

A Descriptive Evaluation of Animals: Insect, Bird and Reptile Names Metaphor in Edo Discourses

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Abstract

This research delves into the metaphoric utilization of animal names in the context of Edo language utterances and discourses. In the realm of conceptual metaphor, various cultures employ elements from their societies to vividly compare situations and personalities, often with the aim of rectifying certain undesirable social behaviors. Metaphorical use of animal names is a linguistic phenomenon where specific animal names, as is the case in the Edo culture, are employed metaphorically to attribute animal-like characteristics to humans. This is done with the intention of compelling the person being compared to amend certain undesirable traits. Currently, there is a paucity of literature on this particular aspect of the language, which has motivated our research in this direction. The Edo language is notably rich in the metaphorical use of animal names, making it imperative to analyze and document these linguistic expressions. Our research primarily draws data from written literary works in the Edo language, including short stories, plays, and poems. These literary forms are abundant in metaphorical language and serve as moral compasses for the language, imparting cultural values and norms. The data extracted from these sources are subjected to analysis using the basic linguistic theory of description. This paper successfully identifies and elucidates various behaviors, physical attributes, choices, and states represented through the figurative use of animal names in Edo. These encompass a wide range of aspects, including social vices, occupational roles, physical appearances, and life choices made by individuals in the community.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Metaphors, Edo language, discourse and animal names.

Introduction

This research delves into the metaphors surrounding the use of animal names in Edo language expressions. In academic discourse, this phenomenon is commonly referred to as the metaphorical utilization of animal names in Edo. This linguistic practice involves selectively employing certain animal names from the Edo lexicon in a metaphorical manner. It's important to note that not all animal names in the Edo language undergo metaphorical or metaphoric use. Given the richness of the Edo language in the metaphorical application of animal names, a comprehensive analysis and documentation of this linguistic aspect are warranted.

The primary objective of this research is to assess the metaphorical use of specifically chosen animal names within the Edo language. Drawing upon the insights of Lackoff (1987:388), who elucidates that "metaphor is the expression of understanding one concept in terms of another concept, where there is some similarity or correlation between the two concepts," we explore the idea that metaphors operate by establishing a connection or correlation between two concepts. Furthermore, Lackoff emphasizes the presence of both connotative and denotative meanings within expressions made metaphorically. To qualify as a metaphor, there must indeed be discernible similarities or correlations between the two concepts, thereby transforming the expression into an idiom.

The Edo Language

The Edo language is the native tongue spoken across most of the territory encompassed within the Benin division of the former Mid-Western State of Nigeria. According to Omozuwa (2003:246), "Historical accounts indicate that the term 'Edo' came into common use during the reign of Oba Ewuare (1440-1473). The term 'Edo' is employed to refer to not only the language but also the geographical region inhabited by its speakers and the speakers themselves, who identify as 'ivbièdó'. 'Edo' can be described as the generic term for a group of people who share a common ancestor and speak a common language, albeit with regional variations depending on their proximity to the ancestral roots situated in and around present-day Benin City. The Edo language is spoken in seven of the eighteen Local Government Areas in Edo state. These seven local government areas are Oredo, Ikpoba-okha, Egor, Ovia South-West, Ovia North-East, Orhionmwon, and Uhumwuode. Omoregbe (2012:10) notes that Edo is largely a homogenous language, though regional varieties exist in certain local government areas, including Oza Aibiokunla, Oza Nogogo, Oza Nisi, Odiguetue, Errua, Oke, Urhonigbe, Amagba, Iyekorhionmwo, among others.

Regarding the language's writing system, Omozuwa (2010:10) posits that the Edo language encompasses thirty-nine orthographic symbols that correspond to sounds. Among these symbols, twenty-seven represent consonants, while twelve represent vowels. Below, we present the orthography and phonemic representation of sounds in the Edo language, as proposed by Omozuwa (2010:10).

Table 1: Letters of the Edo vowels and their corresponding phonetic symbols

(a) Vowels

	Oral vowels							Nasal vowels				
Orthographic symbols	i	E	ẹ	a	u	o	ọ	i	ẹ	A	u	ọ
Phonetic symbols	[i]	[E]	[ẹ]	[a]	[u]	[o]	[ọ]	[ĩ]	[ẽ]	[ã]	[ũ]	[õ]

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Table 2: (a): Letters of the Edo consonants and their corresponding phonetic symbols

(b) Consonants (stops)

Orthographic symbols	p	B	t	d	k	G	kp	gb
Phonetic symbols	[p]	[b]	[t]	[d]	[k]	[g]	[kp]	[gb]

Table 2 (b): Letters of the Edo consonants and their corresponding phonetic symbols

(c) Consonants (Fricative/rhotics/approximants/laterals)

Orthographic symbols	V b	f	V v	s	Z z	r	r r	r r	l	Y h	k h	G h	w	h
Phonetic symbols	[β]	[f]	[v]	[s]	[z]	[λ]	[r]	[r̥]	[l]	[j]	[x]	[ɣ]	[w]	[h]

Table 2(c): Letters of the Edo consonants and their corresponding phonetic symbols

(d) Nasal consonants

Orthographic symbols	M	mw	n	ny	nw
Phonetic symbols	[m]	[m̃]	[n]	[ɲ]	[ɲw]

In addition to all these, he states that Edo language possesses two tonemes. The low tone and the high tone in the nominal class and the two tonemes, low and rising tone in the verb class. The two basic tones on nouns form four tonal patterns in disyllabic nouns of VCV types. Unlike English language, Edo language is a tone-based language. While English language uses stress to cause change in meaning of words, Edo language uses tones to achieve this task. Edo operates an open syllable type. This is to say that every noun begins and ends with a pronounceable vowel. Verbs begin with a consonant and ends with a vowel. With this, one can say that all word in Edo whether or not it begins with a vowel or a consonant end with a pronounceable vowel.

Methodology

The data utilized in this research predominantly consists of oral narratives. Our primary data source is derived from oral interviews conducted in various areas within Benin City. The informants involved in these interviews fall within the age range of 40 to 70 years and were selected from both urban and suburban settings,

specifically Ugbekun and Umelu. These informants are long-time residents of their respective locations and hold at least a primary school leaving certificate, ensuring a certain level of linguistic competence and cultural familiarity.

Data collection involved conducting oral interviews with informants, using a notepad and pen to document their responses. To enhance data reliability and validity, a verification process was employed. Data collected from one informant in a particular location were cross-checked with another informant from a different location to validate the accuracy and consistency of the information. When multiple informants corroborated the same data, it was considered reliable and included in our dataset.

The theoretical framework guiding our research falls within the realm of descriptive linguistics. This framework adopts an inductive approach and serves the purpose of both presentation and discussion of our collected data. Descriptive linguistics is particularly suited for language documentation, emphasizing the comprehensive analysis of linguistic phenomena. In our purely descriptive analysis, several activities are integral to our research inquiry, including but not limited to the following:

1. Data Collection: Conducting oral interviews with informants to elicit language samples and cultural insights.
2. Transcription: Transcribing recorded interviews to capture the spoken language accurately.
3. Data Verification: Cross-checking and validating information across multiple informants and locations to ensure data accuracy.
4. Data Coding: Assigning codes and categories to the collected data for systematic organization and analysis.
5. Analysis: Examining the collected data for patterns, themes, and linguistic features related to the metaphorical use of animal names.
6. Interpretation: Drawing insights and conclusions based on the observed linguistic patterns and cultural context.
7. Documentation: Compiling and preserving the data for future reference, contributing to the preservation of the Edo language and its cultural nuances.

This methodological approach ensures a rigorous and comprehensive investigation into the metaphoric and metaphorical use of animal names within the Edo language, shedding light on both linguistic and cultural dimensions. The descriptive work therefore involves the identification of a linguistic community where primary data will be sourced and kind of data to be collected. (Lehmann, 2001). The theory that is adopted under the descriptive approach for the present paper is the Basic Linguistic Theory, a term coined by Dixon (1997:128).

The relevance of the basic linguistic theory to the present paper lies in the fact that it allows the research to stay focus on the data collected. The data collected is analyzed by the use of traditional grammar terms like “noun” which is the main point of the research. The utterances where animal names are used metaphorically

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will be categorized and analyzed based on the observed functions they perform. The data analysis format in the basic linguistic theory requirement will be specifically used for the analysis of the data collected with reference to Edo animal names. It describes the unconscious rules that speakers of the Edo employ when using animal names metaphorically.

Review of Literature

In conceptual review, attention is given to the difference postulations or accounts about a phenomenon and how these accounts contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon. We will pay a special attention to the nature of metaphor in communication as there presently exist little or no literature on this in the Edo language.

In theory, metaphor serves at least three vital communicative functions, as suggested by Ortony in (1975). In the first instance, metaphors have the potential to convey ideas that are challenging or even impossible to articulate when confined to the constraints of literal language. The presence of evidence supporting this "inexpressibility" claim would significantly bolster the argument for the indispensability of metaphors in our communication (Ortony, 2002).

For instance, in the realm of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural investigations, Alverson's seminal work in 1994 revealed the ubiquity of the TIME IS SPACE conceptual metaphor. This profound concept transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries, manifesting itself in languages as diverse as English, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, and Sesotho. Moreover, a multitude of researchers have subsequently proposed that this very same conceptual metaphor permeates numerous other languages (Kövecses, 2006).

For instance, Kövecses (2000), drawing upon insights from linguists who are native speakers of various languages, highlights the existence of the metaphor AN ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER in languages such as English, Japanese, Chinese, Hungarian, Wolof, Zulu, Polish, and more, albeit to varying degrees. Ning Yu's research, spanning 1995 and 1998, not only reaffirms the presence of the metaphor HAPPINESS IS UP in both English and Chinese but also underscores its cross-cultural applicability.

The intricate web of metaphors encapsulated within the Event Structure metaphor, as elucidated by Lakoff in 1993, is another testament to the universality of metaphorical thinking. Submetaphors such as CAUSES ARE FORCES, STATES ARE CONTAINERS, PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, ACTION IS MOTION, and DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS (TO MOTION) transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries, surfacing not only in English but also in languages as distinct as Chinese (as observed by Yu in 1998) and Hungarian (as documented by Kövecses in 2005).

Furthermore, Sweetser's (1990) discerning analysis unveiled the pervasive presence of metaphors like THE KNOWING IS SEEING and the more overarching THE MIND IS THE BODY across a multitude of European languages, suggesting

their candidacy as (near-) universal metaphors. As a culminating example, the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1999) delves into the rich tapestry of metaphors employed to describe one's inner life in English, further underscoring the profound influence of metaphorical constructs on human cognition and language, transcending linguistic boundaries.

Presentation and Discussion of Data

In this section, the data collected for the present project are analyzed. Using relevant categories and groupings, the animals are grouped under four headings namely insects, birds, reptiles and mammals. The essence is to create a clear-cut distinction between the concepts captured within the context of the uses of the animal names under analysis.

Metaphoric use of Insects

This analyses that follow is concerned with the metaphoric use of insects in Edo expressions. The various insects as well as their examples in use are shown in the sub sections below.

Ikian (fly)

The fly as an insect is a symbol of annoyance in all its ramifications as it causes a lot of discomfort to people. This insect is used to indicate negativity in all forms of use due to the discomfort it causes to humans generally. It can be used to depict stubbornness, dirtiness, subordination and cowardice. Consider the examples in (1) below:

1. a. A gha gu Osasu guan, O gha ru vbena ikian.
One will with Osasu talk, He will do like fly.
Osasu behaves like a fly when he is being spoken to.
Osasu is often restless when he is being advised.
- b. Uyi lele mwe vbena ikian.
Uyi follow me like fly.
Uyi follows me around like a fly.
Uyi sticks with me all the time.
- c. Iran ru vbena ikian rhumwunda evbare.
They do like fly because food.
They are behaving like flies because of food.
They are running around because of food.

The data presented here demonstrates a compressed comparison of the behaviours that are seen as derogatory in the Edo society and as such the discourse is used to discourage such.

Edon (Termite)

This insect is used to indicate that a person likes to come out when his or her comfort zone is disturbed or likes to walk at night. See the examples in (2) below:

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2. a. Osasu la edian vbena ghe edon.
Osasu come out like termite.
Osasu comes out as termites do.
Osasu is only seen when there is rain or when he is disturbed.
- b. Uyi ne edon ma I se owa.
Uyi the termite not never reach house.
Uyi the termite hasn't gotten home.
Uyi is a night walker and rarely comes back early.
- c. Uyi khiṇ edon fo ne.
Uyi turn termite finish already.
Uyi has completely become a termite.
Uyi now prefers to come out at night.

The social behaviours depicted here are not necessarily derogatory but an exceptional characteristic associated with certain individuals in the society. This is typically employed to identify and in some cases defend instances of the manifestations of these behaviours especially to those not conversant with such.

Asaka (Ant)

There are different species of ants so this animal names is used to contextually refer to a case of hurtful and hidden betrayal, shrewdness, craftiness, hard work and team work. Examples are:

3. a. Uyi ru mwe vbe ne asaka ru omwa.
Uyi do me as the ant do person.
Uyi did to me what ants do to people.
I was secretly injured or hurt by Uyi.
- b. Emwi asaka ne O ru mwe re kakabo da mwe.
Thing ant that he do me very well pain me.
The antish behavior of him greatly hurt me.
I was deeply hurt by the secret betrayal I received from him.
- c. Osasu sa mwe vbane asaka sa omwa.
Osasu bite me like ant bite person.
Osasu bit me as an ant would have bitten a person.
I was deeply hurt by Osasu.

The ant is typically seen as an epitome of productivity and teamwork or unity in the Edo society and it is as such employed as a tool of advice/encouragement to persons. It is also used as a tool of conflict resolution and to encourage the successful execution of a project or an assignment as the case may be.

Metaphoric Use of Birds

In the Edo society, birds of prey as well as domestic birds can be used in relation to a person's behavior or looks. In the sub sections that follow, a number of the metaphoric uses of these birds are shown.

Ọkhọkhọ (Fowl)

This bird's name is used to describe the walk or looks of a person. It can be used derogatorily or in congratulatory discourses. Some examples are:

4. a. Uyi khian vbene ọkhọkhọ ne ẹhoho zanzan ifen ọghe ẹre.
Uyi walk like fowl that wind scatter feather of it.
Uyi is walking like a fowl whose feathers are ruffled by the wind.
Uyi is walking like someone who has been disgraced.
- b. Osasu guọ vbene ọkhọkhọ ne amẹ gbe.
Osasu shake like fowl that water beat.
Osasu is shaking like a fowl drenched by the rain.
Osasu is fidgeting out of fear or guilt.
- c. Uwa ru vbe na ọkhọkhọ nọ miẹ emwi re.
Uwa do like fowl that swallow thing eat.
Uwa is behaving like a fowl that swallowed something.
Uwa is behaving like someone who is keeping a secret.

A fowl is typically an animal used for a variety of purposes in the Edo society as it can be used to depict both negative and positive attributes. It is therefore used for description, encouragement and discouragement as the case may be in discourses.

Ọkporhu (Cock)

The cock is a male fowl that is often distinguished by its bright crown and in the traditional Edo society was used as a marker of time especially at dawn with its crowing. This bird is used in relation to the way a person behaves, talks, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

5. a. Ọkporhu ẹre erha mwẹ khin.
Cock that father me is.
My father is a cock.
My father plays his fatherly role well.
- b. Osasu hiọ rre vbene ọkporhu.
Osasu wake come like cock.
Osasu wakes up like a cock.
Osasu is an early riser.
- c. Uyi khiẹ ọkporhu ọghe Uwa.
Uyi turn cock of Uwa.
Uyi has turned to the cock of Uwa.
Uyi is the one that wakes Uwa from sleep.

Though the cock can be used to describe one's negative attribute, it is more frequently used to describe a person's positive traits and to encourage a sort of adherence to time due to the traditional function of the cock as a community time keeper.

Esughusughu (Owl)

This bird is used in relation to the way a person behaves, talks, walks and what a person does. The owl may be a bird but its metaphorical use is somewhat different

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from that of *okhokho* ‘a fowl’. This is because *okhokho* can be used to describe a person in congratulatory forms but the owl is also used derogatorily. Some examples are:

6. a. Uwa ru vbane esughusughu.
Uwa do like owl.
Uwa behaves like an owl.
Uwa behaves like a witch.
- b. Uyi ghe omwa vbena esughusughu.
Uyi look person like owl.
Uyi looks on someone like an owl.
Uyi has a charming look.
- c. Eki mię inwina oghe esughusughu.
Eki see work of owl.
Eki got the job of an owl.
Eki got a night job.

Esikpogho (Nightingale/Sparrow)

This bird is used in relation to the way a person behaves, talks, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

7. a. Uwa mweę urhu oghe esikpogho.
Uwa have voice of nightingale.
Uwa has the voice of a nightingale.
Uwa has a beautiful voice.
- b. Uyi dannọ vbena esikpogho.
Uyi jump jump like nightingale.
Uyi jumps about like a nightingale.
Uyi is a very restless person.
- c. Ameze rri evbare vbena esikpogho.
Ameze eat food like nightingale.
Ameze eats like a nightingale.
Ameze eats sparingly.

The Metaphoric Use of Reptiles, Swimmers and Crawlers

Ozikpalọ (Lizard)

This reptile is used in relation to the way a person behaves, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

8. a. Uwa khuennię mwe vbena ozikpalọ.
Uwa answer me like lizard.
Uwa answered me as if he is a lizard.
Uwa simply nodded his head.
- b. Uyi de vbena ozikpalọ.
Uyi fall like lizard.
Uyi fell like a lizard.

Uyi is light footed.

- c. Egbe Uwa ye vbena egbe ozikpalọ.
Body Uwa look like body lizard.
Uwa's body is like that of a lizard.
Uwa is scaly.

Ẹnyẹ (Snake)

The snake is often viewed as every representation of danger in the society due to its elusiveness and ability to strike without warning. This animal name is used in relation to the way a person behaves, talks, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

9. a. Osasu vbiẹ vbena ẹnyẹ.
Osasu sleep like snake.
Osasu sleeps like a snake.
Osasu sleeps peacefully.
- b. Uyi tu asẹn vbena ẹnyẹ.
Uyi throw spit like snake.
Uyi spits like a snake.
Uyi spits often.
- c. Aro ẹnyẹ ẹre Uwa mwẹẹ.
Eye snake it be Uwa have.
Uwa has snake's eyes.
Uwa has seductive eyes.

Ikolo (Earth worm)

This animal is the very replication of sluggishness and or slowness and it is often seen in discourses as the negative portrayal of a person's character. This animal name is used in relation to the way a person behaves, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

10. a. Uwa ru vbe na ikolo ne a zẹ umwẹ yi.
Uwa do like worm that one sprinkle salt put.
Uwa behaves like a worm that was sprinkled salt.
Uwa is very touchy.
- b. Osasu gha dannọ vbena ikolo.
Osasu is jump jump like worm.
Osasu jumps back and forth like a worm.
Osasu is very restless.
- c. Ikolo ẹre Uwa khin.
Worm it be Uwa is.
Uwa is a worm.
Uwa is sluggish.

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Egui (Tortoise)

This animal name is used in relation to the way a person behaves, walks and what a person does. Some examples are:

11. a. Uwa ru vbena egui.
Uwa do like tortoise.
Uwa behaves like a tortoise.
Uwa is very cunning.
- b. Osasu khian vbena egui.
Osasu walk like tortoise.
Osasu walks like a tortoise.
Uwa walks slowly.
- c. Igbinna ye Eki khin egui.
Fight make Eki turn tortoise.
Fighting makes Eki to become a tortoise.
Eki shys away from arguments.

The Metaphoric Use of Domestic and Wild Mammals

The animals in this category more used in metaphoric uses than those in other groups. Some examples are shown in the sub sections below.

Oduma (Lion)

This is the most significant animal in the Edo society and can sometimes be used to described the traditional political institution and its representatives. It is the name of what is often referred to as the ‘king of the jungle or king of all animals’ in tales due to it regality, strength and general physique. This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to shown importance. Examples are:

12. a. Oduma ẹre Osasu khin vbe igbinna.
Lion it is Osasu be in fight.
Osasu is a lion when fighting.
Osasu is a tough and rough fighter.
- b. Uwa mu so vbena oduma.
Uwa carry cry like lion.
Uwa roared like a lion.
Uwa has an intimidating voice.
- c. Uyi ru vbena oduma o gha ra rri evbare.
Uyi do like lion he when is eat food.
Uyi behaves like a lion when eating.
Uyi has an insatiable appetite.

Atalakpa (Leopard)

This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to shown importance. Examples are:

13. a. Osasu rhule vbena atalakpa.

- Osasu run like leopard.
 Osasu runs like a leopard.
Osasu is very athletic.
- b. Atalakpa ẹre Iyobọ khin.
 Leopard it is Iyobo is.
 Iyobo is a leopard.
Iyobo is unpredicable.
- c. Uwa ru vbena atalakpa.
 Uwa do like leopard.
 Uwa behaves like a leopard.
Uwa is a very smart fellow.

Eni (Elephant)

This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to shown importance. Examples are:

14. a. Eni ẹre oghoghọ khin.
 Elephant it is Oghoghọ be.
 Oghoghọ is an elephant.
Oghoghọ is gigantic.
- b. Uwa mwe ikebe oghe eni.
 Uwa have buttocks of elephant.
 Uwa has the buttocks of an elephant.
Uwa is curvy.
- c. Osasu mwe ihue oghe eni.
 Osasu have nose of elephant.
 Osasu has the nose of an elephant.
Osasu has a pointed nose/has a strong sense of smell.

Ẹwe (Goat)

This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to shown importance. Examples are:

15. a. Ẹwe ẹre Osasu khin.
 Goat it be Osasu is.
 Osasu is a goat.
Osasu is very stubborn.
- b. Osasu ru vbena ewe.
 Osasu do like goat.
 Osasu behaves like a goat.
Osasu acts abnormally.
- c. Uwa gbe Osasu vbena ewe.
 Uwa beat Osasu like goat.
 Uwa beat Osasu like he beat a goat.
Uwa flogged Osasu mercilessly.

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Ohuan (Sheep)

This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to shown importance. Examples are:

16. a. Ohuan ẹre Ẹki khin.
Sheep it be Ẹki is.
Ẹki is a sheep.
Ẹki is very gentle.
- b. Uwa ru vbena ohuan.
Uwa do like sheep.
Uwa behaves like a sheep.
Uwa is a very calm person.
- c. Ohuan I rhe owa ọghe iran.
Sheep not is house of them.
There's no sheep in their house.
Their family doesn't have a calm person.

Ologbo/Ovbiẹden (Cat)

This animal name is used in respect to the temper, physique, behavior and carriage of a person. It is also used to show importance. Examples are:

17. a. Uyi khian vbena ologbo.
Uyi wlak like cat.
Uyi walks like a cat.
Uyi walks stylishly.
- b. Urhu Osasu ye vbena ologbo.
Voice Osasu is like cat.
Osasu's voice is like that of a cat.
Osasu has a shriek voice.
- c. Agbọn ọghe ologbo ẹre Osasu mwẹẹ.
Life of cat it be Osasu have.
Osasu has the life of a cat.
Osasu has escaped death many times.

Discussion of Findings

The preceding sections have meticulously presented and analyzed the data concerning the metaphorical use of animal names in the Edo society. This section is dedicated to a comprehensive discussion of these findings, shedding light on the profound significance of employing these animal names within the Edo culture.

From the data examined above, it becomes apparent that certain animal groups, namely insects, birds, reptiles, domestic animals, and wild animals, stand out as the most frequently employed sources of metaphorical references. These animal categories serve as powerful tools in capturing and expressing a wide array of human characteristics, actions, and realities within the Edo society.

Insects, for instance, are skillfully utilized to symbolize negative behaviors, social vices, and dubious dealings. Consider, for instance, the metaphorical usage of termites to describe individuals who only emerge at night, akin to these insects appearing after their homes have been damaged by rain. Similarly, the tiny but formidable ant, often referred to as a soldier ant, is emblematic of individuals who engage in covert betrayal or backstabbing, mirroring the ant's unexpected bites. Birds serve as a metaphorical canvas for expressing attitudes, moods, choices, physical attributes, and even negative qualities like witchcraft within the traditional Edo society. Each bird species holds a distinct symbolic role in this cultural lexicon. The eagle, for example, signifies pride, while the hawk is a symbol of theft and stealth. Nightingales represent melody and musical talent, whereas owls are associated with witchcraft, unattractive appearances, eerie gazes, and nocturnal activities. The symbolism extends to domestic fowl as well, where mother hens represent care, caution, and guidance, while roosters signify diligence and various other traits.

Reptiles are predominantly employed to metaphorically reference states, movements, and physical appearances, owing to their distinctive characteristics such as scales, tails, and sleek motions. Reptilian names are frequently used to signify pretense, deception, skin conditions, and various other aspects of life in the Edo society. These names are also wielded to describe cunning behaviors and elusive personalities.

Domestic animals, intimately linked to human behaviors and appearances, are commonly used to represent choices, physical attributes, behaviors, and negative tendencies. They serve as a mirror reflecting the interactions and relationships within the society, capturing various facets of daily human life. Wild animals, particularly lions, tigers, and leopards, are harnessed metaphorically to denote royalty, poise, appetite, physical attributes, and choices. Among these, the lion, leopard, and tiger hold a distinct place, signifying kingship, prominence, strength, respect, and dignity.

Conclusion

This study has delved into the metaphorical utilization of animal names in diverse Edo expressions. After meticulous data presentation and discussion, several key findings emerge: **Prevalent Animal Categories:** In the Edo culture, the most frequently used animal names for metaphorical references encompass insects, birds, reptiles, domestic animals, and wild animals. **Metaphoric Significations:**

Insects: These are employed to metaphorically represent negative behaviors, social vices, and shady dealings.

Birds: Symbolize attitudes, moods, choices, physique, and even negative qualities such as witchcraft.

Reptiles: Used to denote states, movements, and appearances, often linked to pretense and deception.

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Domestic Animals: Commonly serve as metaphors for choices, physical attributes, behaviors, and negative tendencies.

Wild Animals: Particularly, lions, tigers, and leopards are utilized to signify royalty, poise, appetite, physical attributes, and choices.

In conclusion, this study has contributed to our understanding of how animal names in the Edo language are creatively employed in metaphorical expressions to depict various aspects of human life, behavior, choices, and states. It showcases the linguistic artistry of Edo speakers in using figurative language to subtly encapsulate the realities of their society.

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