Addressing animals with clicking sounds:
Patterns and universals

Abstract
A strong tendency for people to produce clicking sounds to address animals is demonstrated in this paper. Based on investigations of 126 spots (67 Chinese spots and 59 non-Chinese spots) worldwide, 30 kinds of clicking sounds have been found, and all spots are observed to use clicking sounds to address at least one animal. There are 2.51 clicking sounds per spot overall. The most used clicking sounds are (top 5 and in descending order): ǀʷ, ǀ, ʘ, *1(retroflex rounded click), and *2(click with bilabial release and labiodental friction). Animals most frequently to be addressed with clicking sounds are (top3 and in descending order): dog, chicken and cat. Evident typological features are found meanwhile, e.g., retroflex rounded clicks (almost all are used to address chicken) and clicks with bilabial release and labiodental friction (almost all are used to address cat) are nearly only found in Chinese; while lateral clicks are only found in non-Chinese languages (especially in European languages and almost all are used to address horse). Why clicking sounds used so frequently and worldwide to address animals? We argued that the motivations are resulted from the particular characteristics and properties of clicking sounds, which sorted out as following: Clicking sounds are: (1) ideally specific to human beings; (2) are more likely to aim at animals; (3) are very prominent in perception; (4) contains adequate subtypes; (5) are enough easy to produce.