On the Complexity of Conceptual Animal Metaphors in Queer Speech

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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

Dom total top. 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.

- Height: 6'2"
- Weight: 250 lbs
- Ethnicity: White
- Body Type: Large
- Gender: Man
- Position: Top
- Tribes: Daddy
Someone who wants to have sex all the time. They typically enjoy “dirty”, kinky sex.

(Koymasky, 2013)
**Pig**

- **Gender**: Queer
- **Position**: Bottom
- **Tribes**: Trans

You must be this tall |---------9"---------|
To mount this ride 😍

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

☆ Bottom
Lookin for hung top
21y and up
**Otter**

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

(\_Evannn, 2017)
Otter
Self-identification as both *bear* and *pig*

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

Source Domain

- slim
- young

Target Domain

+ hairy
+ dirty
One-Way Mapping Source → 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
Exceptions

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

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

Sexual Energy
- Pig
- Wolf
- Pup

✝ = 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.
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References


