

Growls and Woofs:

A Theoretical and Descriptive Analysis of Conceptual Animal Metaphors in Queer Speech

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(He/him/his)

“Approaching a Queer Dialectology” Webinar
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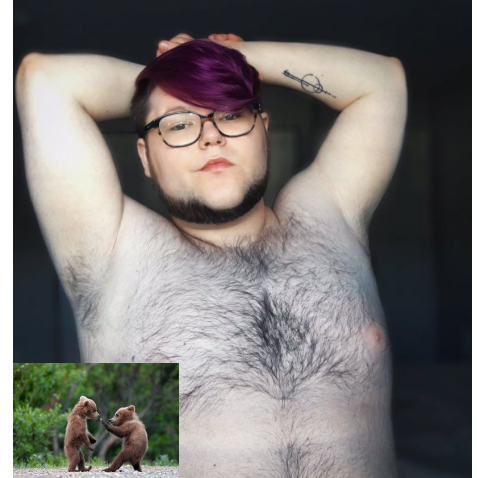
Trigger Warning:
Graphic sexual language and profanity

Introduction

What do these animals have in common?



Types of queer community members



Uses of Queer Animal Metaphors

— — —

- ☐ Medium for (self-)identification

- ☐ Physical appearances
- ☐ Sub-community membership

- ☐ Tool for sexual communication

- ☐ Sexual desires
- ☐ Erotic behavior



General Definitions

— — —

Bear

An “**older**” hairy individual with a **large, stocky body**



Otter

A hairy individual with a **slim, slender body**

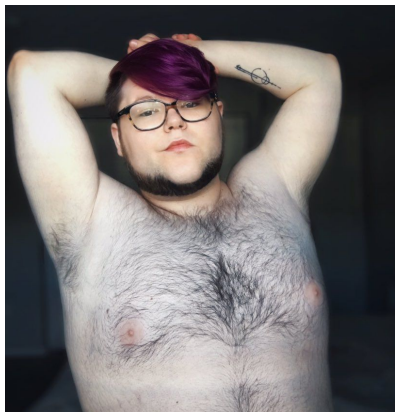


General Definitions

— — —

Cub

A “**younger**”
hairy individual
with a **large**,
stocky body



Pup(py)

An individual who
role plays as a
puppy and
assumes a
submissive sexual
role



General Definitions

— — —

Wolf

A **muscular** or **lean, hairy** individual who assumes a **dominant** sexual role



Pig

An individual who wants to **have sex all the time**; typically “**dirty**”, kinky sex



Conceptual Metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993; Kövecses, 2010)

— — —

- ❑ Conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of an abstract concept in terms of a concrete source.
 - ❑ The different classifications of queer community members are understood in terms of animals
- ❑ Common in everyday communication
- ❑ Systematic relationship between dissimilar concepts
- ❑ Diachronic development

The Takeaways

- ❏ The animal metaphors are systematic, complex, and worthy of future research.
- ❏ A queer dialectology would require a departure from traditional dialectology and a reconfiguration of modern dialectology

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Data Collection

Utilizing Multimedia Platforms

— — —

- ❏ 250 public profiles from online, dating apps
 - ❏ Grindr, GROWLr, SCRUFF
- ❏ Typed-out animal metaphors
 - ❏ No fictional animals (e.g. unicorn)
 - ❏ No pre-selected “tribes”
- ❏ Randomly selected regions of continental USA
 - ❏ Rural and urban

Most common animals

— — —

Bear: 73

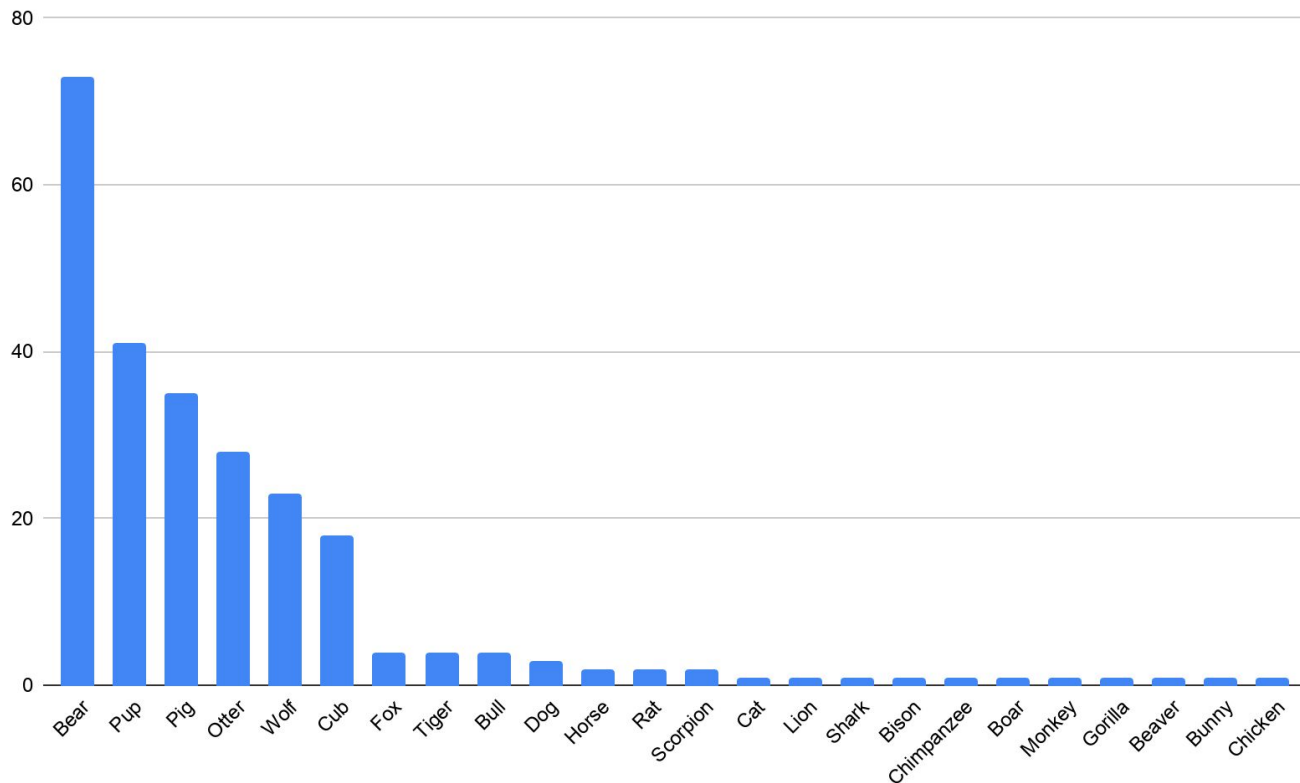
Pup: 41

Pig: 35

Otter: 28

Wolf: 23

Cub: 18



On the Complexity of the Animal Metaphors

Systematic Patterns of Encoded Elements

— — —

- ❏ Inclusivity
 - ❏ Users and identifiers of the animal metaphors
- ❏ Diminutives
 - ❏ Age is relative to the speaker
- ❏ Compounds
 - ❏ Constraints to multiple animal identification
- ❏ Partner entailment
 - ❏ Relationships through kinship/hierarchical terminology

Inclusivity: Not Just for Gay Men

— — —

- ❏ These animal metaphors are inclusive to individuals of various gender identities, ethnicities, age, and sexualities
- ❏ Different species of an animal can refer to a person's ethnicity and age.

trans cub 🐻

#puppy #non_binary #looking

PandaBear 🐼

polarbear 🇺🇸 50

Diminutives: How Young is “Young”?

- — —
- ❑ Some animal metaphors are the younger version of another animal metaphor and they function as a diminutive.

- ❑ *Bear* → *Cub*
 - ❑ *Wolf* → *Wolfpup*
 - ❑ *Pig* → *Piglet*

- ❑ Individuals may identify as the diminutive animal if they are
 - ❑ Young by age or appearance
 - ❑ Inexperienced or a new community member
 - ❑ Sexually submissive

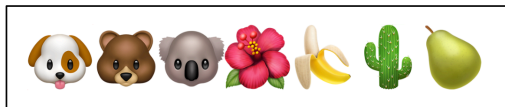
i mostly like strong, beefy, furry men in their 40s and 50s 😍 though sometimes a 30-something cubbo does it for me too 🐻

piglet 🐷

Just came out after many years leading a straight life. Only looking for sex. I've been deprived so now it's time to get wild!

Compounds: Multiple Animal Identification

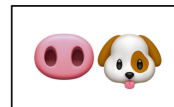
- — —
- ❑ It's not uncommon to find individuals identifying as more than one animal metaphor. In this case they often surface as compounds.



bearpup36



PigBear



Compounds: Contrastive Elements

- There is a pattern to which animals compound to others.
- Pig* can compound with any animal.
- Pup* compounds with any animal except *Wolf*.
- Bear*, *Cub*, *Otter*, and *Wolf* tend to not compound with one another.

<u><i>Bear</i></u> Hairy Large "Older"	<u><i>Cub</i></u> Hairy Large "Younger"
<u><i>Otter</i></u> Hairy Slim	<u><i>Wolf</i></u> Hairy Lean Dominant
<u><i>Pig</i></u> Promiscuous	<u><i>Pup</i></u> Role Play Submissive

Partner Entailment:

— — —

- ❑ *Wolf* and *Pup* may entail a relationship with at least one other partner.
- ❑ The entailment is not necessarily absolute, but can be specified in kinship/hierarchical terms.
 - ❑ *Alpha, beta, gamma*
 - ❑ *Handler, owner*
 - ❑ *Pack, pack-mate*

As a pup there's a couple things I'd love to find. I'm an Alpha pup meaning looking to find pack-mates, while also looking for a handler/owner. I take care of others and love being there for my friends and pack. So you can imagine that sometimes I just need to take a break and relax, as a pup I don't want to worry about being in charge. That's where having a handler or owner comes in!

Issue: 2 Metaphors, 1 Pig

*If you support 45, ya dead to me. Sorry,
but he's a pig. A racist, egotistical,
narcissistic, chauvinistic, pontificating pig.*

*The only pigs I like are the ones that have
an aversion to latex. There's nothing
better than hot, kinky, dirty sex with hot,
raunchy pigs and taking a few rough
breedings 💧🐷👹*

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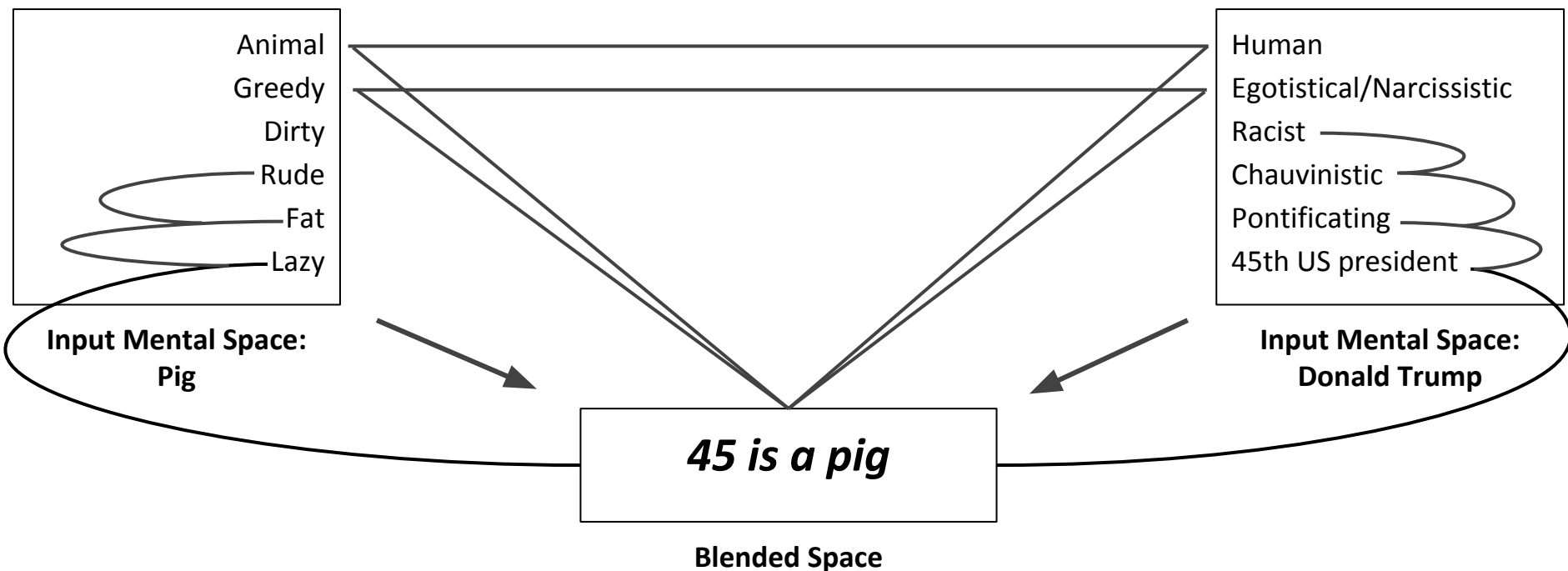
Conceptual Blending

Conceptual Blending (Fauconnier and Turner, 1998; 2003)

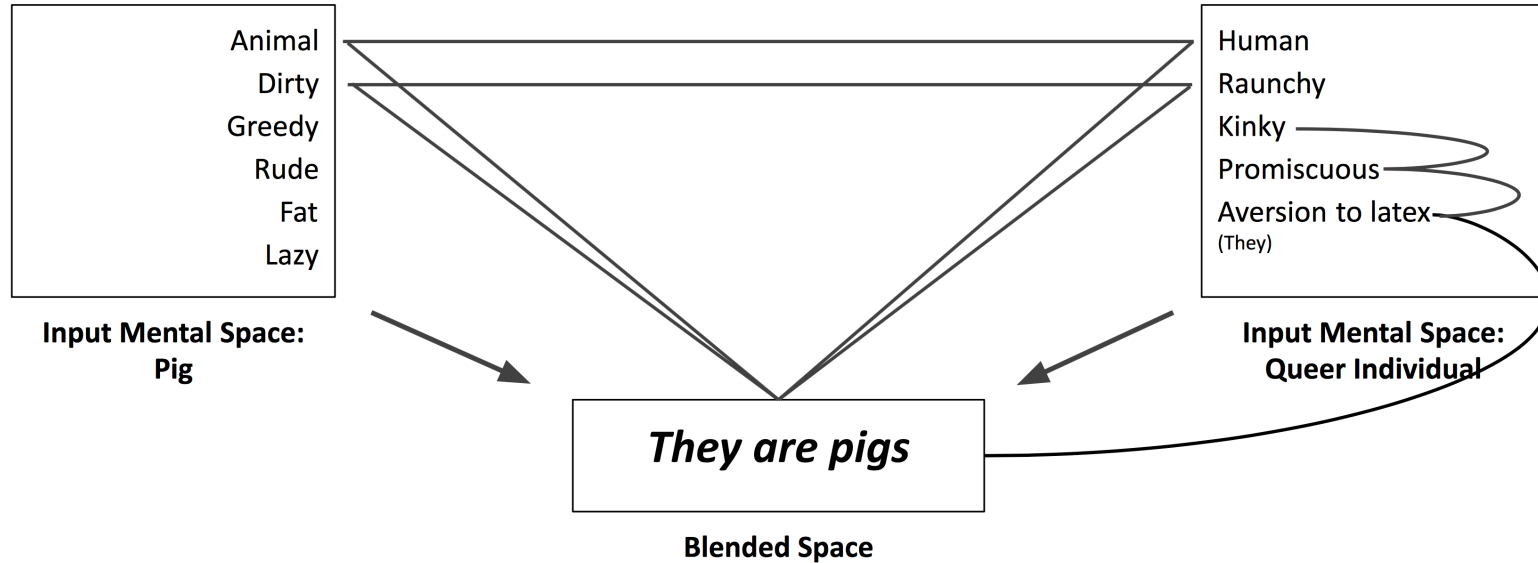
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- ❑ Extension of Conceptual Metaphor Theory
- ❑ A basic cognitive operation which blends concepts within a network of “mental spaces” in order to create new meaning.
- ❑ The conceptual blend of *pig* and *45* (aka Donald Trump) differs from the conceptual blend of *pig* and *the ones with an aversion to latex*

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The only pigs I like are the ones that have an aversion to latex. There's nothing better than hot, kinky, dirty sex with hot, raunchy pigs and taking a few rough breedings 💧🐷👿



Summary

These Animal Metaphors are Complex

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- ❑ Medium for sexual communication
- ❑ Tool for identification
- ❑ Not limited to homosexual, cisgendered men
- ❑ Reflect interpersonal engagement
- ❑ Unique conceptualization, but homophonous to conventional metaphors
- ❑ Worthy of future research

Implications for Queer Dialectology

Beyond Traditional & Modern Dialectology

— — —

- ❏ Complicates what dialectology means for queer people
 - ❏ Sexuality and sexual role as the forefront of dialect research
 - ❏ Relation between metaphor/iconicity and sexuality
- ❏ Challenges the idea of place
 - ❏ Multimedia platforms considered as a regional place
 - ❏ Interference between regional, internet, and queer language variations

References

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