A modern bestiary: a contrastive study of the figurative meanings of animal terms

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Abstract

This paper discusses the figurative meanings attached to the names of different types of animal in different cultures, and highlights some of the problems language learners and translators face when dealing with single-word conventional metaphor. Informants from thirty-eight different geographical regions responded to a questionnaire inviting them to comment on the figurative use made of animal names in their cultures. Many common terms such as CAT, COW and MOUSE were found to have a wide range of figurative meanings, and discussions with informants revealed that even advanced learners tended to think in terms of the connotations of their first culture when they encountered or used these words in a figurative sense in English. An appendix lists the meanings informants attached to thirty animal names.

Introduction

Over the years there has been continuing interest in the problems idioms and fixed expressions pose for learners of English as a foreign language. Makkai (1972), Fernando and Flavell (1981), Alexander (1983, 1984), and Ruhl (1989), for example, have all examined the concept of idiom, and a number of idiom dictionaries have been compiled, such as the **Longman Dictionary of English Idioms** and the **Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English**. Teachers are generally sensitive to the fact that fixed expressions of the following types (categorised by Alexander 1984) are a source of difficulty for learners:

Proverbial idioms: eg *The Land of Nod*

Tournure idioms: eg *buy a pig in a poke*

Irreversible binomial idioms: eg *cloak and dagger*

Phrasal compound idioms: eg *red tape*

Phrasal verb idioms: eg *stand down*

Metaphorical/allusive idioms: eg *a dog's breakfast*

Idiomatic similes: eg *as thin as a rake*.

When interpreting multi-word fixed expressions of this kind the learner's first and most difficult task is that of recognising that a non-literal sense is intended. It may be hard to accept that the familiar words do not convey their normal meaning. However, once an idiom is identified as such, further stages in the interpreting task are relatively easy. The learner can go about discovering its sense in the same way as he or she would discover the sense of any unknown lexical item - either by guessing from context or by consulting an authority (in human or dictionary form). Idioms are often amusing and therefore memorable, and there is little danger of first language interference, because it is unlikely that there exists in the learner's first language an idiomatic expression which is similar in form, but different in meaning.

The case of single-word conventional metaphors is rather different, however. Often the learner will have no difficulty at all in recognising that a non-literal sense is intended, for the simple reason that a word denoting the same physical entity occurs in a figurative sense in his or her first language. The danger lies rather in the possibility that the learner will interpret the metaphor in a different way than the intended one, because the figurative sense in English is different from the first language figurative sense. Figurative and non-figurative meaning may be so tightly linked in the learner's mind that they cannot be disassociated, so first language connotations may be attached to the English word while different and possibly contradictory connotations that the word conventionally carries for native speakers are resisted. I suspect that failure to recognise the connotative range of certain concrete words in the foreign language continues to an advanced level of language proficiency. Often nothing is done to remedy the situation because neither the learner nor those with whom he/she communicates recognise the problem. Misinterpretation of

figurative language can seriously affect communicative efficiency, however. Scollon, for example, considers the differences between American and Chinese metaphors of self and communication to be a prime cause of "the conflicts that inhabit the discourse that takes place between members of these two populations" (1993:41).

Low (1988) suggests that learners may use metaphor (not necessarily successfully) as a compensatory strategy, to overcome gaps in their knowledge of the foreign language. I think it is also likely that many non-native speakers try to *avoid* the use of metaphor, being aware that cultural variation might lead to misunderstanding. However, even if language learners can succeed in expressing themselves without recourse to figurative language, they are likely to be bombarded with figurative language to decode. Metaphor not only serves to dramatise, and to carry emotionally charged subject matter, but is also necessary to express many abstract concepts, to extend thought and to "demonstrate that things in life are related and systematic in ways we can, at least partially, comprehend" (Low 1988). In Lakoff and Johnson's terms (1980), metaphor is something that we "live by". Some of the metaphor that learners encounter will match their expectations (there may be certain patterns of thinking common to all or most cultures) but in some areas of meaning metaphoric use will vary widely, creating likely sources of cross-cultural misunderstanding.

This joke is a good way to illustrate the problem:

Not surprisingly, most non-native speakers do not completely understand it. Their difficulty centres on their interpretation of one word: "mousy-looking", but the notion that someone can be described as being like a mouse is not in itself problematic. For

the native of Britain a "mousy" person is timid, colourless, dull (and probably a woman). In other parts of the world a mouse is perceived of in other ways: as agile, or diligent, or destructive, or deceitful, for example, and "mousiness" in each society means having the qualities mice are famed for.

One non-native-speaker informant explained the cartoon in this way (with little regard for the visual evidence):

> *that woman is staying alone, away from other people's company as if*
> *she were afraid of them, cerainly out of shyness, like a mouse*
> *intimidated by any human presence.*

Another proposed with equal confidence:

> *this woman is either like a mouse (because of the shape of her nose) or*
> *she is ratty (deceiving others).*

Notice how articulate these comments are; the writers are well able to express their ideas in English. Moreover, they do not regard themselves as having difficulty with the text - they think they know what "mousy-looking" means, and so they do, in terms of their own culture.

Animal terms and figurative meaning

This article investigates one small area where metaphor is prevalent: the names of different kinds of domesticated and wild animal. I chose this area not because animal metaphors occur more frequently than metaphors in other semantic areas, but because they are common in most, if not all, cultures, and because in many cases they evoke a strong emotional response. The conceptual metaphor A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL seems to be extremely widespread. Animal metaphors have their roots in traditional, rural society; they are often linked to proverbs and folk stories which, although they have been "laundered out of educated English speech and

writing"(Scollon 1993:48) continue to feature in both conversation and journalism in many cultures.

Saville-Troike (1982) mentions the role of metaphor in many cultures as a means of depersonalising criticism, thus rendering it less offensive. Animal metaphor can be used for this purpose ("He's a little monkey!") but it is also, of course, used to maximise personal impact, in both endearments, and perhaps more frequently in insults. It tends to be used in those situations when "a topic is so emotionally charged that "ordinary literal speech fails" (Low 1988).

It also happens to be the case that animal terms are heavily conventionalised in metaphor. In each culture, certain animal terms are strongly linked with certain attributes, and there is communal agreement about what these attributes are. This does not mean that such metaphors are "dead"; on the contrary they form a very vital part of the language and are frequently used to powerful effect. Conventional metaphors, however, do cause greater problems in cross-cultural communication than those of individual inspiration. Newmark (1982) warns the translator of the relative difficulty of conventional as opposed to creative metaphor:

> Assuming that a creative metaphor is worth translating, there is no
> question that the more original and surprising it is (and therefore the
> more remote from national culture), the easier it will be to translate,
> since in its essence it will be remote from common semantic as well as
> cultural associations.

1982:49

Procedure

Questionnaires were used to gather information regarding the figurative meanings of animal terms. Responses came from representatives of thirty-eight different geographical regions - speakers of thirty-eight separate languages (represented in

some cases by several regional dialects). The regions and languages represented were as follows:

Australia (English)	Indonesia (Bahasa Indonesia)
Bahrain (Arabic)	Iraq (Arabic)
Bangladesh (Bengali)	Italy (Italian)
Belgium (French)	Japan (Japanese)
Benin (Yorouba)	Java (Javanese)
Botswana (Setswana)	Kenya (Kikuyu, Kiswahili)
Burma (Burmese)	Madagascar (Malagasy)
Cameroon (Yambassa,Limbum,	Malaysia (Malay, Iban)
Ewondo,Bassasi,Bangante)	Norway (Norwegian)
Chad (Bidiya)	Palestine (Arabic)
China (Mandarin)	Seychelles (Creole)
Colombia (Spanish)	South Africa (Zulu, Nsotho)
Cyprus (Turkish, Greek)	Spain (Castilian)
Ethiopia (Welaitigna)	Sri Lanka (Sinhala, Tamil)
Germany (German)	Sudan (Arabic)
Greece (Greek)	Sweden (Swedish)
Holland (Dutch)	Taiwan (Mandarin)
Hong Kong (Cantonese)	Thailand (Thai)
Hungary (Hungarian)	United States (English)
	Zanzibar (Kiswahili)

Two different questionnaires were used. The first was longer and more exploratory in nature, as I wished to ascertain both whether the respondents were familiar with common English animal names in their literal sense (the questionnaire included pictures of animals for the respondents to name), and whether the animal terms had strong connotations in their first language. This questionnaire was distributed to fifty

overseas students studying on degree courses at Warwick University, forty-nine of whom replied. Their responses indicated that they were familiar with the base meanings of the English names, but often tended to misinterpret English sentences where animal names or words derived from them occurred with a non-literal meaning. One Chinese informant, for example, interpreted *cowed* in the sentence "the people were cowed by their leaders" (from **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**) as meaning *forced to work hard*, because the cow in China is characterised as hardworking. Similarly, many informants thought *to rabbit* meant *to worry* in the example "He always rabbits on about his health" (from **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**) because rabbits are widely thought of as being timorous.

The second questionnaire listed those terms which respondents to the first questionnaire had most commonly named as possessing a non-literal meaning in their first language. This questionnaire invited respondents to explain any figurative meanings in use in their own country, and identify the terms as having positive, negative or neutral connotations. The questionnaire was distributed to seventy overseas students studying on the presessional programme at Warwick University, sixty-one of whom replied.

Results

The results of the second questionnaire are summarised in the appendix to this paper. The responses challenged the widely-held view that animal metaphors are largely used to to describe inferior or undesirable human habits and attributes (Low 1988, Newmark 1988). Although negative connotations were suggested slightly more frequently than positive ones, many animal attributes were viewed in a very positive light, and it also appeared that many animal terms could be used, within the same culture and language group, to criticise or praise, according to context.

Because strong feelings were involved, and because of the conventional nature of this kind of metaphor, most of my informants for both questionnaires had no difficulty identifying the qualities their particular culture attached to certain animals, and there was a high degree of correspondence between responses from members of the same language group. With animal metaphors, it seems, cultural associations are generally strong enough to override personal feelings or real-world knowledge, although I found an exception to this in the case of a group of young Malaysian informants who had already been living in Britain for three years. The Malaysian responses bore witness to an interesting state of deculturalisation: they varied widely, and tended to be based either on personal feelings (such as "I like cats") or on the imagery of brand names and advertising - which itself, of course, largely depends for its success on positive cultural associations. For some of the Malaysian informants, for example, the image of the horse was linked primarily with Lloyds bank, while a camel suggested a brand of cigarettes.

The implications of cultural variation in animal metaphor

One of the failings of the two questionnaires is that, although they invited informants to provide non-literal meanings for the animal terms listed, they did not gather information regarding the intensity of the association between attribute and animal. In each culture some connotations will be stronger than others; for example, native speakers of English may share figurative meanings for the word *camel*, but they are not strongly felt and would not, I think, prevent us from accepting conflicting meanings implied in a given text. On the other hand all native English speakers associate the snail with slowness and the hare with speed, and it would be difficult for us to disregard these associations in a text which likened human behaviour to the behaviour of either of these animals.

An example of the way associations can differ in meaning and intensity across cultures concerns the nickname of the Belgian ex-Prime Minister Mr Vandan Boeynants, who was kidnapped in 1989 following bribery charges. The BBC reported, probably for humourous effect, that Mr Boeynants was known in Belgium as "the crocodile". For British viewers this was recognisably a negative term, although the exact nature of the criticism would have been unclear. In many other cultures, however, the comparison to a crocodile would have been unequivocal: in Burma it would have implied talkativeness, in Chad and in China wickedness, in Cameroon strength and in Malaysia and Indonesia immoral behaviour towards women. For some (but not all) my Belgian informants *crocodile* had a very specific meaning too - they used the term to refer to a resident of Brussels: "someone with a big mouth who is not good with their hands". We shall never know whether the BBC television reporter was aware of the Belgian associations when he wrote his story, but it seems likely that he assumed that *crocodile* meant for a Belgian just what it meant for an English person - while his Belgian source assumed the reverse!

How can the same animal suggest so many different qualities to different groups of people? Lakoff and Johnson (1980) discuss non-literal language in terms of a cline between metaphor and real-world attributes. In their discussion of the *dove* as *Holy Spirit* metaphor, they claim:

> this symbolism is not arbitrary .... The dove is conceived of as beautiful, friendly, gentle, and, above all, peaceful. As a bird, its natural habitat is the sky, which metonymically stands for heaven, the natural habitat of the Holy Spirit. The dove is a bird that flies gracefully, glides silently, and is typically seen coming out of the sky and landing among people.

1980:40

If, however, the dove possesses attributes we associate with spirituality, how is it that the *pigeon* conjures up a completely different set of associations? There is little distinction between the behaviour of pigeons and doves, and in many languages the two birds are known by the same name. Is it perhaps the case that Lakoff and Johnson themselves are unable to disassociate the real-world entity from its associations? Perhaps they attribute grace and beauty to the dove because those are the values the dove represents in our culture, rather than because the dove actually exemplifies these attributes to a greater extent than other birds. Certainly the real world provides a starting point for metaphor, but the choice of salient feature, and the significance attached to that feature, varies to such an extent as to appear arbitrary. The crocodile's big mouth can be regarded as a sign of rapaciousness or talkativeness, and Low points out that:

> older men with a strong prediliction for nubile young women are
> standardly referred to as "old goats", yet few people who use the
> expression today are likely to know, or indeed care, much about the
> sexual mores of real goats.

<div align="right">1988:134</div>

Such considerations support Eco's assertion (1981:80) that conventional metaphor is not natural but cultural. Once a perceived similarity between two entities is codified, that similarity may even cease to exist, yet the metaphor will remain meaningful. Thus the language learner, or anyone else in an alien cultural environment, has no means of arriving at the meaning of a conventional metaphor by contemplating the nature of the literal referent.

The "bestiary" listed in the appendix to this article might, on the simplest level, be used as an aid to translation, or to facilitate cross-cultural communication. There is an inherent danger in using it for such purposes, however. Metaphors change and develop across time and space; Dr Johnson's associations, which I have added to the

list, do not always accord with those of modern native speakers of English, and modern native speakers themselves use the terms differently in different parts of the world (many British English speakers will not be familiar with the American and Australian sense of *foxy*, for example). The list does not provide a complete picture of the meanings of the animal terms in the countries cited, nor could it ever hope to.

The list might serve a better purpose as a starting point for language work in a mixed-nationality EFL classroom. As a vocabulary learning tool it provides opportunities for the creation of lexical sets and the discussion of fine distinctions of meaning. Furthermore, an examination of the list should increase learners' awareness of the use of conventional metaphor in text, and the dangers of making false assumptions about the transferability of meaning.

Animal terms provide just one small example of conventional metaphor; other semantic fields will also reveal rich data. A similar variety of meaning is attached to the metaphoric use of colour terms (Eisiminger 1979), names of the organs of the body (Stern, Boulanger and Cleghorn 1950), and physical phenomena such as fire and wind, for example.

Even remaining within the field of animal terms, further explorations are needed to investigate the contexts in which the metaphors occur, and the way in which meaning is interpreted according to context. It is to be hoped, therefore, that those who refer to this study will expand and improve the model, so that we can learn more about the figurative meanings routinely attached to common words in different cultures.

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Appendix

A summary of responses to the second questionnaire (with comments from Dr Johnson's Dictionary)

BEAR Botswana (Setswana)= ugly; China = clumsy/slow witted; Cyprus (Turkish) = tall/fat/stupid; Holland = large; Indonesia (Palembang) = wild; Iraq (Arabic)= wicked "*I hate such a bear*"; Italy = lonely with no friends; Italy = authoritarian eg of a dominant father; Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = untidy "*his hair was like that of a bear*"; Sweden = strong; Zanzibar (Kiswahili) = dull.

BUFFALO Indonesia, Malaysia = easily led, simple (very derogatory); Cameroon (Yambassa), Chad (Bidiya), Indonesia (Palembang) = strong; The Netherlands - verb "to buffalo" = to fart or to attend orgies.

BULL Italy, Sweden = virile; Burma, Chad (Bidiya), China, Cyprus (Turkish), Hungary, Indonesia, Kenya (Kikuyu), Spain = strong; Botswana (Setswana) = strong/stubborn, Burma, Norway, Sweden = bad-tempered; Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = obeys orders "*the child was sitting like a bull*".

CAMEL Botswana (Setswana) = tall (derogatory); Chad (Bidiya) = tall and ugly; China, Colombia (Spanish) = hardworking; Cyprus (Turkish) = tall and thin; German = stupid; Indonesia (Palembang) = tall and weak; Sudan (Arabic) = tall man (appreciative); Zanzibar (Kiswahili) = very helpful and essential.

CAT Bahrain = ungrateful; Botswana (Setswana) = dirty; Cameroon (Yambassa) = hypocritical;Cameroon (Limbum),Chad (Bidiya) = sly; China = obeys orders; China = evil; Cyprus (Greek) = homeloving; Cyprus (Turkish), Japan = capricious; Greece = dishonest/ predicting the future eg (of a politician) *"the man is a cat"*; Indonesia, Malaysia = shy; Palestine (Arabic) = quiet, not speaking.

CHICKEN Bahrain, Colombia (Spanish) = cowardly;Botswana (Setswana) = stupid; Greece = lacking strength; Italy = girl who talks too much/ not intelligent; Thailand = hardworking.

COW Cameroon (Yambassa) = heavy and slow; China = foolish (you'd be wasting your time *"playing the piano to a cow"* if you spoke to a layman in technical terms); Cyprus (Turkish) = dull ("of those who study too hard and don't enjoy life"); Ethiopia (Welaitigna) = generous/innocent/ naive; Hungary - verb "to cow" = what fat people do when they take up a lot of space; Hong Kong (Cantonese) = hardworking, making a great contribution; Japan = slow/ stupid/people who eat and sleep without working *"you will be like a cow if you lie down as soon as you have finished eating"* (but can also mean hardworking); Kenya (Kikuyu) = beautiful; Malaysia = lazy/stupid; Sweden, Holland, Germany = stupid; Taiwan = stubborn.

CROCODILE Belgium (French) = someone with a big mouth who is not good with their hands/ a resident of Brussels; Burma = a trickster/ talkative (because of its long tongue); Cameroon (Limbum) = strong; Chad (Bidiya), China = wicked; Java, Indonesia, Malaysia = a liar/ a cheat/ a playboy.

DOG Botswana (Setswana), Indonesia = stupid; Burma, Taiwan, Japan = sincere/faithful (but "dog" is also a swear word in Burmese); Cameroon (Bassasi), South Africa (Zulu) = oversexed; Chad (Bidiya), Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = dirty /nasty/ social outcast; China, Spain = lazy; China, Sweden = (stupidly) loyal; Colombia (Spanish) - adjective = tricky, experienced *"He/she is very dog"*; Hong Kong (Cantonese) = obeys orders; Indonesia = stupid; Madagascar = clever *"scientists are dogs"* / dishonest *"the person who sold this car to me was a dog"*/ mischievous (esp of a child/ - verb to cause trouble *"my car dogged me for one hour, it didn't want to start"*, *"if that tooth dogs you, have it pulled out"*.

DONKEY Bangladesh = worthless; Bahrain, Botswana (Setswana), Cyprus (Turkish), Germany, Holland, Malaysia, Sri Lanka (Sinhala), Sweden = stupid; Chad (Bidiya), China, Holland, Sweden = stubborn; Greece = impolite; Indonesia = a yes man; Palastine (Arabic), South Africa (Nsotho) = lazy.

ELEPHANT most informants associated the elephant with great size, but Cameroon (Bassasi) = unpardoning, vindictive. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"The largest of all quadrupeds, of whose sagacity, faithfulness, prudence and even understanding many surprising relations are given".*)

FOX Bangladesh, Botswana (Setswana),Burma, Cameroon (Bassasi), China, Cyprus, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Palastine (Arabic), Taiwan = cunning; Spain = intelligent; Australia, the United States - adjective "foxy" = sexy (woman). (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"By way of reproach, applied to a knave or cunning fellow" .)*

GOAT Botswana (Setswana), Cameroon (Yambassa) = stupid; China = a victim; Indonesia = an old man who still likes young girls; Malaysia = lazy/ smelly. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: - adjective "goatish" = "*resembling a goat in any quality: as, rankness; lust".)*

GOOSE Italy, Hungary = stupid girl; Spain = foolish person. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"noted, I know not why, for foolishness".*)

HARE Botswana (Seswana) = cheat; Cameroon (Yambassa), Indonesia = fast and cunning *"he cheats like a hare"*; Chad (Bidiya) = Intelligent but cowardly; China, Holland, South Africa (Zulu) = fast; China, Holland, Sweden = cowardly; Seychelles (French Creole) = a thief; Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = innocent/helpless. (Note also Dr

Johnson's comment in his dictionary: "*remarkable for timidity, vigilance and fecundity*".)

HORSE Bahrain, Java, Malaysia = strong, fast and healthy; Italy = clumsy and boisterous; Japan = *"a very strong man in bed"*; Japan, Hungary = hardworking; Spain = hungry.

LION Bangladesh, Burma, Chad (Bidiya), Cyprus (Turkish), Hungary, Palestine (Arabic), South Africa (Nsotho), Sri Lanka (Sinhala), Sweden = strong/ brave; Botswana (Setswana), Indonesia, Kenya (Kiswahili), Malaysia = bad-tempered/ aggressive; Indonesia = very lazy; Italy = brave/ hungry; Thailand = dignified. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"the fiercest and most magnanimous of four-footed beasts".*)

MONKEY Botswana (Setswana), Germany = stupid; Cameroon (Yambassa) = cunning/ ugly; Chad (Bidiya) = cowardly; China = clever/ cunning/ naughty/ quick (a positive image because of the Monkey King legend); Cyprus (Turkish), Indonesia = ugly; Japan = quick moving, especially in sports; Japan = copy-cat; Malaysia = bad-mannered/ uncivilised; Palestine (Arabic) = eating too much.

MOUSE Botswana (Setswana), China = dirty; Cameroon (Yambassa) = little thief; Chad (Bidiya) = destructive; China, Malaysia = timid; Cyprus (Turkish), Hungary, Japan = nimble; Palestine (Arabic) = small and weak; Sweden = quiet, grey, boring.

MULE Bahrain (Arabic) = illegitimate; Cyprus (Turkish) = stubborn; Greece - verb "to donkey" = behave stubbornly *"he doesn't want any advice, he mules them"*; Malaysia, Germany = stupid; Spain, Sweden = hardworking.

OWL Botswana (Setswana), Cameroon (Yambassa, Bamgante) = "witchbird"; Burma = wise, a symbol of good luck; China = bad luck; Germany, Holland, Sweden = wise; Malaysia (Iban) = evil spirit.

PARROT Bahrain, Botswana (Setswana), Burma, Cameroon (Yambassa), Chad (Bidiya), Cyprus (Turkish), Malaysia, Seychelles (French Creole), Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = talkative (not necessarily imitative); China, Colombia (Spanish), Germany, Indonesia, Sweden = someone who repeats without understanding and imitates others; Sri Lanka (Tamil) = loveable (a term of affection used especially of children).

PIG Benin (Yorouba), China, Colombia (Spanish), China, Cyprus (Turkish and Greek), Holland, Indonesia, Japan, Java, Kenya (Kiswahili), Madagascar, Malaysia, South Africa (Zulu), Sri Lanka (Sinhala), Sweden, Thailand = greedy, fat, dirty, bad-mannered; Botswana (Setswana) = stupid; Hong Kong (Cantonese) = lazy; Italy = bad-mannered/ dirty/ a sex-maniac; South Africa (Nsotho) = double-crossing; Taiwan = stupid and lazy.

RABBIT Chad (Bidiya), China, Japan, Hungary, Iraq (Arabic), Italy = cowardly; Sweden = intersted in sex/ reproduces fast.

RAT Bahrain = insignificant person; Botswana (Setswana) = a recluse; Cameroon (Bangante), Colombia (Spanish) = thief; China = evil; Germany = disgusting; Sweden = anything bad.

SHEEP Bahrain, China, Spain = easily led/ obedient; Benin (Yorouba), Botswana (Setswana), Cameroon (Bangante), Chad (Bidiya), Cyprus (Turkish), Germany, Kenya (Kikuyu), Sweden = stupid; Burma, South Africa (Zulu), Taiwan = gentle/ kind; Iraq = unable to manage *"she couldn't do her housework - she was a sheep"*;

Italy = lacking courage/ easily led; Japan = quiet/nervous. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"remarkable for its usefulness and innocence"*)**. LAMB** in Indonesia is a common insult = dirty/stupid.

SNAKE Benin (Yorouba), Botswana (Setswana), Chad (Bidiya), China, Italy, Japan, South Africa (Zulu), Sweden, Zanzibar (Kiswahili) = evil, untrustworthy; Colombia (Spanish) = an unfaithful woman/ a threatening appointment/ a debt; Holland = a cheat; Hong Kong (Cantonese) = lazy; Indonesia = liar/ promiscuous (woman); Malaysia = lazy (after eating too much).

TIGER/ TIGRESS Botswana (Setswana) = agressive; China = bad-tempered woman; Indonesia = brave and strong; Indonesia (Palembang) = cruel; Palestine (Arabic) = big and strong; Sri Lanka (Sinhala) = sexually active *"Beware! He's a tiger!"*.

TORTOISE Burma = lazy and slow; Cameroon (Ewondo and Bassasi) = cunning; Cameroon (Yambassa) = associated with leprosy; Colombia (Spanish), Malaysia = slow; Indonesia = slow/ stupid. (Note also Dr Johnson's comment in his dictionary: *"Anything ravenous or destructive".*)

WOLF Bahrain, Chad (Bidiya), Germany = fierce/ dangerous; China, Sweden = hungry/untrustworthy; Iraq = cunning/ wicked; Italy = cunning and ruthless; Japan = a rapist.