

# Viewing Japanese People's Cognitive Concept From Japanese Proverbs —— Taking "View of Nature" and "View of Emotion" as Examples

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## Abstract

Proverbs are a vital component of Japanese language culture, and their breadth encompasses all facets of human existence. Proverbs are the result of years of understanding growth, the crystallization of life experience, and a source of information. Proverbs are ingrained in the Japanese people and culture. This article uses the study objects "view of nature" and "view of emotion" to integrate language culture theory with information about natural things and family culture in order to help readers better comprehend the Japanese cognitive notion.

**Keywords:** proverb, culture, view of nature, emotional view, cognitive

## 1. Foreword

Language and social culture are mutually exclusive. Language is the most vital component of culture, since it cannot be divorced from it. Not only that, but the spoken language also incorporates the nation's way of thinking, worldview, values, and even habits. Proverbs, as a branch of language, most likely represents the national features and modes of comprehension of all nations on Earth.

Proverbs that have been passed down for hundreds of years have stood the test of time and evolved into cultural emblems for the civilizations to which they apply. As a result, proverbs might be considered as the pinnacle of national knowledge. Until date, the origins of several proverbs have remained unknown. Proverbs, on the other hand, are succinct in substance, straightforward in form, deep in meaning, and dense in connotation. This is why proverbs are used to instruct, lampoon, and swear.

Numerous remarks and opinions on the origins of the "ことわざ" (proverb) may be found in several Japanese language scientific study materials. For instance, the Japanese Mandarin Dictionary defines "ことわざ" as "a language transmitted from ancient times to the current day and a brief statement of humorous and instructive importance." Chinese proverbs are also formed similarly to Japanese proverbs. In general, they all convey the message of exhortation and sarcasm via descriptions of industrial operations and historical events that are dense with ideological substance. Additionally, the linguistic expressions of proverbs are simple to comprehend, which helps us better grasp the Japanese language and culture.

## 2. Japanese People's View of Nature From Japanese Proverbs

### 2.1 Sea and Mountain

Japan's shipping sector is highly developed due to the country's geographical position. It is surrounded by water. As a result, individuals often convey a variety of life experiences via seawater in their everyday lives. For instance, "滴り積もりて淵となる" indicates that it is 1,000 kilometers without accumulation. "船乗りは板子一枚下は地獄" underlines the worth of life via colorful and vivid illustrations of sailors and decks. Japan's many islands are a prominent feature. At the same time, water is important to the Japanese people's existence and growth. By coexisting with mountains, rivers, lakes, and oceans, the clever Japanese have amassed their methods of dealing with people and their experience of living and subsisting. For instance, "山と川" (when others say East, he says West); "水に流す" (to be squandered); "立て板に水" (eloquent); "山に千年海に千年" (craftsman); and "海のものとも川のものともつかぬ" (uncertain).

At the same time, Japan is a significant fishing nation, with several proverbs referring to fish and the fishing

industry. When teaching how to get along with other members of society, the Japanese often utilize the phrase "魚心あれば水心" (put oneself in someone else's shoes) and fish as a metaphor to illustrate the business skills in depth. Simple and simple to accept. Additionally, they emphasize on expressing the way of life in everyday life, such as "魚は江湖に相忘る" (people forget Taoism like fish forget rivers and lakes) and "魚の釜中に遊ぶが如し" (cooked frogs in warm water). Because Japan is a fish-rich nation due to its physical position as an island, the importance of fish in Japanese life is self-evident. Numerous "漁諺" represent the Japanese nation's social and psychological features.

## 2.2 Seasons

Japan has a tropical marine climate characterized by humid weather. Due to the island people's affinity for the sea and the Buddhist belief that everything has a soul, the Japanese have a strong feeling of seasons and remember the changes of these four seasons with a sensitive and acute sensibility, another key aspect of the Japanese perspective of nature. For instance: "春に目覚める" (seed of love); "冬の雨は三日降らず" (winter raindrops instantly).

The Japanese place a premium on knowledge into seasonal variations, and these insights benefit agricultural output and human lives enormously. From food, clothes, housing, and transportation to hobbies and interpersonal connection, we can all sense that the observant Japanese are attuned to nature's four seasons and are inextricably linked to flowers, birds, and moons. Additionally, metaphorical phrases are appearing one after the other. "月に群雲、花に風" (good things always require more grinding) combines the philosophical ideal of harmony between heaven and man with the naturalness of Japanese folk customs, thereby distinguishing Japanese proverbs.

## 2.3 Animals and Plants

The Japanese people are not afraid to show their affection for animals and flora. "愛草木、喜自然" (*Ten Remarks on National Character*), one of the hallmarks of Japanese folk traditions, also symbolizes the natural vision of national culture. For example, "花はおりたしこずえは高し" (visible but out of reach) and so on. According to this, the friendliness for plants may be impacted for a long period of time by "cultivated land culture." In Japan, as long as there is soil, residents will grow their favorite flowers and plants to showcase the four seasons' splendor.

Along with flowers and grass, the Japanese people often celebrates the trees that provide them with ample essentials of life. Trees may be used to manufacture raw materials for food, housing, boats, and clothing. As a result, people often utilize trees and plants to depict life in Japanese proverbs. For instance, "木に竹を注" (pouring bamboo into wood); "木の実はもとへ落つ" (leaves fall back to their roots); "大木は風に折られる" (a large tree is prone to being assaulted by powerful winds); "枯と樹へ花咲つ" (dead trees blossom and resurrect); and so on.

Naturally, utilizing the words and actions of animals as metaphors for human conduct has aided in the explanation of various phenomena, and this proverb is also quite diversified in Japan. For instance, "犬は人に付き、猫は家に付く" (profit-seeking); "鳥疲れて枝を選ばず" (weary birds do not select trees); "犬と猿の仲" (fire and water are incompatible); "猫に鯉節" (let the cat watch the fish while the thief watches the home); "虎を山に放つ" (let the tiger return to the mountain, or there would be unending hardships); "猿に烏帽子" (the monkey is crowned) and so on.

## 3. Japanese People's View of Emotion From Japanese Proverbs

### 3.1 Japanese Proverbs About Lovers

Japanese people have been collecting proverbs about lovers since ancient times, but the objective is to teach future generations how to avoid suffering at the hands of lovers. By appreciating proverbs about lovers, we get insight into the fickle Japanese population. The Japanese place a premium on Bushido's "impermanence" attitude, and the traditional Bushido perspective in Japan views male position as preeminent. Around 500 years ago, with the arrival of Buddhism to Japan from China, Zen Buddhism profoundly influenced Japanese character and conduct. Since then, the notion of emotional impermanence has become a well-known adage among lovers, in conjunction with the ancient Japanese concept of Bushido. The Japanese are taught how to pick their partners via these proverbs, which is extremely similar to China's. For example: "押し付けた縁は続かぬ" (a twisted melon is not delicious); "惚れた目には痘痕笑窪" (Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder).

### 3.2 Japanese Couples as Observed Through the Lens of Japanese Proverbs

Transitioning from lover to husband and wife entails certain everyday responsibilities. Japanese couple proverbs are generally concerned with life experience, which may help make the lives of the younger generation more

complete and prevent conflict. As a result, there are several Japanese proverbs about husband and wife, like "夫婦は苦楽を共に" (husband and wife share their pleasures and sorrows); and "妻子の恥は夫の恥" (wife's humiliation is husband's shame). Proverbs should represent gender equality and charity. We discover that by using these proverbs, spouses may coexist amicably, therefore perfecting families. National harmony may be achieved via the creation of thousands of ideal families. As a result, it also represents the Japanese people's yearning for national stability.

### 3.3 Japanese Proverbs About Parent-Child Relationships

We know that moms often spend more time after giving birth. However, when it comes to right and wrong, dads are critical. As with ancient China, Japanese parent-child proverbs primarily instruct people on how to educate their children as dads and elevate their father's position to a very high level. For instance: "子を養って教えざるは父の過りなり" (the son is not the godfather's fault); "父厳かに子孝なり" (a child's father serves as his role model).

In Japan, the three most terrifying and terrifying things are fire, earthquake, and father. This is inextricably linked to Japan's history. Fathers were primarily responsible for family education under the old patriarchal system. Not only are there countless proverbs about children's and parents' emotions in Japanese proverbs, but they also explain why the Japanese are influenced by Chinese Confucianism, such as Father's kindness is like "父親の恩は山如し 母親の恩は大海により深く" (father's love is greater than a mountain, and mother's love is greater than the sea); "親思う心に勝る親心" (the mother worries about children traveling thousands of miles).

Accept your parents' generosity as a child and reciprocate them as an adult. It is appropriate for Confucian cultural enclaves. According to a Chinese proverb, it is difficult for parents to comprehend their children's sorrows. Apart from job, parents' difficulties are mirrored in their children's schooling. When children reach adulthood, they should take on the role of parents and serve their parents.

### Acknowledgments

Japanese proverbs provide information about the Japanese people's conduct, value orientation, and level of thought. According to Japanese proverbs, we may do a more in-depth analysis of the Japanese people's cognitive notions, which will aid in our deepening our understanding of the language.

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