a dog

Be like a dog with two tails

Let sleeping dogs lie

Dog eat dog

A dog in the manger

Dog somebody's footsteps

Work like a dog

Why keep a dog and bark yourself

You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Top dog

There's life in the old dog yet.

Somatic

Behavioral

Emotional

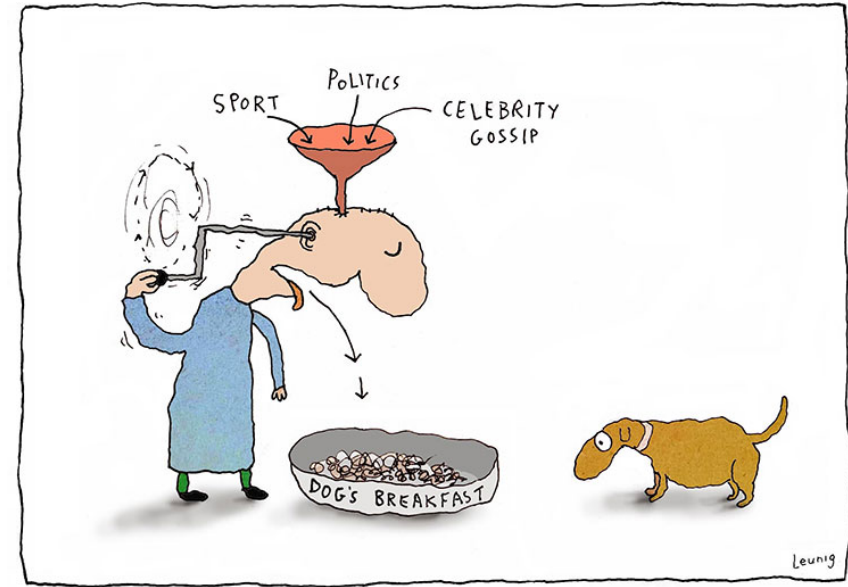| Source domain		Target domain
being sick	→	being in bad health state
welcoming someone with waving tails	→	being extremely happy
sleeping	→	expecting no disturbance that may cause trouble
eating fellows	→	competing fiercely without care of other people's feelings
keeping a manger	→	preserving a benefit
following one's footsteps	→	following someone closely everywhere
working during day and night	→	working very hard
barking	→	doing normal tasks
being an old dog	→	being an old/ experience person
being top	→	being powerful
being active and lively	→	being active and enjoy life

DOG'S UPS AND DOWNS IN LIFE ARE HUMAN'S UPS AND DOWN IN LIFE

Give a dog a bad name
A dog's life
Go to the dogs
Every dog has his/its day
A dog's breakfast/dinner

Source domain		Target domain
getting a bad name	→	getting a bad reputation
having a controlled life	→	having no freedom
having good days	→	having success and luck
getting leftovers of all types for breakfast/dinner	→	getting disorder or messy things at work

IDIOM TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

Distribution of translation strategies of animal idioms (ITSs) proposed by Svensén (1993)

No.	Idiom Translation Strategies	Quantity	Per. (%)
1	Idioms with identical metaphors in source language and target language (ITS1)	12	5.4
2	Idioms with related metaphors (ITS2)	25	11.3
3	Idioms with different metaphors (ITS3)	28	12.6
4	Non-idiomatic equivalent with no metaphorical counterparts (ITS4)	156	**70.7**

Examples

English AI	Meaning	Vietnamese equivalent	ITS
A dog's life	A life in which there is not much pleasure or freedom	Sống khổ như chó	ITS1
Dog eat dog	Fierce competition, with no concern for the harm done or other people's feelings	Cá lớn nuốt cá bé	ITS2
Every dog has his/its day	Everyone will, at sometimes in their life, be successful or lucky	Sông có khúc, người có lúc	ITS3
Be like a dog with two tails	Be extremely happy	Sướng rơn	**ITS4**

vui như tết/ trẩy hội   Sướng quá hoá cuồng/ sướng như điên

Conclusion

- A general picture of animal idioms

✓ About 64 species employed, especially *dogs*, *cats*, *horses*, *birds* and *fish*

✓ A considerate number of idioms with two animals contrasting in characteristics and existence.

→ All of these features should be considered carefully in the process of any translation of animal idioms from English into another language.

- Translating AI - a big challenge due to different cultures with different cognition of specific animals.

→ Require a deep insight of culture, a good understanding and appropriate analysis of the SL idiom and its metaphor for accurate and flexible translation equivalent in the TL.

Top dog

The most important person in a group.

Conclusion

- The conceptual metaphor HUMANS ARE ANIMALS - a good way to understand idiomatic meanings for equivalents with the similar metaphorical meanings in the TL.

- Good analysis of animals' traits and mapping onto humans' based on the GREAT CHAIN metaphor.

→ Search for translation equivalents would no longer be the search for identifiable linguistic features, but the search for a complex set of links in the translator's mind and a certain extent of freedom in choosing of metaphorical images and lexical items.

→ Analyzing idioms for translation under the view of cognitive linguistics is quite applicable and considered a flexible and effective choice for translators/ translation students.

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