



# SINO-FRENCH FOOD SEMANTICS

## 中法飲食語義學

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## IN THIS MINI-SEMINAR, WE WILL EXAMINE...

- ❖ How the rich food cultures of China and France inspire the lexicons in Chinese and French; and
- ❖ The fun food expressions in both Chinese and French.



# LOAN WORDS IN ENGLISH

Arabic algebra alcohol	Chinese feng shui yin yang	French sabotage fiancé résumé village brunette restaurant cliché	German poltergeist kindergarten gesundheit	Greek telephone encyclopedia mathematics chaos
Italian diva scenario opera lingua franca piano graffiti pasta espresso	Japanese tsunami karaoke	Portuguese banana marmelade	Russian vodka cosmonaut	Spanish mosquito macho guerrilla

## CHINESE FOOD LEXICON ADOPTED INTO THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

- ❖ Tofu (漢語：豆腐)
- ❖ Ginseng (漢語：人蔘)
- ❖ Dim sum (漢語：點心)
- ❖ Le thé Pu-er (漢語：普洱茶)
- ❖ Le chop suey (漢語：炒雜碎)
- ❖ Rouleaux de printemps (漢語：春卷)



## FRENCH FOOD LEXICON ADOPTED INTO THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

- ❖ 馬卡龍 (法語 : Macaron)
- ❖ 法式焦糖布蕾 (法語 : Crème brûlée)
- ❖ 歐培拉蛋糕 (法語 : Opéra cake)
- ❖ 閃電泡芙 (法語 : Éclair = meaning “lightning” in English)
- ❖ 勃朗峰 (法語 : Mont-blanc)
- ❖ 巴黎布雷斯特車輪泡芙 (法語 : Paris-Brest = 法國自行車比賽的路線)
- ❖ 梳乎厘 (法語 : Soufflé)





Macaron



eclair



Opera



Souffle



creme brulee



Mont Blanc



Paris Brest

## *METAPHORS WE LIVE BY* (1980)

“Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, **not just in language but in thought and action**. Our ordinary **conceptual system**, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 3)

# ONTOLOGICAL METAPHOR

- ❖ Most of our concepts are abstract – concepts like time, emotions, communication, the mind, ideas, personalities.
- ❖ In general, abstract concepts are defined metaphorically in terms of concepts that are more concrete and clearly structured on their own terms, such as objects, food, space, motion.
- ❖ E.g. The concept of **time is ABSTRACT**. It is perceived as a limited and valuable resource.

For example:

- Thank you for your time.
- How are you going to spend your summertime?
- I have invested a lot of time in her.
- I lost a great deal of time when I was sick.



## IN ENGLISH, FOOD METAPHORS OFTEN REFER TO IDEAS.

- ❖ What he said left a bad taste in my mouth.
- ❖ There are too many facts in the paper for me to digest them all.
- ❖ I just can't swallow that claim.
- ❖ Let me stew over that for a while.
- ❖ Now there's a theory you can really sink your teeth into.
- ❖ That's food for thought.
- ❖ He devoured the book.

IN CHINESE, FOOD METAPHORS  
OFTEN REFER TO PEOPLE.  
(CHECK THESE EMOJI!)

- ❖ “小辣椒” 指厲害的女孩
- ❖ “瓜” 或 “蛋” 貶低人，如笨蛋、傻瓜
- ❖ “飯桶、酒囊飯袋” 指人無能
- ❖ “老油條” 指人滑頭



## IN FRENCH, FOOD METAPHORS CAN REFER TO PEOPLE TOO.



- ❖ 在法國人日常生活中及電影、小說中常稱配偶或情人 *mon chou* , *chou* (卷心菜、洋白菜), 指可愛的人。
- ❖ E.g. “*Cette enfant est très chou.*” – This child is very cabbage. (This girl is adorable.)
- ❖ “*Elle est vraiment un chou.*” – She is really a cabbage. (She's a real honey.)

## MORE FRENCH FOOD METAPHORS TO REFER TO PEOPLE.

❖ 而 “Jacque, c'est un navet.”,  
“Louis, c'est un melon”,  
“Quelle poire.” 中 “navet” (蘿  
卜)、 “melon” (瓜)、 “poire”  
(梨) 全有傻瓜、笨蛋之意。



# CHINESE IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION ABOUT FOOD

漢語常說：

- ❖ 僧多粥少、味如雞肋、畫餅充飢、如飢似渴、  
挑肥檢瘦、豆腐渣工程、天下無不散的筵席。

# FRENCH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION ABOUT FOOD

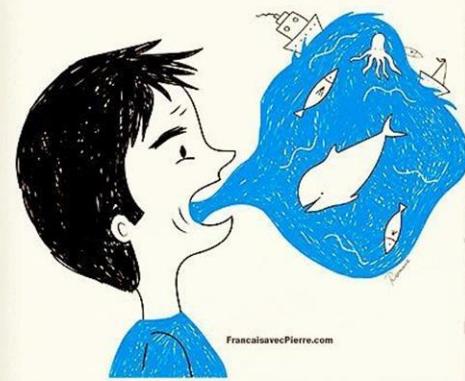
- ❖ “Faire des salades (生菜)” = make some salad = 說瞎話
- ❖ “Sortir de la purée (菜泥)” = 摆脫困境
- ❖ “Ne pas avoir un radis (蘿卜)” = 身無分文
- ❖ “Il y a boire et manger.” 有利有弊



# “吃” & “MANGER” AS ORIENTATIONAL METAPHORS

- ❖ No matter in English, in Chinese or in French, hardship and suffering are considered overcome if you can eat it, swallow it up, digest it in your stomach.
- ❖ 漢語常說: 吃苦、吃虧、吃苦耐勞、吃不開、吃不消
- ❖ In French: “Se manger les sangs” (= Swallow the blood = 吃苦、打落牙齒和血吞); “Ce n'est pas la mer boire!” (= It's no big deal!)

C'est pas la mer à boire !\*



\*Ce n'est pas si difficile !

## SIMILARITIES IN CHINESE AND FRENCH FOOD METAPHORS

漢語和法語還有一些相近的表達法,如:

先甜後苦 Manger son pain le premier.

飢不擇食 A la faim , tout est pain.

茶餘飯後 Entre le poire et le fromage.

得到飯碗 Avoir du bol.

# Merci beaucoup, mes petits choux!



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