On the Complexity of Conceptual Animal Metaphors in Queer Speech

Jarrett Hopewell

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On the Complexity of Conceptual Animal Metaphors in Queer Speech

Jarrett Hopewell  |  February 28, 2020  |  UM GradCon

*Some viewers might experience discomfort due to the content and language of some images.*
Roadmap

➢ Introduction
➢ Previous Research
➢ My Research Goals
➢ *Bear, Pig, and Otter*
➢ The *Bear* and *Otter* Contrast
➢ Proposal of Animal Metaphor Subgroups
➢ The *Wolf* Exception
➢ Summary
➢ Greater Impacts
Conceptual Metaphor Theory

➢ Conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of an abstract concept in terms of a concrete source.  

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)

➢ TIME IS MONEY  

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 7-8)

○ You are *wasting* my time
○ You need to *budget* your time
○ I’ve *invested* a lot of time in this project
What do these animals conceptualize?
Types of queer community members
Samardžić (2015)

- Analyzes animal terms as a conceptual metaphor that categorizes types of queer community members

- Observes but does not describe inconsistencies in the metaphor
  - Visual similarities between animal and person
  - Behavioral similarities between animal and person
My Research Goals

➢ Investigate these inconsistencies through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory.
  ○ What patterns exist?
  ○ What generalizations can be made?

➢ Data consists of animal metaphors from publicly available social media sources.
  ○ Grindr
  ○ Growlr
  ○ Scruff
Bear

A mid-aged, hairy individual with a large, stocky build. They are typically, though not necessarily, the defined image of masculinity

(…Evannn, 2017)
Bear Daddy

Not looking to kiss, cuddle, or snuggle. Looking for a hungry sub btm who enjoys being f*cked long, hard, deep, and without mercy. Safe only. Also: I will not send a face picture -- do not contact me if you expect one.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribes</td>
<td>Daddy</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Pig

Someone who wants to have sex all the time. They typically enjoy “dirty”, kinky sex.

(Koymasky, 2013)
Pig

Gender: Queer
Position: Bottom
Tribes: Trans

☆ Bottom
Lookin for hung top
21y and up

Height: 5’ 11”
Weight: 175 lb
Body Type: Average
Position: Bottom
Otter

Someone that has a slim or even slightly athletic body and typically has a lot of facial and body hair.

(avier, 2017)
Otter

Otterhands

Online 3 hours ago, 1,338 mi away

I am
Jock, Muscle, Leather, Otter

I am into
Bears, Jocks, Muscle, Daddies, Otters

Mustachio

29 years old, Single
White, 5’8”, 150 lb, Hairy

I am
Jock, Chaser, Guy Next Door, Otter

I am into
Bears, Jocks, Muscle, Daddies, Otters
Self-identification as both *bear* and *pig*

No self-identification as both *bear* and *otter*
One-Way Mapping Source → Target

Source Domain

- slim
+ hairy
- young

Target Domain

+ dirty
One-Way Mapping Source $\rightarrow$ Target

Source Domain
- slim
+ hairy
- young

Target Domain
+ slim
+ hairy
Bear and Otter are Contrastive

- Bear and otter encode features of physical appearance
- Pig encodes features of sexual energy
Subgroups of Animal Metaphors

**Physical Appearance**
- Bear
- Otter
- Chicken
- Wolf
- Bull
- Cub
- Rat
- Bunny

**Partner Relation**
- Hawk
- Chicken
- Wolf
- Pup
- Lamb

**Sexual Energy**
- Pig
- Wolf
- Pup

✝ = historical metaphor

† = historical metaphor
Exceptions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Physical Appearance</th>
<th>Partner Relation</th>
<th>Sexual Energy</th>
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<td>Rat</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunny</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✝ = historical metaphor
The Wolf Exception

Wolfie

36 years old, Single
Multi-Racial, 5' 9", 185 lb, Very Hairy

I am
Muscle, Leather, Geek, Daddy, Queer

I am into
Jocks, Muscle, Leather, Daddies, Guys Next Door

Single and enjoying life!

That being said, I do have an amazing Alpha in

who’s been my rock over the last

year.

I’m also fortunate to have a loving bondage

MASTER in who has shown me a tame

side of myself I never thought possible. Collared

and locked for bondage only! Checkout

on Twitter to see his work, and

some of me...
The Wolf Exception

+ muscle
+ hairy
+ aggressive
+ dominant
Summary: Potentially Encoded Features

Physical Appearance
+slim
+hairy
+young
+muscle

Partner Relation
+dominant

Sexual Energy
+dirty
+playful
+aggressive
Summary: Generic to Specific Metaphorical Levels

PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS

QUEERS ARE ANIMALS

Physical Appearances
Partner Relations
Sexual Energy
Greater Impacts

➢ QUEERS ARE ANIMALS encodes a conceptual understanding of the human experience through the lens of the queer community.

➢ There is an inherent relationship between conceptual metaphor and culture. (Kövecses, 2010)
  ○ “We can see the relationship is not that of one dominant over the other, but that of mutual promotion and constraint.” (Yuanqiong, 2009)

➢ We might infer certain components of a culture by analyzing the conceptual metaphors found in the language of that culture.
Acknowledgements

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References


