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# Animal Metaphors from the Viewpoint of Parts of Speech

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## Abstract

メタファーとは、言語の特殊技法ではなく、日常言語や我々の思考や行動の奥にまで存在しているものだと Lakoff and Johnson (1980) が指摘してから、様々なメタファー研究が盛んに行われてきた。その中でも近年注目を集めているのが、コーパスデータに基づくメタファー研究である。実際の言語使用に基づくこの研究方法は、言語的直観に基づく伝統的なメタファー研究とは異なる研究結果や、これまであまり注意が向けられてこなかった特徴を明らかにするなど、メタファーの新しい側面を見せている。

コーパスデータに基づくメタファー研究の一つとして、品詞的側面からのメタファー研究がある。その中で、名詞のメタファーは実際の言語使用のなかでは主要ではないという、伝統的な見解とは反対の指摘がなされた。この指摘は、根源領域と目標領域の間で品詞転換が起こるのかという問題にも発展して議論がなされている。

その具体的な研究として挙げられるのが Deignan (2006) である。Deignan は、調査対象を動物のメタファーに絞り、それらの品詞別頻度や、領域間での品詞転換について言及した。しかし、*hound*, *weasel*, *squirrel*, *hare*, *ferret*, *ape* は名詞のメタファーを全く持たず、領域間での品詞転換は完璧に起こっているという Deignan の指摘に疑問が生じたため、本稿ではそれらの語(ape は除く)の調査を再度行った。Corpus of Contemporary American English から得られたデータより、主に以下の3点が明らかになった。

1. Deignan (2006) の指摘とは異なり、字義通りの意味と比喩的な意味の間に完全な品詞転換はみられず、ある程度の品詞の相続はみられた。
2. 目標領域内の動詞のメタファーは、目標領域内の名詞のメタファーから、“行為者からプロセス”という関係に基づくメトニミー的拡張によって生まれた。
3. メタファーが持つ、根源領域内の対象との類似性のタイプがメタファー

の品詞の頻度に影響を与える。

以上のように本稿では実例に基づいた調査を行い、品詞という側面からメタファーの分析を行った。

## 1. Introduction

Lakoff and Johnson (1980), a pioneering cognitive linguistic study of metaphor, state:

Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish - a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3)

Since they have described metaphor as above, a lot of studies focus on metaphor and describe it from various viewpoints. In recent years, the corpus-based research on metaphor is prosperous. It is the attempt to observe metaphors, which Lakoff and Johnson (1980) described as ‘pervasive’, from the natural occurring data. The research often shows different result from traditional studies based on intuitively-derived examples, and it often finds new characteristics of metaphors to which little attention has been given. The corpus-based research on metaphor reveals the variety of metaphor in everyday life.

Among the corpus-based studies on metaphor, there are studies which focus on the grammatical aspect of metaphor, specifically, the parts of speech of metaphors. Some studies point out that nominal metaphors in the target domain are not dominant in language in use, contrary to the idea of traditional studies that nominal metaphors are the most common. It is discussed involving the problem whether there is a full conversion of the parts of speech between the source domain and the target domain. The concrete study on it is Deignan (2006). She narrows the object to animal metaphors, and reports the frequency of the parts of speech of animal metaphors and the conversion of the parts

of speech. Although it is an interesting study, the question arises to her claim that *hound*, *squirrel*, *weasel*, *hare*, *ferret*, and *ape* don't have nominal metaphor at all and there is a full conversion of the parts of speech between the source domain and the target domain on those words.

This research is firstly done in order to confirm this point. The object words are also narrowed to the animal metaphors. The aim of this study is to clarify the following three points with corpus data:

1. Whether there is the full conversion of the parts of speech between literal meanings and metaphorical meanings on those words.
2. How the conversion of the parts of speech occurs.
3. The reason why some metaphorical words take a form of verb more frequently than a form of noun in the target domain, but others don't.

This thesis reports the following results. First, there is some preservation of the parts of speech between the literal meanings and the metaphorical meanings. The changes of the parts of speech don't occur completely in the words: *hound*, *ferret*, *squirrel*, *weasel*, and *hare*. Second, the verb metaphors have arisen from the nominal metaphor with a metonymical extension of "agent - process". Finally, the type of similarity in metaphors influences the frequency of the parts of speech in the target domain.

The organization of the thesis is as follows. Section 2 summarizes the major findings of past studies. Section 3 reports the findings about the metaphors of those words from the viewpoints of the parts of speech. Section 4 discusses the questions with the findings made above, and Section 5 is the conclusion.

## 2. Past studies

First of all, past studies about the parts of speech of metaphors are introduced. The following studies adopt an experiential study and used corpora as the data sources. Note that they study metaphors from the same aspect, but there is similarity and some different points as presented below.

### 2.1. Cameron

Cameron (2003) studied metaphor with the idea that metaphor should be studied not

only from a theoretical perspective but also from a perspective of discourse. She used a corpus and focused on the parts of speech of metaphors in target domains. She showed the following data; 47.0% of the data took the form of verb, 34.0% were prepositional metaphors, 15.0% were nominal metaphors. In this research, she paid attention to the low frequency of the nominal metaphors. This result conflicts with the idea of some theoretical studies of metaphors; some theoretical studies claim that nominal metaphors such as 'A is B' are typical and common compared with metaphors which take other parts of speech. Although she doesn't explain why nominal metaphor is less frequent, Cameron shows the unique and fresh aspect of metaphor by researching it from the viewpoint of parts of speech.

## 2.2. Goatly

Goatly (1997) focused on the grammatical features of metaphor and described it from the viewpoint of parts of speech, based on the data from corpora. In his study, metaphors were found in all the major parts of speech. He suggests that a lot of metaphor studies tended to focus on nominal metaphors not because of their frequency but because nominal metaphors were 'more marked' than metaphors of other parts of speech. That is to say, nominal metaphors are outstanding and easy to recognize. Both Cameron (2003) and Goatly (1997) share the idea that the literal meaning and the metaphorical meaning of a word take the same part of speech. In contrast, Deignan (2006) suggests a different view as shown below.

## 2.3. Deignan

Deignan (2006) also studied the parts of speech of metaphors using a corpus, but she suggests the different idea that many words don't take the same part of speech in literal and metaphorical senses. There is a conversion of the part of speech in the path from the source domain to the target domain, so there is no inheritance of the parts of speech between literal meanings and metaphorical meanings. Based on this idea, she examined actual data of animal metaphors and suggests that *pig*, *wolf*, *monkey*, *rat*, *fox*, *bitch*, and *dog* could be used as both nominal metaphors and verb metaphors; however, nominal metaphors are much less frequent compared with verb metaphors. This means that there is little inheritance of the parts of speech from literal meanings to metaphorical meanings of those words. Moreover, she claims that the words; *hound*, *hare*, *ferret*, *weasel*, *squirrel* and *ape* are not used as nominal metaphors at all but used as verb metaphors.

It means that there is no inheritance of the parts of speech between the source domain and the target domain. She claims that the low frequency of nominal metaphors in animal metaphors comes from the conversion of the parts of speech between literal and metaphorical meanings.

## 2.4. Questions

As presented above, all those studies point out the low frequency of nominal metaphors. However, two questions now arise toward Deignan (2006). First, there are expressions like “I’m a weasel” and “He is a hound dog” in metaphorical meanings, while Deignan (2006) claims that those words *weasel* and *hound* don’t have nominal metaphors at all. Is there really no preservation of the parts of speech between the literal meaning and the metaphorical meaning in those animal words? Second, why do those changes of the parts of speech occur? In order to find answers to those questions, this thesis will begin with the examination of the words *hound*, *hare*, *ferret*, *weasel*, and *squirrel*.

## 3. Data Analysis

### 3.1. Procedure for the Research

As noted above, metaphors from the source domain of animals are examined in this thesis. Specifically, we focus on the five words, *hound*, *hare*, *weasel*, *squirrel*, and *ferret*. Among the words which Deignan (2006) examined, *ape* is excluded because the word can refer to human beings as a literal meaning. Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is a data source for this research. It consists of 410 million words of American English collected from spoken data, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic texts. The data collected include all registers, tenses, and forms from 2003 to 2010. The data are categorized into four categories, *nominal metaphors*, *verb metaphors*, *others (nouns)*, and *others (verbs)*. *Nominal metaphors* and *verb metaphors* only include metaphors which express human beings, so *others* include other metaphors which express non-human and similes. After the categorization, the metaphors are analyzed and some concepts which are considered as similarity between the animals and human are identified. To be concrete, the three types of similarity: *behavior*, *images*, and *appearance* are found.

Before turning to a closer examination of the actual data, a few remarks should be made

concerning the types of similarity. If we categorize metaphors based on the idea of Black (1962), every metaphor might be categorized into the similarity of “*images*”. He thinks that there are some subjective senses about the word which he calls “the *system of associated commonplaces* (Black 1962: 40)” and they are described with metaphors instead of the dictionary meaning in animal metaphor. Allan (2008) also suggests that in animal metaphor, the status in the relationship to human beings is described, and it is not necessarily literal meaning. They assume that every similarity in animal metaphor is not the literal meaning of the animals but the subjective “*images*” which human beings selected from the relationship to us. It is not to be denied that the similarity which underlies metaphors is subjective. In this research, however, similarities are categorized into *behavior*, *images*, and *appearance* based on the following points:

Behavior: observable action in the real word.

Images: unobservable characteristics of the animals. Reputation.

Appearance: observable form of animals and human.

Thus, the categorization of similarity in this research is based on not whether the similarity is subjective or objective but whether it is observable or not. Let us see the actual data from the next section. First of all, we will focus our attention on whether those words have nominal metaphors or not.

### 3.2. The Numbers and the Percentage of Nominal Metaphors and Verb Metaphors

Table 1: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors

<i>Hound</i>				<i>Ferret</i>			
	Noun	Verb	Total		Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	63(27.3%)	168(72.7%)	231(100%)	Metaphors	1(0.7%)	140(99.3%)	141(100%)
Others	559	47	606	Others	142	9	151
Total	622	215	837	Total	143	149	292

  

<i>Weasel</i>				<i>Squirrel</i>			
	Noun	Verb	Total		Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	35(56.6%)	30(43.4%)	65(100%)	Metaphors	3(18.8%)	13(81.2%)	16(100%)
Others	136	0	136	Others	769	0	769
Total	171	30	201	Total	772	13	785

  

<i>Hare</i>			
	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	2(40.0%)	3(60.0%)	5(100%)
Others	482	0	482
Total	484	3	487

Table : Animal Metaphors from the Viewpoint of Parts of Speech

There are two important points to emphasize. First, as the tables indicate, this research confirmed the existence of nominal metaphors in all lexemes examined. It completely differs from the explanation of Deignan (2006). There is some inheritance of the parts of speech between the literal and metaphorical senses. The first question is answered here. The changes of the parts of speech don't occur completely in those words. Second, some words are used as a verb metaphor more frequently than a nominal metaphor (*hound, ferret, hare, and squirrel*), and others are used as a nominal metaphor more frequently than as a verb metaphor (*weasel*). This result leads us to add the third question: "Why are some words used as a verb metaphor more frequently than as a nominal metaphor, but others are not? How do those differences arise?" The second question which we asked in the previous section and the third question seem to be answered by analyzing each word, so let us analyze the data of those words in the next section.

### 3.3. Data Analysis of *Hound*

#### 3.3.1. The Number of Metaphors of *Hound*

Table 2: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors of *Hound*

	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	63(27.3%)	168(72.7%)	231(100%)
Others	559	47	606
Total	622	215	837

As the table shows, the word *hound* is often used to express human's characteristics and behaviors; it accounts for 27.3% of the total citations. As nominal metaphors, 63 citations out of 231 citations are found. It discords Deignan's study (2006), and it also shows that there are some inheritance of the parts of speech between literal *hound* and metaphorical *hound*. The conversion of the parts of speech doesn't occur completely.

#### 3.3.2. Nominal Metaphors of *Hound*

Nominal metaphors of *hound* have two senses based on the concept which is considered as similarity between hound and humans.

Concept: A hound searches for a quarry and chases it.

Sense 1: 59 citations

[noun + hound] Someone who has a particular enthusiasm for, or interest in, the

object (=preceding noun) and always seeks for (or sometimes collects it)

As stated above, the behavior of hounds of searching for a quarry and chasing it is considered as similarity with humans. A hound is a counterpart of a person, and a quarry is a counterpart of things the person seeks for.

(1) My mother was a bit of a **rock hound**, and I still have some of the ones she collected.

(American Artist, 2007, MAG)

(2) He is not a favourite of the tabloids, although when he had a lunch meeting with Nicole Kidman in New York a few years back, **gossip hounds** painted the pair as a couple.

(Associated Press, 2005, NEWS)

Sense 2: 4 citations

[hound dog (3 citations) or hound] A womanizer. Man who likes women unusually.

(3) Last week, he wrote that back then “one of the worst-kept secrets on the PGA tour was that Tiger was something of a **hound**. Everybody knew. “Some people even” saw it.”

(Newsweek, 2009, MAG)

### 3.3.3. Verb Metaphors of *Hound*

Verb metaphors of *hound* have five different senses, and they are grouped into two big categories, based on the concept of the similarity. The first concept is “A hound searches for a quarry and chases it.” It is the same concept that nominal metaphors have. The second concept is “A hound corners a quarry.” Nominal metaphors don’t have this concept in their meaning. The first concept focuses on chasing and the second concept focuses on driving someone. Let us look at the six senses which verb metaphor of *hound* has.

#### 3.3.3.1. Concept 1

Concept 1: A hound searches for a quarry and chases it.

Sense 1: 81 citations

To chase someone

35 citations out of 81 citations are related to celebrities, that is, fans, the media, the press, and paparazzi follow celebrities to see them or to get information and a scoop.

(4) Both couples are **hounded**, of course, by the paparazzi.

(CNN\_Showbiz, 2009, SPOK)

Sense 2: 6 citations

[hound out] To search for something/someone, or to pursue something.

(5) **Hounding** out the quartet is the tidally disrupted spiral NGC 3187, a challenging visual object. (Astronomy, 2004, MAG)

### 3.3.3.2. Concept 2

Concept 2: A hound corners a quarry.

Hounds drive quarries into a corner with baying when they hunt. The following senses would have arisen from this action.

Sense 3: 38 citations

To harass, annoy, or bother someone as a hound bays at quarry.

The action of driving a quarry with baying is considered to be similar to human beings. The examples are:

(6) We can also find in them vicarious expressions of his sense of being **hounded** or misunderstood by critics. (Art Bulletin, 2007, ACAD)

Sense 4: 23 citations

To keep prodding someone to do something like hounds bay at a quarry

(7) There's a lot of horse-trading going on, so you need someone who is **hounding** the staffers, calling up every week or every day if necessary.

(Harpers Magazine, 2005, MAG)

Sense 5: 20 citations

To drive someone to a certain state

Driving quarries out of their nest would be similarity with human. The state is basically bad situation for someone who is driven like a quarry.

(8) In Morocco, Islamist activists complain that women who wear the head scarf, usually

called a hijab, are **hounded out** of jobs and schools.

(Christian Science Monitor, 2006, NEWS)

### 3.4. Data Analysis of *Ferret*

#### 3.4.1. The Number of Metaphors of *Ferret*

Table 3: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors of *ferret*

	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	1(0.7%)	140(99.3%)	141(100%)
Others	142	9	151
Total	143	149	292

As the table shows, *ferret* is used as a metaphor frequently; about 48% of the total citations have metaphorical meanings. Regarding to the parts of speech, *ferret* is rarely used as a nominal metaphor but frequently used as a verb metaphor. The existence of the nominal metaphor of *ferret* is confirmed, but it is too small. So the metaphors of *ferret* seem to have no preservation of the parts of speech from literal to metaphorical meaning. It is inferred that the conversion of the parts of speech occurs almost thoroughly. Let us see the meanings.

#### 3.4.2. Nominal Metaphors of *Ferret*

In a nominal metaphor, the appearance of a ferret has similarity with the person's appearance.

Sense 1: 1 citation

Someone who looks like a ferret

- (1) Anne Berquist, **that little ferret?** Who, along with her shrewd, close -- set eyes and tiny, pinched face, had the most enormous breasts for a girl so short and sparing otherwise. (The Southern Review, 2003, FIC)

#### 3.4.3. Verb Metaphors of *Ferret*

Verb metaphors of *ferret* have three different senses, and we see the base concept common to those meanings. The concept is "Ferrets hunt vermin." The following three senses came from this concept. Ferrets are traditionally used for hunting rabbits and rats. They get into the burrows of those harmful animals and chase them out, and then

humans hunt those animals. This role of ferrets would be similar to humans and used metaphorically.

Concept: Ferrets hunt vermin.

Sense 1: 121 citations

[ferret out] To find or seek out something/someone

Here, the behavior that a ferret seeks out harmful animals has similarity. Because the animals hunted by ferrets are often hidden and harmful animals, the objects of metaphorical expressions are mainly something difficult to find and also often something bad. To be concrete, *potential waste, talent, the truth, pharmaceuticals, and secrets* are the examples of something difficult to find, and *a criminal, wrongdoers, terrorists, racial bias, and spammers* are those of something bad.

- (2) Iowa Senator Charles Grassley says the idea of an inspector general is to **ferret out** fraud and waste. It's worked well in other parts of the government, so why not in the courts? (CNN\_Event, 2006, SPOK)
- (3) They argue that those combined files could then be mined to **ferret out** terrorists. But many privacy experts object, saying such information remains too vulnerable to attack. (Christian Science Monitor, 2008, NEWS)

Sense 2: 17 citations

[ferret out] or [ferret away] To oust someone/something

This sense arises from the behavior of ferrets that they chase harmful animals out of their burrows. The focus here is to drive out something, while Sense 1 focuses on seeking out. As well as Sense 1, the objects are something/someone harmful or problematic as follows:

- (4) The guard is nowhere to be seen and it is with difficulty that he convinces the driver to wait while he **ferrets him out** from his usual sleeping spot amid a shady, hidden harbour along the fence. (Literary Review, 2009, FIC)

Sense 3: 2 citations

To search for something (Intransitive verb)

Unlike Sense 1, it doesn't mean that the subject has found the object. The speaker focuses on only the action of searching as a ferret searches for animals in a hole.

- (5) I **ferreted** inside my sailor’s bag for my trumpet and thrust it toward him, not wanting to miss a word. (Book: A richer dust, 2008, FIC)

### 3.5. Data Analysis of *Squirrel*

#### 3.5.1. The Number of Metaphors of *Squirrel*

Table 4: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors of *squirrel*

	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	3(18.8%)	13(81.2%)	16(100%)
Others	769	0	769
Total	772	13	785

*Squirrel* is rarely used as a metaphor; it is only 2% of the total citations, and although it is a very small number, squirrel has nominal metaphor. This also differs from the study of Deignan (2006). There is a little preservation of the parts of speech between literal meanings and metaphorical meanings. Let us see the meanings and the characteristics of the metaphor of *squirrel*.

#### 3.5.2. Nominal Metaphors of *Squirrel*

The meanings of the nominal metaphors of *squirrel* are quite vague. In (1), a squirrel seems to refer to a woman who always reports small incidents in daily life. We may assume that the habit of squirrels to store food in their nest might have similarity with human although it is still ambiguous. The meaning of (2) is more ambiguous than that of (1). It is hard to identify the similarity between squirrels and humans; however, it must be a metaphor because it doesn’t refer to real squirrels. The low frequency of this nominal metaphor and the vagueness of the meaning imply that the vocabularization of this metaphor isn’t going on well. Contrary to the citation (1) and (2), (3) is not ambiguous at all, but the nickname ‘The Squirrel’ simply refers to a man who is look like a squirrel.

- (1) Another call from Eunice Simon. She was always reporting “irregularities,” a strange car she couldn’t identify cruising past her house, a stray dog being sent by a neighbor to torment her cats, strange noises in the middle of the night. The woman was **a squirrel**, no doubt about it. (Black Issues Book Review, 2005, FIC)
- (2) “We sleep up there,” Fortchee said. He had a fight on his hands. We had never heard of such a thing. “What, climb up that? We’ll split our hooves. Or tear our

fingers, “said Ventoo.” And leave everything behind in the wagons?” yelled one of the men. “It’ll be windy and cold.” Fortchee tossed his head. “We’ll keep each other warm.” “We’ll fall off....” “Don’t be a load of squirrels,” said Leveza. She went to a cart, picked up a bag of tools, and started to climb.

(Fantasy & Science Fiction, 2008, FIC)

- (3) A mouthful of brown, disobedient teeth. My father had nicknamed him’ **The Squirrel.** (Literary Review, 2009, FIC)

### 3.5.3. Verb Metaphors of *Squirrel*

Verb metaphor is more frequent than nominal metaphor. All citations of verb *squirrel* come with *away*, and have a common concept as similarity that “A squirrel stocks food”.

Concept: A squirrel stocks food.

Sense 1: 12 citations

[squirrel away] To stock something (secretly)

8 citations have a meaning to hoard money. (4) is an example of that, and (5) is the example of the others.

- (4) The service is particularly interested in schemes that **squirrel away** income in offshore banks, then use credit cards to sneak the money back into the United States.

(ABA Journal, 2003, ACAD)

- (5) She **squirrelled away** leftovers of her favorite desserts - almond cake, lace cookies; anything my brother or I might otherwise scavenge - in a tin beneath her bed.

(New Yorker, 2006, FIC)

Sense 2: 1 citation

To confine someone

This citation is distinguished from the other citations because only this citation refers to ‘stocking a person’. And also the purposes are different; in Sense 1, people stock something for the purpose of using it later. On the other hand, in Sense 2, to confine her is in order to get her out of drug addiction.

- (6) And Jane Fonda actually said she wanted to kind of take her away, **squirrel her**

away for 20 years to get her out of this environment. Ms-LEE: Definitely. I think anybody who works with Lindsay feels that way. (CBS\_SatEarly, 2007, SPOK)

### 3.6. Data Analysis of *Hare*

#### 3.6.1. The Number of Metaphors of *Hare*

Table 5: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors of hare

	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	2(40.0%)	3(60.0%)	5(100%)
Others	482	0	482
Total	484	3	487

There is no doubt about the low frequency of the metaphors of *hare*; only 1.6% of the total citations of *hare* are metaphors. Concerning the validity of Deignan (2006), the existence of nominal metaphor is observed, so it conflicts with her suggestion again. There seems to be preservation of the parts of speech in literal and metaphorical meanings. Let us take a look.

#### 3.6.2. Nominal Metaphors of *Hare*

Nominal metaphors of *hare* seem to refer to someone who is like the hare in the Aesop's fable "the Tortoise and the Hare". The story concerns a hare that races with a tortoise. The hare runs very fast and soon leaves the slow-moving tortoise. Confident of winning, the hare takes a nap on the way to the goal, but when he awakes he finds that the tortoise has already reached his goal. The hare loses because of his arrogance. The characteristics of the hare in this story are considered to have similarity with humans in nominal metaphor. Specifically, the quickness of the hare with the contrast to the slowness of the tortoise would be similar in both (1) and (2). So, the concept of similarity is "The hare runs rapidly (with a contrast to "the tortoise moves slowly)". Note that the settings are races and the comparison with the tortoise is described.

Concept: The hare runs rapidly (with a contrast to "the tortoise moves slowly").

Sense: 2 citations someone who is like the hare in the Aesop's fable

(1) Two things are true about Eastwood's career: 1 Because he never sounds neurotic or intellectual, he has been underestimated for decades; and 2 He really has gotten better, year after year. In the race for screen immortality, he has been the tortoise, not the

**hare.** # The career comes in waves, each bigger than the one that preceded it.

(SEC, 2007, NEWS)

(2) Ultimately, the race will be a replay of the parable of the tortoise and the hare. The trick, if there is one, is to be a tortoise and just keep moving forward. But the one-month deadline means that being too much of a tortoise may result in disqualification. So challengers have to be a little bit of **a hare**, as well.

(Christian Science Monitor, 2006, NEWS)

### 3.6.3. Verb Metaphors of *Hare*

The concept which has similarity here is the behavior of real hares, not the hare in the fable. The quickness of hares is described. Unlike the nominal metaphor, the concept wouldn't come from the fable because there is no comparison with the tortoise.

Concept: Hares run off rapidly.

Sense: 3 citations

[hare off] To run off or move hurriedly

All citations found in the corpus come with *off*, so it is used as a phrasal verb. See citations (3) and (4).

(3) What did his lordship mean, taking her out driving in the park every day, waltzing with her at Almack's, and then **haring off** to Derbyshire without proposing?" he demanded, apparently of Benedict. (Book; Rules for being a mistress, 2008, FIC)

(4) "How are you, Gordon?" "Oh, tolerable. Maybe a bit better than tolerable," Coates replied. "So you're **haring off** into the wilderness again, are you?" He was a city man to the tips of his manicured fingers. (Analog, 2005, FIC)

## 3.7. Data Analysis of *Weasel*

### 3.7.1. The Number of Metaphors of *Weasel*

Table 6: The numbers and the percentage of nominal metaphors and verb metaphors of *weasel*

	Noun	Verb	Total
Metaphors	35(56.6%)	30(43.4%)	65(100%)
Others	136	0	136
Total	171	30	201

About 33% of the total citations are metaphors. It seems that *weasel* is often used in

a metaphoric meaning. Among the words examined in this study, only this word *weasel* is used as a nominal metaphor more frequently than as a verb metaphor. It is obvious that there is a little inheritance of the parts of speech from literal meanings to metaphorical meanings. The conversion of the parts of speech from noun to verb doesn't occur every time when the word takes a metaphorical meaning.

### 3.7.2. Nominal Metaphors of *Weasel*

The concepts are “Weasels are cunning” and “Weasels are sneaky animals”. The significant point here is that those concepts are not the real behaviors of weasels but the images of them. Another word which has this type of similarity is *hare*. The other words don't have these types of the similarities. Instead, the similarities are related to the actual behaviors of animals. We will discuss this point in the next chapter. Let us see the meanings and collocations for now.

Concept 1: Weasels are cunning.

Sense 1: 32 citations

Someone who is cunning

Some take the form of a compound noun with a successive word such as *resident*, *politicians*, *lawyers*, *family*, and *slug*. The others don't collocate with any words. Both of them refer to someone who is cunning or sly.

(1) That's Congress saying we're going to do whatever we want and we're going to have **weasel lawyers** find a way in the Constitution to make it happen.

(Fox\_Beck, 2009, SPOK)

(2) The **weasel resident** was praised for his role in my save.

(The six-liter club: a novel, 2010, FIC)

Concept 2: Weasels are sneaky animals.

Sense 2: 3 citations

An informer or a spy

(3) As is well known, the Soviets had a **weasel** in the Los Alamos hen house, he being the spy Klaus Fuchs.

(Analog Science Fiction & Fact, 2004, FIC)

### 3.7.3. Verb Metaphors of *Weasel*

The verb metaphors also have the same concept as the nominal metaphors.

Concept: Weasels are sneaky animals.

Sense: 30 citations

[weasel (out)] or [weasel in (with the movement in the opposite direction)] To escape from something or doing something sneakingly

The action of escaping from something would have an affinity with the images of sneaking weasels.

(4) Face it, “College Not Combat” is a selfish, cowardly and shameful attempt by the city to **weasel out** of its obligation to our country.

(San Francisco Chronicle, 2005, NEWS)

(5) And naturally I tried to **weasel out** of caring for him as fast as possible.

(Parenting, 2006, MAG)

## 4. Discussion

Having seen the data and examined them, we may now proceed to the discussion of questions 2 and 3. Reconfirm that the second question is “why do the conversions of the parts of speech between the literal meanings and the metaphorical meanings occur?” Question 3 is “why are some words used as a verb metaphor more frequently than as a nominal metaphor, but others are not? How do those differences arise?” Let us begin with Question 2.

### 4.1. Question 2

First, we will consider Question 2: “why do the conversions of the parts of speech between the literal meanings and the metaphorical meanings occur?” The conversion means the change of the parts of speech from noun to verb in this research because we examined animal lexes which are originally nouns. Thus, we can rephrase the question into “how do verb metaphors arise?”

This question might be answered by the viewpoint of metonymy instead of metaphor. Seto (2005) explains metonymical conversions of the parts of speech and shows some types of metonymy. A metonymy ‘*from agent to process*’ seems to be applicable to this

conversion in the types which he shows. A word which originally refers to an agent begins to refer to the process which the agent originally does. For instance, a noun *author* originally refers to a person who has written a book, and also a verb *author* means writing a book. The verb is considered to have arisen from the noun as a metonymy.

This metonymical conversion might have been applied to the words which we examined. That is, for example, a verb *hound* could be considered to have arisen from a noun *hound* which is the original agent with the metonymy of ‘agent to process’. It seems simple at first sight; however, it doesn’t go straightforward. As the first step to apply the explanation to those words, we need to identify where (either the source domain or the target domain) the verbs arise because metaphor is involved here, although it doesn’t need to identify the domain in metonymy essentially. It has three possibilities:

Possibility 1: The verb has arisen as a literal verb from the literal noun. After the development, the verb acquires the metaphorical meaning.

Possibility 2: The verb has arisen as a metaphorical verb simultaneously when the literal noun acquires a metaphorical meaning.

Possibility 3: The verb has arisen as a metaphorical verb from the metaphorical noun.

Let us consider these possibilities. First, as a problem of Possibility 1, note that those words in question have no literal verb. It can be thought that those literal verbs just have vanished, even if so, however, the literal verbs which might have arisen from the literal nouns with the metonymy of ‘agent-process’ seem unnatural and obscure. To illustrate, imagine the expression “The weasel weaseled.” in literal meanings. This expression sounds like a pun, wordy, or unnatural. Besides, the literal verb is vague in meaning. What does that phrase mean exactly? It can express all characteristics of a weasel. Compared with other examples of metonymy of ‘agent-process’ such as *butcher* (n), *author*(n), and *nurse* (n), the literal nouns of *hound*, *squirrel*, *weasel*, *ferret*, and *hare* seem too vague to be “an agent of an action”. Those words such as *butcher* (n), *author* (n), and *nurse* (n) are more specific as an agent of an action because they refer to certain occupations. However, the animal word refers to an animal; it means that the word involves the behaviors, the characteristics, and the appearance of the animal in the meaning. It would be difficult to identify one action from the behaviors in order to consider the animal an agent of an action, so it also would be difficult to identify the

Table : Animal Metaphors from the Viewpoint of Parts of Speech

meaning of the literal verb. Thus, Possibility 1 would be denied.

Next, consider Possibility 2. Possibility 2 means that the metaphorical extension of meaning and the metonymical extension of meaning occur correlatively, and at once. However, when we examine the following example carefully, we will find that the metonymical extension of meaning cannot occur simultaneously with the metaphorical extension. It will succeed the metaphorical extension of the meaning. Consider the following case: the metaphorical verb *weasel* has arisen from the literal noun *weasel* with the metonymical expansion. The metaphorical verb has meaning of escaping from something sneakily; however, the literal noun doesn't have such meaning. Objectively weasels don't escape from something sneakily. This behavior is our image of weasels which is considered as similarity with human. So, there is the relationship of 'agent-process' not between the literal noun and the metaphorical verb but between the metaphorical noun and the metaphorical verb. It means that Possibility 2 is denied here and Possibility 3 might be plausible. Thus, let us go on to Possibility 3.

As stated above, the literal nouns are too ambiguous to be considered as 'an agent of an action', so it seems reasonable to suppose that the metaphorical verb has arisen from the metaphorical noun with metonymy of 'agent-process'. As one thing to consider in the examination of Possibility 3, there is no relationship of 'agent-process' between the nominal metaphors of *squirrel* and the verb metaphors of *squirrel*; the nominal metaphor of *squirrel* refers to a person who looks like a squirrel, and the verb metaphor of *squirrel* means stocking something. However, it is only one citation, so I am in support of Possibility 3. I assume that the verb metaphors have arisen from the nominal metaphor with a metonymical extension of 'agent-process', although it needs a further research.

#### 4.2. Question 3

Next, we consider Question 3: "why are some words used as a verb metaphor more frequently than as a nominal metaphor, but others are not? How do those differences arise?" This question seems to depend on the types of similarity. See Table 7:

Table 7: The percentage of verb metaphors and the similarity which those metaphors have

	verb metaphor(%)	similarity
hound	72.7	behavior
ferret	99.3	behavior
squirrel	82.2	behavior
hare	60	behavior
weasel	43.4	image

In all words except *weasel*, their behaviors are considered to have similarity with human. Behaviors are essentially actions, so it is natural to express them through verbs. This is the reason why those metaphorical words often take the form of verb. We will go on the difference of the frequency of nominal metaphors.

Table 8: The percentage of nominal metaphors and the similarity which those metaphors have

	nominal metaphor(%)	similarity
hound	27.3	behavior
ferret	0.7	appearance
squirrel	18.8	appearance
hare	40	image
weasel	56.6	image

Like Table 8 shows, nominal metaphors have *behavior*, *appearance*, and *image* as the types of similarity. When we place them in the order of the frequency of nominal metaphors, we will find the clear correspondence with the similarity as shown below:

The frequency of nominal metaphor	:	weasel	>	hare	>	hound	>	squirrel	>	ferret
similarity	:	image		>	behavior		>	appearance		

Images are described with nouns more naturally than verbs, and behaviors are described with verbs more easily than nouns, so the words that have the similarity of the images tend to be used as nominal metaphors more frequently than the words that have the similarity of the behaviors. As for the reason of the lower frequency of the nominal metaphors which have the similarity of appearance than the frequency of the nominal metaphors which have similarity of behavior, I'm assuming that the similarity of appearance is rarely described with metaphor. In all 458 metaphors through the animals which I examined, only two citations are metaphors which have similarity of appearance with an animal. Because the number of the metaphors of appearance is very small, the percentage of that would be smaller than that of behaviors in the nominal metaphors although appearance seems to be described with nouns more easily than behaviors.

Viewed from the individual word, the answer to Question 3 becomes clear. That is, *Hound* is used as verb metaphors more frequently than as nominal metaphors because it has similarity of behaviors with human. *Ferret* and *squirrel* are used as verb metaphors much more frequently than as nominal metaphors because it has similarity of behaviors with human. Because similarity of appearance is rarely described with metaphor as

stated above, the frequency of the nominal metaphors is lower than that of verb metaphors. *Hare* is used as nominal metaphors as frequently as verb metaphors because the images are considered to have similarity with human in nominal metaphors and the behaviors are considered to have similarity with human in verb metaphors. Both similarities fit to the characteristics of the parts of speech, so the frequency of the nominal metaphors and the verb metaphors are close. *Weasel* is used as nominal metaphor more frequently than as verb metaphor because the images are considered to have similarity with humans in both nominal and verb metaphors. The reason why the verb metaphors account for 43.4% with the similarities of image is that the image includes the fanciful behavior of weasels. To be concrete, the image includes the sneaking movement of weasels. Weasels don't intend to move sneakily, so it must be a fanciful behavior which we make. Because this fanciful behavior is considered as similarity, nearly half of total citations take a form of verb in the target domain. In short, the types of similarity would influence the frequency of the parts of speech in the target domain.

## 5. Conclusion

This thesis has examined the animal metaphors from the respect of the parts of speech by using corpus-data, and it has reported the following answers to the three questions.

Question 1: Is there really no preservation of the parts of speech between the literal meaning and the metaphorical meaning in those animal words?

Answer 1: There is some inheritance of the parts of speech between the literal meaning and metaphorical meanings. The changes of the parts of speech don't occur completely in those words. The frequency of the changes depends on the words.

Deignan (2006) claims that those words have no preservation of the parts of speech between the literal meanings and the metaphorical meanings; however, some inheritance of the parts of speech is observed in this research. It is open to further investigation and need to be researched with more words from various domains in order to obtain a complete result about the conversion of the part of speech between the literal meanings and the metaphorical meanings.

Question 2: Why do those changes of the parts of speech occur? How do the metaphorical verbs arise?

Answer 2: The verb metaphors have arisen from the nominal metaphor with a metonymical extension of '*agent-process*'.

The verb metaphors have arisen from the nouns which have already acquired the metaphorical meanings. However, there is an exception. The word *squirrel* doesn't have any relationship of '*agent-process*' between the metaphorical noun and the metaphorical verbs. This point needs to be researched further and identify the route from which the metaphorical verb arises.

Question 3: Why are some words used as a verb metaphor more frequently than as a nominal metaphor, but others are not? How do those differences arise?

Answer 3: The type of similarity influences the frequency of the parts of speech in the target domain.

The metaphors with similarity of the behavior tend to take the form of verb, and the metaphors with similarity of the image tend to take the form of noun. This point also needs further research because the frequency of the nominal metaphors with the similarity of the appearance is less than that of the nominal metaphors with the similarity of behavior. The similarity of the appearance is expected to be described with nominal metaphor more frequently than nominal metaphors with the similarity of behavior, but it isn't. It discords the explanation given in this thesis. Although I provided a possible reason, it isn't confirmed yet. So, further discussion would be needed. As a possible reason, simile might be related to the description of the similarity of the appearance.

We have seen animal metaphors from the respect of the parts of speech. Some problems still remain to be researched and discussed; however, I hope this thesis will stimulate further research on the part of speech of metaphor.

(たべ ちえこ・言語文学専攻)

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## Data Source

Corpus of Contemporary American English: <http://www.americancorpus.org/>