

Verbs of animal sounds and their metaphorical extensions

01/04/15



Typology of animal sounds: aims of the project



Aims of the project

Verbs of animal sounds:

1. Direct meanings cluster animals:

Are clusters different in all languages?

Are there prevailing patterns of clustering?

2. Metaphors:

View these verbs as the source of metaphors.

Which types of metaphors are recurring?

What types of semantic shifts are the most common?

Typology of animal sounds: methodology



Methodology

- ✓ **Corpus analysis:**
 - linguistic corpora;
 - Internet search;
- ✓ **Questionnaires:**
 - the one aiming at specific contexts (crying, laughing, etc.);
 - the one based on animal verbs and their possible transitions

20 languages are studied so far.
(approximate number)

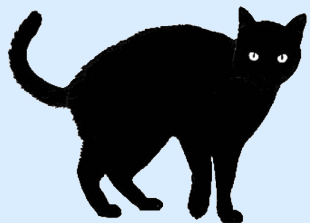
Typology of animal sounds: direct meanings

PREPARE FOR
THE UNEXPECTED

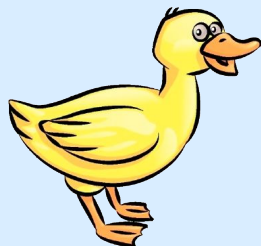


Examples from Russian

мяукать ↔
'to meow'



крякать ↔
'to quack'



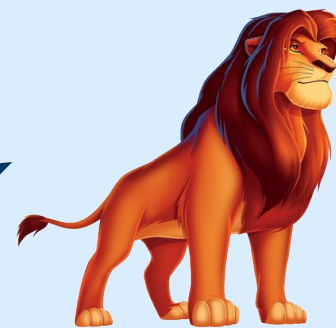
лаять ↔
'to bark'



мычать ↔
'to moo'



рычать
'to growl'



пищать
'to peep'



RUSSIAN VS GERMAN

блеять
'to bleat'



blöken



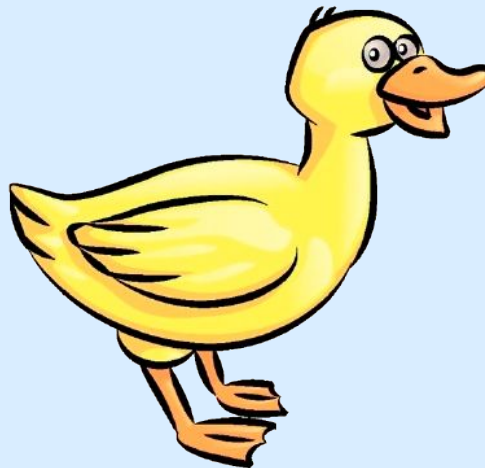
meckern

GEORGIAN VS RUSSIAN

qiqini



квакать
'to croak'



крякать
'to quack'

Animals: frequent unions

- livestock
- predators (feline VS canine)
- birds of prey
- small birds and songbirds
- small animals & cubs

Animals: unexpected frequent unions

- livestock
 - cow, sheep, ram, bull, etc. + **SEAL**
- predators (feline VS canine)
 - cat, lion, tiger, etc. + **RAM** + **SQUIRREL**
 - dog, fox, wolf, etc.
- birds of prey
- small birds and songbirds
- small animals & cubs

Animals: no sound

Greek - camel, rhinoceros, fox, hog, eagle, mouse, fly

Indonesian - camel, crocodile, rhinoceros, stork

Each language has its own exceptions!

Amount of verbs: languages

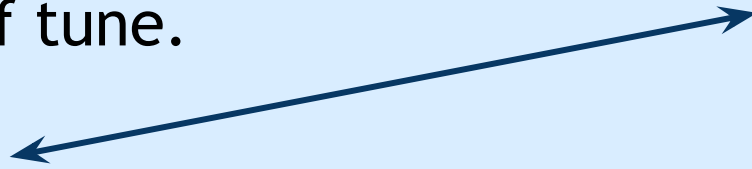
- **many specific verbs for various animals:**
Finnish, Serbian, Hungarian, Greek, French
- **one or two common verbs for animal sounds:** Japanese, Korean, Erzya

Typology of animal sounds: metaphors



What's it all about?

He used to be at the Cathedral at rehearsals and growl if some things were out of tune.



The dogs began to growl as Frankie turned the knob of amber glass with both hands and pushed the door open.

Cet enfant ne fait que piauler.



Des petits poulets viennent de naître et piaulent au coin du feu.

Typology can answer

1. Are there such transfers of animal verbs in other languages?
2. If yes, do they follow the models present in Russian and English?
3. What's common and what's different in such transfers?
4. Is it all about humans?

What we found: possible goals

- humans

Ул сысылдап һөйләне. (Bashkir: сысылдау ‘hiss’)

‘He hissed.’ (spoke angrily)

- artefacts

Traktori mylvi, kun se kulki tiellä. (Finnish: mylviä ‘roar’)

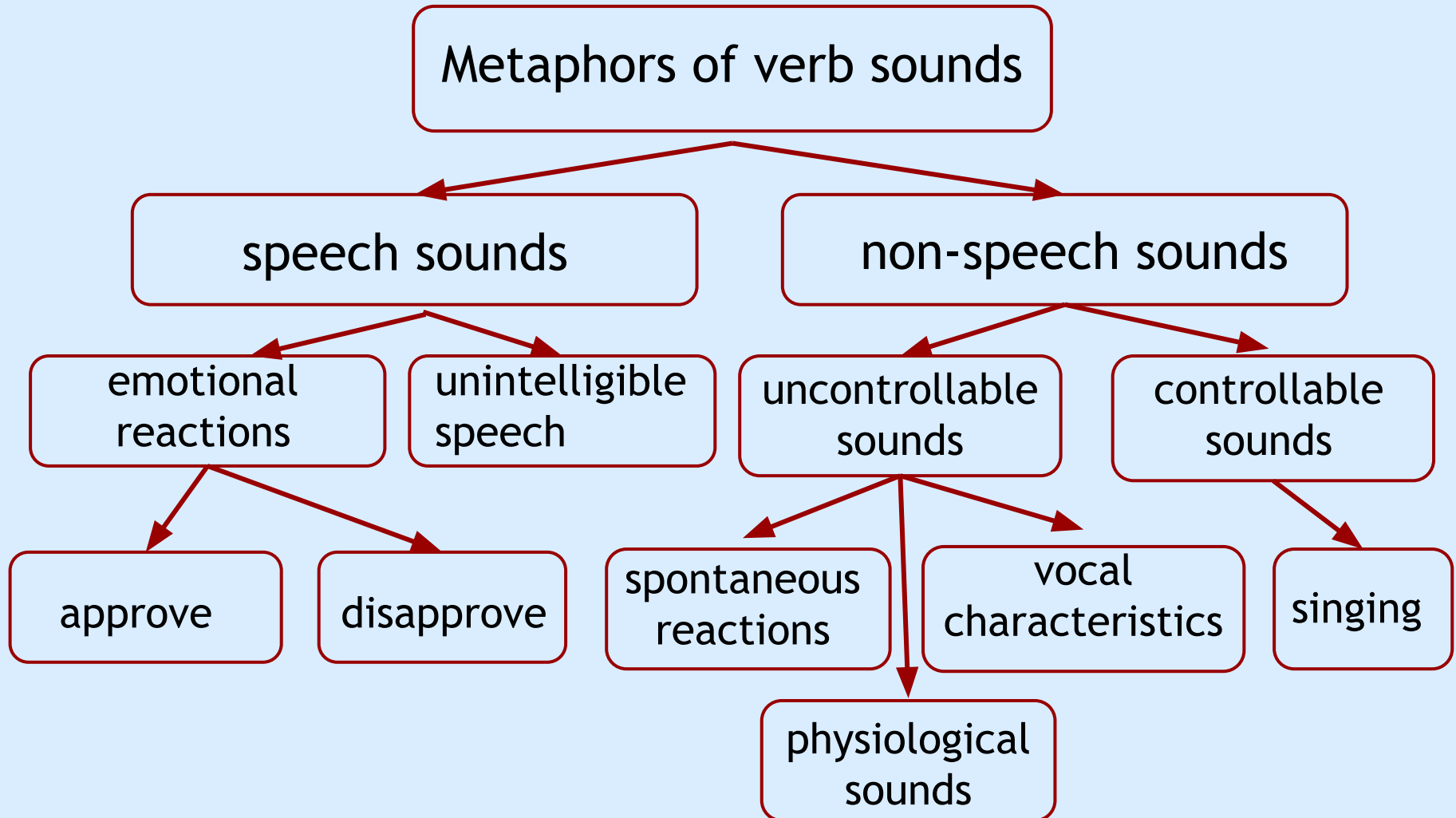
‘The tractor moved by the road, roaring.’

- nature

Roedd yr awel yn suo rhwng y dail. (Welsh: suo ‘buzz’)

‘The breeze was murmuring through the leaves.’

What we found: structure of the zone connected to humans



What determines the transfer?



- ✓ Features of an animal sound
- ✓ Cultural stereotypes

Features of an animal sound

- Horses whinny → laughing

loud, sonorous and discontinuous

In gərdle me vylam! ‘Don’t laugh at me!’ (Komi-Zyryan)

- Pigs grunt → snoring

voiceless, hoarse and discontinuous

Ул хырылдай. ‘He snores.’ (Bashkir)

- Wolves howl → crying

loud, extended, dull

Бичкн күүкн уульжана. ‘The little girl cries’ (Kalmyk)

Cultural stereotypes

However, metaphORIZATION is seldom motivated only by sound features.

Insects → annoying

Sya mortys ottore zyyge i zyyge. (Komi-Zyryan)

'He buzzes and buzzes (He annoys me).'

Tigers → aggressive

Kutul-un manna-ki-man-ha-myen nul ululeng-keli-mye ssawu-n-ta. (Korean)

'When they meet, they argue and shout at each other.'

Cultural stereotypes

Culture defines lexical structure!

the more salient an animal is

the more verbs it has

the more metaphors can arise



Typology of animal sounds: conclusions



Conclusions: part 1

- World languages have common strategies of clustering animal sounds
- However, every language has its own specific features
- Scientific worldview is different from the worldview from the language perspective

Conclusions: part 2

- Different languages employ similar strategies of metaphorization
- Surprisingly, unique examples can be found in every language :)
- Metaphors from the field of animal sounds contribute to the general theory of metaphorization



The end

Thank you for your attention!

