

Study on the Similarities and Differences of Chinese Culture and Thai Culture from the Euphemism of "Death" in China and Thailand

Zhaoyang Duan^{1,*}

¹Yunnan Normal University, Kunming, Yunnan, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 371807896@qq.com

ABSTRACT

Language taboos are the most fundamental reason for euphemism. Since ancient times, "death" has been the most taboo word for people. Under normal circumstances, people avoid talking about death, and believe that the greatest misfortune for a person is death. Therefore, they always avoid the word "death" in language communication and try to replace it with related words. In the Chinese and Thai culture, the Chinese and Thai people also use metaphors, metonymy, euphemisms and other rhetorical methods in their own language to implicitly and circuitously talk about "death" with people of different identities in different ways. Also, the specific euphemistic expressions show the feelings and attitudes of people left in the world towards the deceased. Due to the differences in Chinese culture and Thai culture, especially the differences in political systems and religious beliefs, this article divides the death objects into imperial household, monks, old people, giants, celebrities, talents, heroes, women, and juveniles according to their status, gender and age, analyzes the differences in the euphemisms of "death" used in Chinese and Thai languages, and then reveals the similarities and differences between Chinese culture and Thai culture.

Keywords: euphemism, death, cultural similarities and differences

I. INTRODUCTION

Language taboo is the most fundamental reason for euphemism. From ancient times to the present, "death" has been the most taboo word. Generally speaking, people hate to talk about death and think that death is the greatest misfortune of human beings.[1] Therefore, people always avoid the word "death" in language communication, and use metaphors, metonymy, euphemism and other rhetorical means to euphemistically express the "death" of people with different status or different causes in a subtle, circuitous and pleasant way. At the same time, through the expression way, it can see the feelings and attitudes of people left in the world to the deceased, namely, expressing different emotional colors [2]. There are many euphemisms about death in all kinds of languages in the world. There are also a lot of euphemisms related to death in Chinese and Thai languages.

Due to the differences between Chinese culture and Thai culture, especially the differences in political systems and religious beliefs, this paper divides the objects of death into imperial household, monks, old people, giants, celebrities, talents, heroes, women and juveniles according to their status, gender and age,

analyzes the differences of euphemism "death" used in Chinese and Thai languages, and then reveals the similarities and differences between Chinese culture and Thai culture.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL CLASS IN CHINA AND THAILAND FROM THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF THE EUPHEMISMS ABOUT THE DEATH OF EMPERORS AND THEIR RELATIVES IN CHINA AND THAILAND

Regarding the death of kings and queens in Chinese and Thai languages, it is "崩逝" and "驾崩" in Chinese and "สวรรคต" in Thai. The death of the prince is called "薨" in Chinese and "ทิวงคต" in Thai. The death of misbegotten prince is "สิ้นพระชนม์" in Thai; the death of nobleman is "สวรรคาลัย" in Thai; and the death of grandson of the king and son of misbegotten prince is "สิ้นชีพิตักษัย" in Thai. For the death of the emperor, it uses "崩" both in Chinese and Thai. "崩" has the same meaning as "mountains collapse", meaning the sky and the earth collapse [1]. The death of an emperor is like the collapse of the sky, and it can also use the words such as "崩驾", "崩逝", "宾天". However, the death of Chinese queens or imperial concubines and the death of

princes are called "薨", while the death of Thai princes and nobles are expressed in different words according to their identities and status. This shows that Thailand's hierarchy is even stricter than that in ancient China.

Why can't the death of the imperial household or the emperor and their relatives be directly expressed as "death" in the Chinese and Thai languages? This is due to the influence of the feudal hierarchy on social culture. The Chinese feudal hierarchical system emphasizes the orderliness of the hierarchy and the difference between the older and younger, all things are customized, and no one can go beyond it. In "the Book of Rites · Qulixia", it is described that the death of the emperor is "崩"; the death of "princes" is "薨"; the death of a senior official in feudal China is "卒"; the death of warrior is "不禄"; and the death of the common people is "死". However, the corresponding euphemism used to express the death of the imperial household or the emperor and their relatives has been abolished since China broke up the feudal society. However, Thailand is influenced by the concept of Brahmanism, the concept of "divine right of kings" and the concept of "Karma" in Buddhism. The obsession of hierarchy has also penetrated into all aspects of Thai society and culture. The imperial households and monks enjoy special status in Thailand. Therefore, the death of Thai imperial households also varies with social identity and status.

III. UNDERSTANDING THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF CHINA AND THAILAND FROM THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF EUPHEMISMS ABOUT THE DEATH OF MONKS IN CHINA AND THAILAND

There are many Chinese words to express the death of monks, such as "圆寂", "归寂", "坐化", "归真", "灭度", "入寂", "入灭", "迁寂"; and there are few words to express the death of monks, such as "มรณภาพ" and "สิ้นพระชนม์". And if people translate these two Thai words into Chinese, it expresses the same meaning of Chinese words, namely, the death of monks. Why are the expressions about the death of monks in Chinese and Thai languages similar? The reasons are as follows.

First of all, Buddhism is the most influential religion in China. In the Western Han Dynasty, the religion originated in India was introduced into China. After a long period of development, spread and evolution, Buddhism with Chinese characteristics was formed. Since then, it has had a wide and far-reaching impact on the traditional culture and social development of China. For example, there are euphemisms about the death of monks, such as "圆寂", "归寂", "坐化", "归真", "灭度", "入寂", "入灭", "迁寂". These words can only be used to describe the death of monks. Because these words don't refer to the death of ordinary people in the general sense, but refer to a state of

practice in Buddhism, a supreme state that cannot be described and understood at will, which is beyond the reach of ordinary people. However, with the development and localization of Buddhism in China, many professional terms in Buddhism have also been used to describe the death of ordinary people, such as "升天", "成佛", "坐化", "涅槃", "上天堂", "见阎王", "见如来佛祖", "下地狱". Hell is the place where evil people suffer and reincarnate in Buddhism. Chinese people have a saying that "when he is alive, he does evil things, and he will go to hell after death." From this sentence, it can see that Buddhism has a profound influence on Chinese people, but in fact, many Buddhist euphemisms on death are mostly confined to the scope of Buddhism.

Secondly, in addition to Buddhism, there is another widely recognized religion Taoism in ancient China. Taoism is a religion originated in China. It was formed in the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period. Since its birth, Taoism has been closely linked with Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, it has very distinctive Chinese characteristics and has a profound impact on all aspects of Chinese society and cultural customs. Taoism originates from the Taoist thoughts of Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi, and takes the life-long pursuit of helping the world, saving people and cultivating into immortals. Taoism believes that to a certain extent, people with the practice can become immortals, and do not have to die. Everyone thinks that there is no difference between everything in the world, even between life and death. Taoism pursues the unity of nature and human beings, eclosion and immortality. The euphemisms in death originated from Taoism are mostly related to immortality, such as "仙逝", "仙游", "仙去", "驾鹤西去", "仙奴西驰". These professional terms are also used for the death of ordinary people. For example, people can see some sentences, such as "惊闻令尊仙逝, 不胜悲恸", "慈父于X年X月日驾鹤西去", "逝者已登仙界, 生者节哀顺变", to express the pity for the death of ordinary people. Taoism uses "物化" or "隐化" to euphemistically express death. Taoism believes that human death is like the shelling of a cicada, so it uses "蝉蜕" or "蜕化" to express the death. In Taoism, human death is like the soaring, so it also use "eclosion". In the legends, all these immortals ride on white cranes, so "驾鹤西去" (driving a crane to the west) or "化鹤" has become another term for death. These words all express the praise and respect of the living to the dead. The euphemism on death formed under the influence of Taoism not only entrusts people's desire for immortality, but also embodies people's desire to transcend death and break the restrictions of natural laws through their own practice.

The religious belief of people in Thailand is mainly influenced by Buddhism from India. The most common religious belief in the whole society is Buddhism, which is believed by all the imperial household, government officials and ordinary people. It can be said

heroes similar? Because the Chinese nation has always admired the style of a man sacrificing his life for righteousness since ancient times. There are sayings of "杀身成仁" (killing oneself to achieve virtue) and "无求生以害仁", paying more attention to the meaning and social value of death. Sima Qian proposed that death comes naturally to all men, and may be weightier than Mount Tai or lighter than a feather, basically representing the death values of Chinese culture. People with lofty ideals hope to "retain their loyalty" in history. When a person lays down his life for the country or for the ideal of justice, people often sing his glorious "death". At this time, words such as "壮丽牺牲", "以身殉国" are used to express praise to heroes. They all show strong tragic colors and praise for the social value of their death, making people sound in awe. Through comparison, it can be seen that both Chinese culture and Thai culture have values and value orientations that respect and praise heroes.

VI. UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINA AND THAILAND FROM THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF EUPHEMISMS ABOUT THE DEATH OF GIANTS, CELEBRITIES, TALENTS, WOMEN AND JUVENILES

In Chinese, there are euphemisms about the death of giants, celebrities, talents, such as "星陨", "逝世", "与世长辞", "兰衰", "兰摧玉折", "英才玉折", reflecting a strong sense of regret and sadness. As for the death of a woman, there are many Chinese words to express, such as "香消玉损", "毁损兰摧", "红消香断", "葬玉埋香", "倩女离魂", "珠沉璧碎", "凋谢". These words are often used in the written language to describe the woman's death by the image of falling flowers, expressing sympathy and regret for the death of women. In addition, there are euphemisms for the death of juveniles in Chinese, such as "夭折", "夭逝", "短命", "没成人". However, there are no special words in Thai to euphemistically express the death of celebrities, talents, women and juveniles, and "เสียชีวิต" is mostly used to express the death. This is due to the differences in national system, historical and cultural factors and religious beliefs between China and Thailand. The euphemism of death in China is influenced by thousands of years of feudalism, diversified religious beliefs, social value of death and 5000 years of traditional culture accumulation, etc. [4]. Since the end of feudal society, Chinese society emphasizes the principle of equality for all. Even for people with different status, gender and age, such as women and juveniles, there have euphemisms corresponding to their status after their death. Thailand's social hierarchy is particularly obvious, and women and juveniles have no status. Therefore, there is no euphemism in Thai language to express the death of women and juveniles. "สิ้นบุญ" and "หมดบุญ" are used to express the end of the life ("天数已尽", "阳寿已尽").

"หมดลมหายใจ" has the same meaning as "去世" and "安息", namely, the death. "สิ้นใจ" has the same meaning as "永别了", "与世长辞了". And all these Thai words are same as Chinese words used for ordinary people.

VII. UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINA AND THAILAND FROM THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF OTHER TYPES OF DEATH EUPHEMISMS

There are also some euphemisms expressing death in Chinese, such as "一命呜呼", "呜呼哀哉", "命归黄泉", "去见马克思", "呜呼哀哉", "死翘翘", "回老家", "OVER" etc. These euphemisms are used to make jokes or self-deprecating, joking or cursing at oneself or a close friend, or people whom one does not like or have nothing to do with oneself. "一命呜呼" has a mocking meaning, with the hope that he will die soon, and now it has finally come true. "翘辫子" is used in spoken language and is relatively vulgar. There are also euphemisms in Thai, such as "เด็ด" (loanwords of die), "กลับบ้านเก่า" (回老家), "เรียบร้อย" (结束), "ลาโลก" (离开世界), "ไปสบายแล้ว" (走了), "หลับไม่ตื่นแล้ว" (睡着了). This kind of euphemism in Thai is used when people are angry. No matter what it is, the above euphemisms are not very polite. The vocabulary used to jokingly express this kind of death euphemism in China and Thailand does not completely correspond to each other, showing the cultural differences between the two countries.

In addition, Chinese also adopts the following euphemistic expressions according to the cause of death, such as "三长两短", "突然毙命", "不测", "不幸", "长短", "意外", etc. The Thai have such expressions, such as "ไม่ฟื้นแล้ว" (再也醒不过来了), "หมดลมหายใจ" (没气了), "หมดหายใจ" (没有呼吸了), "หมดวาสนา" (福气尽了), "สิ้นบุญ" (天数已尽, 阳寿已尽), "หมดบุญ" (天数已尽, 阳寿已尽), "สิ้นชีพ" (毙命、丧命、丧生), etc. Because of the differences between Chinese culture and Thai culture, the euphemisms on abnormal death between China and Thailand do not correspond to each other. However, it can see the awe of this abnormal death in Chinese and Thai culture.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In short, language and culture are inseparable, language is the carrier of culture, and culture is the reflection of language [5]. Death is the ultimate destination of everything in the world. It is the most taboo word for mankind. Mankind tries its best to avoid or not mention it, but no one can escape from such a natural law from birth to death. Through the analysis of the euphemism of "death" in Chinese and Thai, it clearly see the similarities and differences in the euphemistic expressions used by the Chinese and Thai people towards people with different status and identity

or in different causes. Also, differences in culture and value orientation of China and Thailand have been shown. From the similarities and differences of euphemisms about the death of emperors and their relatives in China and Thailand, Thailand's hierarchical system is stricter than that in ancient China. From the similarities and differences in the euphemisms about the death of monks in China and Thailand, the religious culture of both China and Thailand has been influenced by religion, especially Buddhism. There is awe and worship of Buddhism in the hearts of Chinese and Thai people. From the similarities and differences between the Chinese and Thai euphemisms about the death of the elderly, both Chinese culture and Thai culture have values and orientations of respecting and loving the elderly. From the similarities and differences of the euphemisms about the death of heroes and martyrs in China and Thailand, both Chinese culture and Thai culture have values and orientations that respect and praise heroes. From the similarities and differences in the death euphemisms of giants, celebrities, talents, women and juveniles in China and Thailand, it can see the differences in national systems, historical and cultural factors and religious beliefs between China and Thailand. From the Chinese and Thai euphemisms about other types of death, these euphemisms are not very polite, and the Chinese euphemisms on death does not completely correspond to Thai expressions of death, showing the cultural differences between the two countries.

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