

SOMATIC CULTURAL CODE AND ITS ROLE IN THE CHINESE LINGUISTIC WORLDVIEW (BASED ON THE CONCEPTS OF “FACE” AND “HEART”)

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The study aims to describe the notion of somatic cultural code. The research pursues several objectives, such as: to describe the concepts of the linguistic worldview, the image of the world, the cultural code; to identify and systematize the somatic code of the Chinese language; to describe the lingua cognitive and linguacultural properties of the selected somatic concepts; to study the role of somatic components in lexical units; to investigate and describe the denotative meaning, functional-stylistic and emotional-expressive connotations.

Methodology: The author employs the descriptive-representative method to isolate and describe the key Chinese cultural somas. Besides, the conceptual analysis method was used to determine the frequency of somatic metonymy and its influence on linguistic worldview. The material of the study consists of 3,000 examples of somatic concepts.

Main Findings: The article offers an analysis of somatic cultural code and its role in the Chinese cultural and linguistic worldview. The research was conducted on the material of Chinese lexical and phraseological units. Despite the growing interest of modern linguistics in somatic cultural models, and in particular, in somatic metaphors, there are only a few studies on the lexico-semantic aspects of the Chinese language.

Applications of this study: The concepts of face and heart are primary elements of the Chinese cultural somatic code with its system of associations, images, and symbols. As part of the traditional linguistic worldview they shape mentality, character, traditions, and stereotypes. As practical and axiological means, they are embedded in the language and consciousness of native Chinese speakers.

Novelty/Originality of this study: It is one of the first studies of the Chinese somatic cultural code and its national and cultural specificity.

Keywords: Chinese linguistic worldview, conceptosphere of Chinese culture, somatic cultural code, the concept of Face, the concept of Heart, lingua culturology.

INTRODUCTION

The more flexible cultural boundaries get, the more problematic the issue of national identity becomes. Thus, many linguists are interested in the study of such concepts as linguistic personality, linguistic worldview, and cultural codes. The connection between national identity and language was underscored in the 19th century. For example, a German philologist, philosopher and one of the founders of linguistics, Wilhelm von Humboldt introduced the term *Innere Sprachform* (the inner form of language). Many researchers use it in connection with a linguistic worldview, which traditionally refers to conventional ideas about the world as reflected in the language. In his research Wilhelm von Humboldt introduced the following statements: 1) Material and spiritual culture are embodied in the language; 2) Every culture is national, and its national character is expressed in language in the form of worldview; 3) Language is present in each internal form; 4) The internal form of language is the expression of the “national spirit and culture”; 5) Languages the intermediary, uniting the most diverse individualities through communication ([Humboldt, 1984](#)).

Later, Humboldt's theory was elaborated by many scholars (see Neo-Humboldians) including Leo Weisgerber, who introduced the term "linguistic worldview" to convey the idea that every language is a repository of cognitive content. In *MotherTongueand the Formation of Spirit*, Leo Weisgerber asserts that national languages represent a particular understanding of the world which differs because nations have a different history, geographical location, and economic development. Consequently, all languages have different linguistic worldviews formed as a result of the historical development of the people and language. The linguistic worldview shapes the national mentality and thus the future of the nation. The linguistic worldview is passed from generation to generation with the language, value system, culture, mentality. According to Weisgerber, the linguistic worldview is manifested in the system of sounds, the articulatory structure, prosody (from the Greek *prosodia* – accent, chorus), morphology, syntax, paremiology, and others ([Weisgerber, 2004](#)).

LITERATURE REVIEW

German linguist J. G. Herder contributed to the studies of the linguistic worldview. He insisted that any language stems from the human soul which creates words to deal with sensations: "Language is the essential property of human consciousness" ([Herder, 2007](#)). J.G. Herder's views on the link between language and thinking inspired such scholars as E. Sapir, B. Whorf, X. Steinthal, A. Potebnya and other researchers.

Russian linguists such as N.Arutyunova, Y.Apresyan, A.Wierzbicka, Y.Stepanov, V.Telia, V.Gak, [N. Alefirenko](#), [A. Leontiev](#), [Z. Popova](#), [I. Sternin](#), V.Karasik, TanAoshuan, M. Kopylenko, A. Kaidar, E. Zhanpeisov, R. Syzdykova, [E.D. Suleimenova](#) devoted their studies to the linguistic worldview, the image of the world, the model of the world.

Chinese linguistics also has many studies on the linguistic worldview, the most prominent of which belong to Luo Changpei (罗常培), Shen Xiaolong(申小龙), and Zhang Gongjin(张公瑾).

U.Reshetyova, [Y. Zhuravleva](#), I.Kozhevnikova, I.Voitsekhovich, O.Donov, O.Khafizova examined the semantic characteristics of the Chinese language in their dissertations.

The comparative linguistic Russian-Chinese studies were done by F. Daulet, Cao Yongjie, GuoXini, Tian Jun, Zhao Zhiqiang, Shi Lei, Zheng Guangjie, etc.

In 1979, Russian philosopher A. N. Leontiev introduced the term "the image of the world" as a crucial step in explaining the basic postulates of sensory perception, described as a reflection of the objective reality by the human mind: "The problem of perception should be defined as the construction of a multidimensional image of the world, an image of reality by a human mind. In other words, the psychology of perception seeks to explain how in the course of human activity people create the image of the world - the world in which they live, act, create and change. It also tries to explain how the image of the world functions and shapes human activity in an objectively real world" ([Leontiev, 1983](#)).

The author of the article supports N. Alefirenko's ([2010](#)) views on semantics as a generator and transmitter of national culture. National cultural consciousness reflects the image of the world in the system of interrelated images. There are universal and national semantic structures determined by perception. The researcher emphasizes that national culture in a particular time and place shape the properties of the language as a whole and vice versa, national cultural codes are embedded in semantics.

There is a terminological confusion between the concept of the *image of the world* and the *linguistic worldview*. For example, V.A. Postovalova ([1988](#)) describes the image of the world as an activity: "A person feels the world, understands, comprehends, cognizes, interprets, reflects, imagines". E.D. Suleimenova ([2013](#)) insists that "the linguistic worldview differs from the image of the world". She adds that the language cannot be equated with thinking. The difference between the image of the world and the linguistic worldview is the difference between thought and language. The image of the world is embedded in thinking, while the linguistic worldview – in language. Language offers a specific organization of the world, but it does not reflect reality because it is the function of the mind.

The triad 'language-thought-communication' is an intertwined system. Thus, the perception of the world and the language create a conceptual system, a result of the human cognitive activity. Linguistics usually differentiates between the two notions: the language worldview and the conceptual worldview. The core of the conceptual worldview forms the information stated in notions, and the language worldview is based on the knowledge fixed in words and word combinations of a particular language. Language forms our concepts about the environment and helps us to objectify the world we live in, state and express our ideas and thoughts. To fix this knowledge in lexical units, each person should possess cognitive abilities to categorize and conceptualize the world.

As a system of signs shared by a group, cultural code affects intercultural communication. Cultural studies demand vast linguistic and cultural expertise, encyclopedic knowledge of the culture, history, philosophy, literature, ethnography, psychology. It is always a challenging task to tackle foreign cultural codes, but sometimes it offers a unique comparative perspective.

Cultural signs can be either verbal or non-verbal ([Gudkov&Kovshova, 2007](#)). Y. Lotman ([2015](#)) claimed that the language as the underlying human code consists of "three elements (text, culture, memory) designed to create semiotic space around a person and society through constant renegotiation" ([Martynova, 2018](#)).

We support Krasnykh's view that cultural codes are nationally determined and culturally conditioned and cultural space is created by cultural codes ([Krasnykh, 2003](#)). In our study, we approach metaphor and metonymy as a means of social code manifestation in the semantics of Chinese phraseology. In the article, the cultural code is often used as an umbrella term that refers to signs, meanings, concepts, ideas, and even stereotypes ([Zhinkin, 1996](#)). The cultural code works at the subconscious level while concepts are pragmatic and predetermine free associations ([Krasnykh, 2003](#)).

D. Likhachev ([1993](#)) viewed the concept as "the result of a collision of the word's vocabulary with personal human experience". His approach to the triad of 'language – consciousness – culture' shaped the linguistic school founded by

Russian philosopher C. Askoldov-Alekseev and developed by A. Wierzbicka, Y. Stepanov, V.V. Kolesov, S. Nikitina, N. Arutyunova. Most of them agreed that the concept is a psycho-mental phenomenon at the intersection of signs and culture.

According to E. Kubryakova, "concept is a mental unit <...>, a mental resource, an information structure. It is a unit of operational memory, language, and cultural framework. The whole worldview is reflected in the human mind" (Kubryakova et al., 1996). Thus, the concept is a unit of mental extralinguistic reality in the human mind. The concept is "melted in a sign" (Kubryakova et al., 1996).

Our study examines the key somatic concepts in the Chinese linguistic worldview: in other words, we study the motivation behind the signifier. N. Mechkovskaya (2004) calls such concepts *signs-symbols* with secondary motivation. She also insightfully notes that the Chinese language has many units with secondary motivation (Mechkovskaya, 2004). The research material of the current study includes the secondarily motivated signs in the Chinese phraseological units of *chengyu* (quaternary idioms) and *Guanyunbyui* (three-part idioms). They have vivid expressive imagery, stable composition, and pragmatic function: they are the "most stable phraseological category that transmits the cultural codes and shape national character for thousands of years" (Zhuravleva, 2007).

Among basic cultural codes, V. Krasnykh (2001) mentions: 1) somatic (body), 2) spatial; 3) temporary; 4) subject; 5) biomorphic; 6) spiritual codes. He also claims that the somatic code is the primary code for any culture. It is also the most ancient of the existing: "A human being had first to explore his body and then the world repeating through "a hermeneutic circle" at a new stage. While exploring the world, a human being found a place for himself. In other words, a person learned to describe the world extrapolating his knowledge about his body on the reality which is fixed in the somatic code of culture. It is a constant process of exploration, description, application, and prescription of the knowledge about the world" (Krasnykh, 2001).

V. Krasnykh (2001) also describes the cultural codes as "nets" that culture "throws" on the world to divide, categorize, structure and evaluate. We support Krasnykh's view and use it as a cornerstone of our research. We also suggest that cultural codes can be viewed as puzzles and mosaic. To a certain extent, they have a similar function and contribute to the development of figurative and logical thinking, attention, perception, in particular, the distinction of individual elements according to color, shape, size.

We suggest that cultural code is like a jigsaw puzzle consisting of different pieces: *somatic, zoomorphic, spiritual, spatial, temporal, and others*. Because the somatic code is one of the foundational, we choose it as the object of study. The conceptual analysis is done within the framework of the concept, the content and the interpretation field. According to Z. Popova, concepts have "neurolinguistic nature of the universal objective code: the sensory image is captured in the concept." The sensory images can be perceptual or cognitive. Cognitive concepts often rely on the metaphorization of an object or phenomenon. The interpretation field is formed by cognitive features "which in one way or another interpret the basic concept, flow out of it to represent or evaluate" (Popova&Stermin, 2007).

Following Z. Popova and I. Sternin (2005) who suggested that human thinking is non-verbal and carried out in universal subject code, we believe that a concept is a mental unit that exists in human consciousness, a universal unit of mental activity, a quantum of structured knowledge.

In this respect, M. Pimenova (2005) offers to employ several steps for conceptual analysis. "The first step is to examine the lexical meaning and internal form of the word representing the concept. The second step is to identify the synonymic row. The third step is to categorize the concept in a linguistic worldview. The fourth step is to determine the secondary conceptualization and to describe the conceptual metaphor and metonymy. The fifth step is to reconstruct a scenario of conceptualization in time and space, its subject, object, purpose, conditions of origin, time and place of action. Such a scenario explains emergence and changes to the concept".

Human body parts play an essential symbolic role in the Chinese somatic cultural code. For example in the Chinese language man is often represented by the following concepts: *head* - 头[tóu]: 我公司头头 [wǒgōngsītóutou] – a head of our company, 特务头子 [tèwùtóuzi] – a head of counter-intelligence; *body* - 身[shēn]: 以身作则 [yǐshēnzhuòzé] – to give a personal example; to serve as an example; 修身[xiūshēn]: - to work on yourself, to improve; *hand* - 手[shǒu]: 亲手[qīnshǒu] – by hand, personally (do something); 水手 [shuǐshǒu] – "water + hand" = a sailor; 名手 [míngshǒu] – "fame + hand" = a celebrity; 老手 [lǎoshǒu] – "old/respectable + hand" = an experienced person; *heart* 心肝 [xīngān]: "heart + liver" = a beloved/darling; 有心人[yǒuxīnrén] – man with heart = a determined person; *nose* - 鼻[bí] - nose meant a newborn (human, animal), as well as a slave (in dialect); *eyes* - 目[mù] - chief, senior; head: 吏目[lì mù] – senior of a group of junior employees; *meat* - 肉[ròu] - meat: 孩子是妈妈身上掉下一块肉 [háizhishì mā ma shēnshàngdiào xià yí kuài ròu] – "a child is a piece of meat, separated from the body of its mother"; *gallbladder* - 胆[dan] – 他胆大[tādǎndà] "he has a large gallbladder" means "he is brave", 胆小[dǎnxiǎo] – "a small gallbladder" means a cowardly/gingerly. For Chinese people, the gallbladder is a symbolic receptacle of courage, bravery, and valor.

The Chinese somatic cultural code often employs the following key concepts: 耳[er] - ear, 眼[yǎn] - eyes, 目[mù] - eyes, 首[shǒu] / 头[tóu] - head, 手[shǒu] - hand, 脚[jiǎo] - foot, 心[xīn] - heart, 肝[gān]: - liver, 肺[fèi] - lungs, 身[shēn]: - body, 皮[pí] - skin, 肉[ròu] - flesh, 嘴[zǔi] - mouth, 背[bèi] - back, 眉[méi] - eyebrows.

Since our study is an attempt to examine the primary somatic concepts in Chinese phraseology, we take a close look at such basic concepts as *face* and *heart*.

THE CONCEPT "FACE" – 面子 [MIÀNZI] / 脸 [LIǎN]

The concept of face is at the center of the Chinese cultural somatic code. Many foreign scientists, travelers, and missionaries testified to its importance. For example, English missionary A. McGowan wrote in the 19th century that face "is one of the most important and significant words for the Chinese. Thanks to the concepts embedded in this word, every Chinese is an actor, and the whole Chinese life is a theatre where comedies are played out at every step with the purpose of appearing more worthy in the eyes of others" ([McGowan, 2017](#)).

Living in China in the late 19th century an American missionary Arthur Smith writes in his book *Characteristics of Chinese*: "For the Chinese people, the face is not just the front of the head. This word has a more complex meaning." He continues that "... offering a nice beautiful gift to someone means "give him a face" (给面子), to be accused of mistake or misdemeanor means "to lose face" (丢面子)" ([Smith, 1890](#)).

The Chinese concept "face" conveys the following significant cultural values:

- 1) *Face is a status, prestige, good name*: 他屡屡失败以后, 这次胜利挽回了他的面子 [tā lǚ lǚ shī bài yǐ hòu, zhè cì shèng lì wǎn huí le tā de miàn zi] - After the failure, the victory helped him to regain his good name (lit. "recover the face") 我只不过在帮你保全面子 [wǒ zhǐ bù guò zài bāng nǐ bǎo quán miàn zi] - I just want to help you keep your good name (lit. "to save face");
- 2) *Face is a reputation; dignity*: 男人爱面子, 女人爱名声 [nán rén ài miàn zi, nǚ rén ài míng shēng] - A man takes care of his reputation (lit. "loves the face"); a woman cares for her good name; 不要怕丢面子 [bùyào pà diū miàn zi] - Do not be afraid to lose face; 不要脸 [bùyào liǎn] - A shameless person (lit. "do not need a face", "has no face"); 你把我的脸丢光了! - [nǐ bǎ wǒ de liǎn diū guāng le] - You disgraced me (lit. "You made me lose my face");
- 3) *Face is honor*: 我们可当不起这个大面子 [wǒ men kě dāng bù qǐ zhè ge dà miàn zi] - We do not deserve such honor (lit. "We do not have such a big face");
- 4) *Face is importance*: 我的面子有多大呀? [wǒ de miàn zi yǒu duō dà ya] - How important is my personality? (lit. "how big is my face?); 请不到你是我面子不够大? [qǐng bù dào nǐ shì wǒ miàn zi bù gòu dà] - I'm not so cool (lit. "my face is not so big") to ask you out?
- 5) *Give/sell a face, do (or not do) a favor; have (or not have) a favor*: 你们俩是老同学,你总得给他点面子[nǐ men liǎng shì lǎo xué, nǐ zǒng dé gěi tā diǎn miàn zi] - You are classmates, you should show him more kindness (lit. "Give him a little face"); 你就卖面子帮他他一次吧, 他会终生感激你的! [nǐ jiù mài miàn zi bāng tā yí cì ba, tā huì zhōng shēng gǎn jī nǐ de] - Do favour! (lit. "sell a face"), Help him (lit. "sell a face")! He will never forget your kindness!; 不是我不买你的面子, 这事实实在在不好办 [bù shì wǒ bù mǎi nǐ de miàn zi, zhè shì shí zài zài bù hǎo bàn] - It's not that I do not want to help you (lit. "I do not buy your face"), it's just really hard to do.

THE CONCEPT "HEART"

Heart is also one of the key concepts in the somatic code of Chinese culture. As Tan AoShuang([2012](#)) writes: "For the Chinese, heart represents a variety of emotions and feelings including joy, sadness, fear, envy".

Thus, *heart* represents emotional information and values:

1. *Heart is thought, mind, reason, intellect, reason*: 心不在焉 [xīn bù zài yān] - absorbed in thoughts, preoccupied (lit. "heart is not here"); 有口无心 [yǒu kǒu wú xīn] - to say smth. without any malicious intent (lit. "there is a mouth, but no heart"); 她心很灵 [tā xīn hěn líng] - she has lively mind, she's smart (lit. "she has a living heart"); 你死了这条心吧 [Nǐ sǐ le zhè tiáo xīn ba] - do not even think (lit. "let your heart die");

2. *Heart is will, determination; an aspiration*: 没心思去那里 [méixīnsīqùnlàlǐ] - no desire to go there (lit. "no heart to go there"); 心比天高 [xīnbǐtiāngāo] - an ambitious person (lit. "the heart is higher than the sky");
3. *Heart is soul; spirituality*: 心安理得 [xīnānlǐdé] - to feel moral satisfaction (lit. "with a calm heart"); 心潮澎湃 [xīncháopéngpài] - to experience spiritual elevation; 心腹之患 [xīnfùzhīhuàn] - lit. "internal ulcer, a deadly disease." Compare to Russian: *душаболит* (*soul hurts*); 心安理得 [xīn'ānlǐdé] - lit. "with a calm heart." Compare to English: *peace of mind*; 心烦意乱 [xīnfānyìluàn] - a restless person, lit. "anxiety in the heart, chaos in the thoughts." Compare to Russian: *насердцекошкикисребут; мятежнаядуша* (Cats are scratching at the heart; a restless soul);
4. *Heart is the measure of emotions*: 心如刀割 [xīnrúdāogē] - afflicted with sorrow, lit. "the heart is as if slashed with a knife." Compare to Russian: *сердцекровьюобливается* (*heart bleeds*); 心胆俱裂 [xīndǎnjùliè] - be frozen with horror; to be frightened to death, lit. "heart and gallbladder burst"; 心痒难抓 [xīnyǎngnǎnzhuā] - can not cope with desires and emotions, lit. "heart itch is difficult to calm";
5. *Heart is an object and has different qualities*: 心如铁石 [xīnrútiěshí] - cruel, lit. "heart is like iron and stone." Compare to Russian: *каменноесердце* (a heart of stone); 心直口快 [xīnzhíkǒukuài] - a frank person: lit. "heart is straight, speech is direct"; 缺心眼儿 [quēxīnyǎn r] - an idiot, a simpleton, lit. "have not enough heart"; 铁心木肠 [tiěxīnmùcháng] - a ruthless man, lit. "iron heart and wooden bowels"; 小心眼儿 [xiǎoxīnyǎnr] - a small-minded person, lit. "little heart". Compare to Russian: *мелочнаядушонка* (petty soul);
6. *Heart is a living organism, person*: 有心人 [yǒuxīnrén] - a determined person, lit. "a person with a heart"; 心不两用 [xīnbùliǎngyòng] - a multitasking person, lit. "heart can not be in two places"; 开口见心 [kāikǒujiànxīn] - an unsophisticated person, lit. "opens mouth and you can see the heart."

Many of the above-mentioned examples are specific to Chinese phraseology even though *heart* and *face* are universal somatic symbols in the expressive figures of speech. Cultural codes set cultural standards and predetermine the evaluation in the structure of the language ([Krasnykh, 2001](#)).

CONCLUSION

In the Chinese language, the concepts of *head*, *heart*, *body*, *eye*, *hand*, and *ear* are often employed to describe human character with its characteristics and attributes: 公司的头头 [gōngsī de tóutou] - head of the company; 你是我的眼睛 [nǐshìwǒ de yǎnjīng] - you are my eyes; 孩子是妈妈的心肝宝贝 [háizishīmāma de xīngānbǎobèi] - a child is a mother's heart; 亲手做的 [qīnshǒuzuò de] - "made by own hands" - personally done; 墙垣有耳 [qiángyuányǒuěr] - the walls have ears - be aware of eavesdroppers.; someone has his ear to the wall.; 心不两用 [xīnbùliǎngyòng] - "heart cannot be in two places" - a person cannot do many things at the same time; 吏目 [lì mù] - the senior of a group of junior employees.

In the non-verbal communication, *nose* is often used in the meaning of the first person singular: 我 [wǒ] - I. Speaking of himself, the Chinese often points to the nose with his forefinger.

In Chinese phraseology, *face* is one of the basic concepts that encodes such values as: *high status, prestige, good name, reputation (good and bad); dignity, honor, significance, importance*. In Chinese phraseology, *heart* conveys the following concepts: *idea, mind, intelligence, intellect, will, determination, emotions, emotional intensity*.

The concepts of *face* and *heart* are primary elements of the Chinese cultural somatic code with its system of associations, images, and symbols. As part of the traditional linguistic worldview they shape mentality, character, traditions, and stereotypes. As practical and axiological means, they are embedded in the language and consciousness of native Chinese speakers.

In the article *Cultural codes: Who Holds the Key?* Jenny Hyatt and Helen Simons describe what it means to be a stranger. They claim that being a stranger involves constant evaluation which requires an understanding of the specific context, norms, and values, both verbal and non-verbal. Failure to decode the signs leads to misunderstandings, conflicts, and disagreements ([Hyatt & Simons, 1999](#)). We support the opinion of the admired authors. In addition we would like to add couple of quotes from ancient philosophers: *Ignorantia non est argumentum* (Spinoza), *Vere scire est per causasscire* (Aristotle), because - *Qui quare tire pettit*.

A BRIEF DICTIONARY OF CHINESE PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH SOMATIC COMPONENTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION IN RUSSIAN

- 白手起家[báishǒuqǐjiā] - lit. to build a house with bare *hands*; fig. to create from scratch;
- 白头偕老[báitóuxiélǎo] – lit. together to gray *heads*; fig. Live together until old age!
- 搬起石头砸自己的脚[bānqǐshítouzázìjǐ de jiǎo] – lit. to pick up a stone and drop it on the *feet*; fig. to cause self-harm, to fall into a self-made pit;
- 包藏窝心[bāocángwōxīn] - lit. to hide an insult in the *heart*; fig. to conceal insult;
- 抱头鼠窜[bàotóushǔcuàn] – lit. to hide *head* in hands and sneak away like a rat; fig. to run in panic, to take flight;
- 背井离乡[bèijǐnglíxiāng] – lit. to leave a well behind your back, to leave your native land; to leave native places; fig. to live in a foreign land, to leave your native land;
- 背信弃义[bèixìnqìyì] – lit. to turn *your back* on your duties; fig. to break your promise;
- 笨口拙舌[bènkǒuzhuōshé] – lit. inept *mouth* and clumsy *tongue*; fig. tongue-tied; helpless in dispute;
- 闭口不谈[bìkǒubùtán] – lit. to shut *your mouth* and not to talk; fig. keep your mouth shut;
- 遍体鳞伤[biàntǐlínshāng] – lit. the whole *body* in wounds; fig. not a living place; there is no place left alive;
- 长舌之妇[chángshézhīfù] - lit. a woman with a long *tongue*; fig. a gossip; ratchet;
- 称体裁衣[chèntǐzàiyī] – lit. to cut the dress on the *body*; fig. to be realistic; to not break away from reality;
- 赤子之心[chìzǐzhīxīn] – lit. a childish *heart*; fig. childish simplicity; an innocent soul;
- 冲口而出[chōngkǒuérchū] – lit. to fly from the *mouth*; fig. direct speech, say what came to mind;
- 抽筋剥皮[chōujīnbāopí] – lit. pulling the *veins* and ripping off the *skin*; fig. torture; torment;
- 愁眉不展[chóuméibùzhǎn] – lit. to not relax *frown eyebrows*; fig. frown; to be darker than a cloud;
- 出头露面[chūtóulùmiàn] – lit. to stick *your head out* and show your *face*; fig. to show up, to appear in society;
- 触目惊心[chùmùjīngxīn] - lit. to frighten the *eyes* and scare the *heart*; fig. to stun, shock; to spook;
- 吹胡子瞪眼睛[chuīhúzydèngyǎnjīng] – lit. to fluff the *mustache* and goggle the *eyes*; fig. angry; be furious; lose one's temper;
- 垂头丧气[chuítóu sang qì] – lit. to hang *your head* and fall in spirit; fig. to hang down the head; to give up;
- 椎心泣血[chuíxīnqìxuè] – lit. to beat into the *chest* and to cry *with blood*; fig. mourn, to grieve;
- 春风满面[chūnfēngmǎnmiàn] – lit. the spring wind on the *face*; fig. to shine with happiness;
- 唇齿相依[chúncǐxiāngyī] – lit. to close like *lips* and teeth; fig. similar;
- 唇枪舌剑[shūnqiāngshéjiàn] – lit. lips are spears and tongue is sword; fig. a verbal dispute; a heated argument;
- 打落牙齿和血吞[dǎluòyáchǐhéxuètūn] – lit. to swallow a loose tooth; fig. to restrain tears; to repress grief;
- 打开眼界[dǎkāiyǎnjiè] – lit. to open *your eyes* wide; fig. to expand horizons;
- 当耳旁风[dàngěr pang fēng] – lit. like the wind by the *ears*; fig. to pass by the ears; to hear nothing at all;

耳听八方 [ěrtīngbāfāng] - lit. *ears* hear eight sides; fig. to keep your ears open; all ears;

肝肠寸断 [gānchángcùnduàn] – lit. the *liver* and the *entrails* are torn into small pieces; fig. to strongly grieve; the heart bleeds; to be heartbroken by grief;

火烧眉毛 [huǒshāoméimáo] - lit. fire burns his *eyebrows*; fig. an emergency;

祸从口出 [huòcóngkǒuchū] – lit. trouble comes out of the *mouth*; fig. a long tongue will not end well. My tongue - my enemy.

于人假手 [jǐàshǒuyúrén] - lit. doing business with smb's *hands*; fig. to rake fire with someone else's hands;

口黄未退 [kǒuhuángwèituì] – lit. the milk on the *lips* has not dried out; fig. a young inexperienced person;

面如土色 [miànrútūsè] – lit. *face* of color of the earth; fig. deadly pale (from fear, from illness);

抹一鼻子灰 [mǒyībízihuī] - lit. to hit dust with *your nose*; fig. to be left with nothing;

菩萨低眉 [púsàdīméi] – lit. Bodhisattva lowers the *eyebrows*; fig. with a kind expression on one's face; kind-looking;

人老心不老 [rénlǎoxīnbùlǎo] – lit. a man has a hundred flies, but his *heart* does not get old;

fig. to be old, but young in heart;

三寸不烂之舌 [sāncùn bùlǎnzhīshé] - lit. *tongue* in three tsuns; fig. a glib of tongue, an eloquent tongue;

三缄其口 [sānjiānqíkǒu] – lit. to tie one's *mouth* three times; fig. to be reluctant to speak or voice one's opinion, to remain silent;

伸手不见五指 [shēnshǒubùjiànwúzhǐ] - lit. when stretch *out your hand* - you cannot see *your fingers*; fig.: pitch dark; cannot see even a finger;

身在宝山不识宝 [shēnzāibǎoshānbùshí bǎo] – lit. the *body* is in the golden mountains, but does not appreciate it; fig. to not value your happiness;

十个指头不能一般齐 [shígèzhǐtoubùnéngyībānqí] - lit. *ten fingers on the hands* cannot be the same length; fig. nothing is absolutely the same;

视同手足 [shìtóngshǒuzú] - lit. to count your own *hands* and *feet*; fig: like a relative, like a brother;

守口如瓶 [shǒukǒurúping] – lit. to keep *your mouth* shut like a corked bottle; fig. to keep your mouth shut;

死皮赖脸 [sǐpílailiǎn]– lit. dead *skin*, lying *face*; fig. shameless, thick-skinned;

驷不及舌 [sìbùjíshé] - lit. the four horses cannot catch the *tongue*; fig. a word spoken is past recalling;

铁石心肠 [tiěshíxīncháng] - lit. the *heart* of stone; fig. heartless; hardhearted.

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