Characteristics of Association Words about Love among Tibetan College Students in China

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ABSTRACT: In order to explore the characteristics of Tibetan college students' association words about "love" under the background of social transformation in China, 239 Tibetan college students in Southwest Minzu University were selected as research objects to associate Chinese words with the stimulate word "love". After all the association words collected were sorted out, statistical analyzes like word frequency, association intensity and Chi-square test were carried out. Results showed that both "love experience" and "commitment" categories were important in Tibetan college students' association words; men were more likely to think of the "love representation " and "Love experience B"(feeling of miss in love) categories, while women tended to experience "Love experience A"(sweet feeling in love); who were single but had intimate experience are more likely to associate words of "pain of loss" category; and as a whole, Tibetan college students paid less attention to "rationality", "Joint action" and "dullness" categories.

As a distinctive form of "the most mysterious" in human relationships, Love has always been closely concerned by the scholars of sociology and psychology. Since the 1970s (Rubin 1970), love has been booming in the field of scientific psychology research. Among them, the affective color style theory (Lee 1977), the three-element theory of love (Sternberg 1986) and the adult attachment style theory (Bowlby 1988) and the evolutionary psychological strategy theory (Buss and Schmitt 1993), which aim to explain the nature of love. Other related theoretical models are endless with the continuous progress of the study. However, the explicit theory built up by foreign psychologists or sociologists for love is totally different (Hamilton 2006).

Prior studies have demonstrated the biological connotation of love (Fisher et al. 2002), and confirmed the existence of love in various cultures (Hatfield and Rapson 2002). However, love as a superior emotion is bound to be influenced by the social culture and should be regarded as a cultural concept. Considering that "love" is a borrowed word. It enters the Chinese context not only by inheriting its inherent meanings in western culture, but also by giving it new and additional meanings. Some domestic scholars have conducted preliminary exploration of love conceptions of Chinese urban adults and college students based on the implicit theories (Fuhrman et al. 2009, Zang 2013, Li et al. 2006; Yan 2004). Not to mention the differences between Chinese and western cultures, the Tibetan nationality as a minority nationality has strong cultural traditions of marriage and love (such as monogamy, polygamy and polyandry Co-exist) (Wang 2006), Tibetan college students must have some unique emotional experience or psychological experience in the context of their own national culture. Therefore, if we simply borrow the concept of love abroad, the theory of love examines Tibetan subjects; it is possible to "alienate people in the real-life scene".

The research results are bound to break away common situations and the ecological validity of them are worrying. At the same time, college students who grew up in Tibetan culture have also been continuously influenced by the current "fashionable culture" such as "flash marriage", "naked marriage", "remarriage leftovers", divorce, and even dating sites and blind date shows (Zhang 2013) etc. the concept of love is also subtly changing.

Therefore, to explore the concept of love of Tibetan college students and to compare them with the Western theory of love or common college students' concept of love is necessary. One can deeply reflect the current situation of the Tibetan college students the concept of love, on the other hand also provide the necessary theoretical basis for the guidance and education of marriage values for Tibetan College students.

1. Method

1.1. Survey instrument

The survey instrument used in this study is a self-made "love vocabulary questionnaire", including "basic information" and "word association" two parts. The "basic information" section mainly includes gender, grade, emotional experience and other content; and "word association" part is to ask subjects to fill in the "love" of the associative terms. Referring to the previous studies and the participants' opinions after the preliminary investigation, the formal survey asked for "no less than 8 words" for the number of association words.

1.2. Participants

A random selection of 255 Tibetan college students in a national university for the survey, retrieved 239, the retrieved rate of 93.7%. The age of the subjects ranged from 17 to 24 years, with an average age of 20.36 (± 1.58) years. Among them, 87 were males (36.4%), 152 were females (63.6%), 78 (32.6%) were females in love, 78 (32.6%) were single with a history of love, 83 (34.7%) had never had love experience, 86 (36.0%) were freshmen, 46 were sophomores (46.2% Person (26.0%), senior 45 people (18.8%).

1.3. Investigation process

The survey was conducted by means of a collective survey of questionnaires. The instructional examinations were read out by the research leaders in a unified way. The associative terms that each subject should fill in and not be repeated and the subjects should be prohibited from freely discussing. The test does not limit the time of subjects to answer, the subjects completed an average of about 15 minutes.

1.4. Data compilation and analysis

Use Microsoft Excel 2007 to 239 valid questionnaires were collected and analyzed association vocabulary. Preliminary statistics found that the lowest frequency questionnaire all association word number is 8, the highest number of association word was 13, per capita number is about 8.73, the cumulative number association word collected 2087. Taking into account the highly repetitive nature of associative terms among different subjects, we further merged synonyms such as "long long-last long" and "long term", while synonyms such as "Hasta Mannana" and "Everlasting"

were not merged. At the same time, due to language habits, some Tibetan students fail to fully understand the meaning of "words". Associative phrases such as "I love you" and "I understand you" to simplify the merger. After the preliminary association were simplified and meagered, get a total of 604 non-repetitive association words.

2. Result

2.1. Analysis of association word frequency

Since the test words in this study require that the subject's words can not be repeated, each associative word appears at the same frequency as the number of subjects in the study who are associated with the word. Generally speaking, more subjects to associate the words, the words and concepts of core structure is closer to. Statistics of the frequency of associated words and found that the top ten high-frequency associated words are romantic (word frequency 88, the same below), sweet (75), happiness (72), trust (54), understanding (37), happy (36), beautiful (33), love at first sight (33), forever (32), love each other. The sum of the frequency of the top ten high frequency terms (486) is 23.29% of the total word frequency of the associative term (2087), nearly a quarter. The top three frequency words "romantic", "sweet" and "happy" almost mentioned by all one-third of the subjects.

Further sorting out the top ten high-frequency words of the associative terms of Tibetan students of different genders and emotions, the results are shown in the following table. As can be seen in all types of subjects in the "romantic", "happiness" and "sweet" and other words still are the highest in the high frequency word list, the remaining words are broadly similar, but in a different order. More worth mentioning is that the "single and had a love experience," who high-frequency associative words "break up", "treasure", "pay" and other related to the break-up vocabulary.

Table 1. Different gender, emotional experience Tibetan college students love association high frequency words

Subject categories		High frequency words and the number of them
Gender	Male	Romance (34), Happiness (21), Sweetness (17), Understanding (15), Love at First Sight (15), Forever (14), Trust (13), Accompanied by (11), Love (11), I Love You (9)
	Female	Sweetness (55), Romance (53), Happiness (51), Trust (41), Pleasure (29), Wonderfulness (25), Understanding (22), Care (19), Love at First Sight (18)

Love experience	In love	Sweetness (27), Romance (25), Happiness (22), Trust (20), Understanding (17), Accompanied by (14), forever (12), Life together (10), Wonderfulness (9), Pleasure (8)
	Singer with love experience	Romance (26) Happiness (25) Sweetness (22) Trust (14) Breakup (11) Pleasure (11) Love at First Sight (11) Wonderfulness (10) Cherish (10)
	Never in love	Romance (34), Happiness (26), Sweetness (23), Trust (18), Pleasure (16), Love at First Sight (15), Love (14), Wonderfulness (13), Understanding(10), Two of a Kind (10)

2.2. Classification of Association words

Considering the similarity of contents, classification of association collected according to Li Zhao-xu et al's classification standard research, and increase the "other" category, words will not have related to the previous study, and cannot be classified as existing types (such as "Timing", "Location" etc.) in. The Tibetan students love association words classification is obtained after the 15 low order classification, further after the induction of 6 high order classification, as shown in table 2.

Table 2. Tibetan college students love associate word classification situation

High-order classification	Low-order classification	Example of the content of the project
1. Rational	1. Material Basis	In reality, money, material, work, learning, knowledge
2. A Friend of Love	2. Friendship	Good friends, companions, friends, like-minded, world outlook
	3. Treat Each Other.	Help, communication, loyalty, sincerity, tolerance, acceptance
3. Ethics and Responsibility	4. Family	Family, family, children, wife, warmth, happiness
	5. Flat	Plain, ordinary
	6. Marriage	Love, sex, marriage, marriage, love, wedding
	7. Commitments	Responsibility, respect, understanding, trust, support, enduring as the universe
4. Conflict and Pain	8. The Pain of Lost Love	Break up, pain, loss, betrayal, hurt, sad
	9. Striking One Snag After Another	The cold war, fight, deception, contradiction, wishful thinking

5.Romantic Experience	10. Fall In Love	A solemn pledge of love, lasting love, understanding
	11. The Love Symbol	Romance, date, roses, flowers, kiss, fate
	12. Joint Action	Eat together, walk, travel, chatting together
	13. Love Experience A	Happy, pure, beautiful, sweet, intimate
	14. Love Experience B	Miss, crush, bear in mind constantly, sour, sweet, bitter, hot
6. Other	15. Other	Day, Austria, and positive energy, culture protection

In order to further explore the distribution of the word frequency of associative terms in all levels of classification, this study introduces "Association Strength" for analysis. Association Strength, the percentage of subjects who think of a word. The higher the associative intensity is, the higher the association frequency of such words is. This indicates that subjects are more likely to think of such words in the face of the word "love." The average association strength of a category is calculated by dividing the sum of the associations of all words in the category by the total number of words. The specific results are shown in the following table:

Table 3. The average associative intensity of various associations

High-order classification	Original words	The average intensity of Lenovo	Low-order classification	Original words	The average intensity of Lenovo
Reason	20	0.71	Material Basis	20	0.71
Friends Care	270	4.74	Friendship	54	1.89
			Playing Together	216	5.45
Ethics and Responsibility	596	9.78	Family Ethics	130	18.11
			Plain	4	0.84
			Marriage	61	2.67
			Commitment	401	8.24
Conflict and Pain	129	2.48	The Pain of Lost Love	82	3.18
			Striking One Snag After Another	47	1.26

Romantic experience	942	9.85	Agree in opinion	182	5.72
			Love means	308	12.68
			Joint action	25	0.86
			love experience A	311	12.77
			Love experience B	116	2.99
Other	129	1.28	Other	129	1.28

In terms of higher-level classification, the performance of different categories in the "original words" and "average association strength" basically the same. In terms of original words, "romantic experience" accounted for almost half of all the associated words (45.14%), followed by "ethical responsibility" and "friend-care" terms, accounting for 28.56% and 12.94% respectively, while "rational "The words are the lowest association frequency, only 0.96%. Corresponding to the average associative intensity, the average associative intensity of the words of "romantic experience" in the high-class classification (9.85) is the highest, followed by the words of "ethics and responsibility" (9.78), while the average association of "rational" The lowest intensity, only 0.71.

In terms of low-level classification, the performance of different categories in the "original words" and "average association strength" appears inconsistent. The original words of Responsibility Commitment (401) were the highest, followed by "The love symbol" (308) and "Love Experience A" (311). In terms of average associative intensity, the "Family human relations" category (18.11), which had a primitive number of only 130, topped the list, while the Association of Responsibility Commitments, which had the highest number of original words, only had a strength of association of 8.24. In contrast, the average associative intensity of the three categories of "material basis", "dull" and "common action" is very low, only 0.71, 0.84 and 0.86.

2.3. Analysis of influencing factors

Tibetan students of different genders were tested in six high-order frequency of the classification associated words chi-square test, boys and girls results show no significant differences in the various higher-order classification. Further tests were conducted on the frequency of word association between boys and girls in the low-order classification. The results are shown in the table below: Male subjects were tested in " The love symbol " ($\chi^2 = 10.13$, p <0.01) and "Love Experience B" 5.16, p <0.05),

while the associative words of women in "Love Experience Class A" were significantly higher than those of men ($\chi^2 = 8.14$, p <0.01).

Table 4. Low-level classification sex differences in the χ2 test results (df = 1)

Association Words	Male (N=87)		Female (N=152)		X²
	Actual Frequency	Theoretical Frequency	Actual Frequency	Theoretical Frequency	
Material Basis	8	7.28	12	12.72	0.11
Friendship	20	19.66	34	34.34	0.01
Playing Together	74	78.63	142	137.37	0.43
Family Ethics	41	47.32	89	82.68	1.33
Plain	0	1.46	4	2.54	2.30
Marriage	28	22.21	33	38.79	2.37
Commitment	137	145.97	264	255.03	0.87
The Pain Of Lost Love	33	29.85	49	52.15	0.52
Striking One Snag After Another	13	17.11	34	29.89	1.55
Agree In Opinion	67	66.25	115	115.75	0.01
Love Means	139	112.12	169	195.88	10.13**
Joint Action	10	9.10	15	15.90	0.14
Love Experience A	89	113.21	222	197.79	8.14**
Love Experience B	54	42.23	62	73.77	5.16*
Other	44	46.96	85	82.04	0.29

Note: * for p <0.05 (bilateral), ** for p <0.01 (bilateral) (same below)

Differences in the frequency of associative words among six college students in different emotional states in the six higher-level classifications are shown in Table 5. The results are shown in Table 5. Tibetan college students with different emotional experiences only had associations of "clashes and pains" Significant difference ($\chi^2 = 9.00$, p <0.05). Furthermore, we test the frequency of ideal words of Tibetan college students in different affective states in low-order classification and find that there are only significant differences in the frequency of ideal words ($\chi^2 = 6.07$, p <0.05), in which "single with a love experience "were more likely to associate these words.

Table 5. Higher-level classification of emotional experience differences χ^2 test results (df = 2)

Association Words	Never In Love (n=78)		Single With Love Experience (n=78)		In Love (n=83)		χ^2
	Actual Frequency	Theoretical Frequency	Actual Frequency	Theoretical Frequency	Actual Frequency	Theoretical Frequency	
Reason	4	6.95	8	6.53	8	6.53	1.91
Friends Care	87	93.77	85	88.128	98	88.128	1.71
Ethics and Responsibility	197	206.99	195	194.53	204	194.53	0.94
Conflict and Pain	38	44.80	58	42.11	33	42.11	9.00*
Romantic Experience	359	327.16	286	307.47	297	307.47	5.84
Others	37	44.80	46	42.11	46	42.11	2.08

3. Discussion

This study investigated 239 Tibetan students through word association method, and explored the characteristics of their love association words by the analysis on association words frequency, association intensity of categories, and association words frequency of different groups on the base of 2087 love association words collected. Generally speaking, the current Tibetan College Students' love association words have the following characteristics:

3.1. Love association words tend to be positive

The statistical analysis of high-frequency words shows that the "romantic", "sweet" and "wellbeing" always top the list, whether in the sample population or in the classified population, but the order of the three words is different in different situation. This shows that in the current Tibetan students' minds, "love" first contacts with the three kinds of positive feelings, in other words, love more easily performances as positive

experience such as "romantic", "sweet" and "wellbeing". Furthermore, the classified analysis of association words also found that "romantic experience" words' accounted for almost half of all association words (45.14%).

In this high order category, the association words in "Love experience A" (311, 12.77) which tends positive experience is more than "Love experience B" (116, 2.99) which tends negative experience. These analysis results show that the love concept of Tibetan students emphasizes the positive emotional experience, and the ideal of love experience emphasizes idealism, which is consistent with the survey results of ordinary college students.

As young college students, their physical and psychological development will inevitably lead to their strong demand for the pursuit of love. For Tibetan youth, their love life before marriage is relatively free, generally not be subjected to family or social interference, and can be free to talk. Therefore, in the relatively free environment of the university campus, Tibetan college students' romantic relationship is basically to pursue and experience the feeling of love, and its expectations for love is often positive, passionate, full of idealistic color. This can also be seen from the sorting of high-frequency words, whether the sample population or boys and girls, "love at first sight" and "ever-lasting" always accompanied. From the "love at first sight" to "ever-lasting" should be regarded as the most perfect form of love. This vision of near-fantasy love is not only the typical manifestation of Tibetan college students' love implicit concept, but also may be influenced by their national traditional literary works and songs.

3.2. Love Association words emphasize "responsibility and ethics"

By analyzing the original words and association intensity of high-order categories, we can find that although the words number of "romantic experience" and "responsibility and ethics" is significantly different, the association intensity is relatively similar. As mentioned earlier, although the Tibetan youth is relatively free to love before marriage, but their marital attitude is quite strict, whose style incorrect will be subject to social, family and friends and family condemnation and discrimination. This kind of traditional love concept and the influence of the open concept of social transition set up two important aspects of love in current Tibetan college students' mind - love experience and commitment to responsibility. Western studies have found that love as a more complex emotion than the friendship has more stringent behavior standards, so the treat of lovers is more loyal than friends. Just because the higher "responsibility and commitment" they spend on love than other emotion, love will be more "passion", "ecstasy". Therefore, feelings do not have the full "responsibility and ethics" can not be regarded as true love. At this point, both the Tibetan and the Han students can

resist the impact of bad beliefs and uphold Traditional value of love from the excellent resources in the current society which is full of "Hook up", "the third person "and high divorce rate.

Interestingly, there is a strong inconsistency of the words number and association intensity between "responsibility commitment" and "family human relations" in the "responsibility and ethics" high-order category. The "family human relations" whose words number is 130 tops the association intensity list (18.11), while the association intensity of "responsibility commitment" who tops the words number list (401) is only 8.24. This means that the words used by the participants to express "responsibility commitment" is abundant, and the words used to describe "family human" is relatively poor.

3.3. There are obvious gender differences in love Association

The results of association words frequency difference test show that men seem more likely to associate the words in "love experience B" and "love representation", women are more likely to associate the words in "love experience A".

In the classification of this study, "love experience A" mainly includes the existence of love aesthetic experience, similar to Maslows' "exist love" (Being love), and "love experience B" is about the satisfaction of needs in love, similar to "lack of love" (Deficiency love). Although the Tibetan culture gives young people different degree of freedom between before and after marriage, it seems that men are more likely to divorce love and marriage, that think that there is not exist inevitable link between love and marriage. A qualitative study of Tibetan college students in 2015 found that women showed a more cautious and serious attitude towards love, treating love as a necessary stage of marriage, and that men were more likely to accept Parental arrangements.

This difference of attitude about love, on the one hand, makes men more likely to associate words directly related to things, that is "love representation ", on the other hand let men pay more attention to their satisfaction of needs in love, so it is easier for men to associate desires can not meet the feelings. In contrast, because women regard love as an important part of life, their attitude of love is more serious, careful, and their expectations of love is also more beautiful, positive, deep.

3.4. Emotional experiences affect love associations

Through the association word frequency difference test in every category of different emotional experience participants, we can see the Tibetan college students who are "single but had love experience," associate more words in "conflict and pain", especially

the "lovelorn pain" category. To further compare the top-ten high frequency words, we found that words about breakup and relationship maintain such as "break up", "treasure", "pay" only appear in the crowd who are "single but had love experience". Obviously, the experience of breaking up makes the crowd who are "single but had love experience" have a more comprehensive understanding of love.

In fact, not only the one who don't have breakup experience are lack of consciousness of "contradictions and conflicts", the frequency analysis of all subjects also shows that the Tibetan students are lack of awareness of "material basis", "joint action" and "routine". Although breakup experience can provide us with psychological preparation for the conflict and pain in love, can enhance our attention paid for the maintenance of love, the price is too heavy. Therefore, the relevant education departments can not let Tibetan students obtain "cohabitation" information from the literary and artistic works and even the network, rely on their own unilateral limited imagination to build their own love values, but should give their system, comprehensive emotional values education and guide.

On the basis of the word association method, this study explores the implicit love-concept of Tibetan college students', and makes a more objective and plain description of the characteristics of their love association. However, the classification standard of association words used in the study has limited the development of data. For example, association word frequency of the "other" category in the classification standard is 129, and the inconsistency between the words number and the association intensity in the category of "family human relations" and "responsibility commitment" shows that the application of original association vocabulary classification standard in this study is not ideal. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the structure of Tibetan college students' love association by "card classification", cluster analysis and other experimental statistical methods, to provide necessary theoretical support for marriage guidance and education work of contemporary Tibetan college students.

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