

## A STUDY OF METAPHORICAL MAPPING INVOLVING SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES: HOW WOMAN IS CONCEPTUALIZED IN JAPANESE

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### ABSTRACT

The present study investigates a type of metaphor involving socio-cultural values in their mapping and interpretation. The linguistic data are Japanese metaphorical expressions that conceptualize women as plants or animals. First, the typology of metaphor based on previous research is discussed, focusing on conceptual, correlation, and resemblance metaphors, followed by our proposal to distinguish “socio-cultural metaphors” within resemblance metaphors. The main part analyzes the data to illustrate various characteristics of socio-cultural metaphors, which is divided into the following sections: 1) Women as Animals or Plants, 2) Some Mapping Gaps and Asymmetry, 3) Properties Involved in the Mapping, 4) Socio-cultural Codes, and 5) Social Structures and Interpretation of Woman Metaphors. The result of the questionnaire survey reported in 4) seems to suggest that interpretations and usage of some metaphorical expressions have undergone certain changes over the years. The study concludes by suggesting further research in socio-cultural metaphor in Japanese and other languages.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Since Lakoff and Johnson [1], the study of metaphor has made great progress in cognitive linguistics. It has been well established that there are inter-domain mappings of concepts in two different domains, and that the set of correspondences between them are called “conceptual metaphors.” Research has also shown that in the most basic conceptual metaphors, the image-schematic structure of the source domain is preserved in the target domain. Up till now, the focus has been on the conceptual metaphors based on the image-schematic correlation. While such metaphors are important for the research in cognitive semantics, other kinds of conventional metaphors deserve more attention. Recent development in this field of study, however, has seen other conventional metaphors identified and classified in a more elegant way. One such example is the work of Grady [2] who has distinguished motivations for two kinds of metaphors, “correlation metaphor” and “resemblance metaphor.” The present study makes a further distinction within resemblance metaphors, and proposes what we may call “socio-cultural metaphor.” This is exemplified by Japanese metaphors that conceptualize women in terms of animals or plants. We present a model of socio-cultural metaphors illustrating how they are formed as a result of socio-cultural interpretations of the source and target concepts.

## 2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

### 2.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

From the time of Aristotle, metaphor had been treated in the western tradition as a linguistic device used in rhetoric and literature. It was considered that all metaphors had literal meanings and were used by specialists for purposes such as to persuade people or to express an imaginary world. On the contrary, Lakoff and Johnson [1] claimed that metaphor is not just a matter of language, but that it governs our ordinary conceptual system. According to their view, “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” and the “human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined” (6). Since then, research on metaphor has headed towards a new direction, and the basic ideas of Lakoff and Johnson [1] have been developed as the Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

In this theory, metaphor is defined as “a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system” (Lakoff [3]: 203). Thus, “metaphorical expression” is used to refer to an individual linguistic expression or “a surface realization of such a cross-domain mapping” (203). The metaphor involves two domains, namely, a source domain and a target domain. The latter is understood in terms of the former, so the convention is to call each mapping as “TARGET-DOMAIN IS SOURCE-DOMAIN” or “TARGET-DOMAIN AS SOURCE-DOMAIN.” For example, statements like “Look, how far we’ve come.” and “Our relationship has hit a dead-end street.” are based on the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY where the love relationship is regarded as traveling through space.

### 2.2. Primary Metaphor

Grady [4] elaborated on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory by distinguishing between complex and primary metaphors. He reanalyzed the data presented in Lakoff & Johnson [1] as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS and proposed that this is a complex metaphor which consists of two primary metaphors: ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT. Here are some metaphorical expressions for each metaphor (Grady [4]):

- (1) ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE
  - a. They tore the theory to shreds. (272)
  - b. The theory has completely unraveled. (275)
- (2) PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT
  - a. Your facts are solid, but your argumentation is shaky. (269)
  - b. All the arguments are solid, but they can’t stand up without a factual basis. (269)

The metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS does not have an experiential basis, which calls into question whether this is a conceptual metaphor. Conceptual metaphor requires a physical motivation. The above analysis makes it possible to explain the motivation of mappings in terms of physical experiences.

### 2.3. Correlation Metaphor and Resemblance Metaphor

The typology of metaphor is an issue that needs further investigation, since there are many metaphors that are not explained by co-occurrence of certain phenomena. Grady suggests a “Resemblance Hypothesis” which distinguishes between conceptual metaphor (e.g., MORE IS UP) and resemblance metaphor (e.g., “Achilles is a lion.”) clarifying how the nature and the process of mapping differ in these two types [2].

According to Grady's model, primary metaphors could be characterized as links between distinct concepts, perhaps based on numerous experiences where the concepts are tightly correlated and therefore simultaneously activated ([2]: 8). In the case of MORE IS UP, the two phenomena in different domains – quantity increase and vertical elevation – often co-occur so that they are cognitively correlated. On the other hand, the mapping of resemblance metaphors does not involve such correlation, but rather, shared features of two different schemata are activated. As for the example, "Achilles is a lion," lions and people have separate sets of features in the conceptual schema, but they both have "bravery" which motivates the metaphor.<sup>1</sup>

#### 2.4. Variation among Resemblance Metaphors

It seems that there is some variation among resemblance metaphors. Image metaphor is an example where the metaphor is motivated by physical similarity between the source and target concepts. An expression such as *tori-hada-ga tatu* (bird-skin-NOM stand: skin turning into goose-flesh) would be an example. On the other hand, there are resemblance metaphors that are not based on literal similarity. Let's re-examine the above example, "Achilles is a lion." Lions are perceived to be brave because of the fact that they are carnivores whose nature is to hunt other animals. In human society, hunters who risk their lives by challenging stronger animals are considered brave. It seems that lions are brave only in the sense of killing other animals, but those animals may not be harmful to the lions. Although many other animals hunt (e.g., cats hunt mice), they are not considered brave. The idea that lion is a prototype of brave animals is symbolic and arbitrary. It seems that resemblance metaphors require further distinction. Then, the question to ask is:

How can we account for resemblance metaphors whose source and target concepts do not have an apparent commonality but are associated under a socio-cultural concept?

### 3. SOCIO-CULTURAL METAPHOR

In order to answer the above question, we propose a variety of metaphor that we call "socio-cultural metaphor." This is a kind of metaphor in which socio-cultural interpretations of the source and target concepts play a crucial role in the mapping. Again, let's take "Achilles is a lion." as an example. This mapping requires several steps. First, the source and target concepts are associated by socially defined properties: bravery is socially defined for human beings, and the lion is determined as a proto-typical category that possesses bravery. Then, the source concept "bravery of lion" is mapped onto the target concept "bravery of human." Putting this process into a general model, we may get the following (see 4.4 for further discussion):

- (i) The property of the target concept is defined socially.
- (ii) The property of the source concept is defined socially.
- (iii) The source concept is mapped onto the target concept because the properties defined in (i) and (ii) are alike.

The motivation for this mapping is that the source and target concepts share a similar property that is socially defined. We will call this model the "socio-cultural metaphor model." This kind of metaphor is

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<sup>1</sup> Grady [2] does not discuss the motivation for this metaphor in detail, but he does mention: "My proposal does not imply that there is any literal similarity whatsoever between brave people and lions." (7)

included in resemblance metaphors as defined by Grady [2], but it is distinguished from other types of resemblance metaphors in that it involves socio-cultural interpretations of the source and target concepts.

This distinction is crucial in explaining the motivation of metaphors that describe human beings in terms of other concepts such as animals, plants, objects, etc. For example, HUMAN BEINGS ARE MACHINES (e.g., “I ran out of gas.”) does not mean that human beings require the same kind of energy as machines. There are also metaphors that involve gender differences. Men and women are not only genetically different, but they are also given separate roles, and thus perceived differently in some societies including Japan. This is reflected in metaphorical expressions that are specifically used for either male or female. In what follows, such metaphorical expressions in Japanese will be examined, applying the socio-cultural metaphor model.

## 4. WOMAN METAPHOR IN JAPANESE

### 4.1. Women as Animals or Plants

In this section, we will examine metaphors in Japanese that conceptualize women as something else (“woman metaphors” henceforth), by which we illustrate our model of socio-cultural metaphor, and discuss how well it can explain the mapping involved in Japanese woman metaphors. The pioneering work on Japanese woman metaphors is done by Hiraga [5], but the present study is more concerned with the typological issue, and the motivation and the mapping process of socio-cultural metaphor.

In Japanese there are varieties of conventionalized metaphorical expressions referring to women. Among them, we focus on metaphors with animals and plants as the source concepts.<sup>2</sup> Consider examples in (3).

- (3) a. *ofisu-no hana* : office-GEN flower (flower in the office)
- b. *kabe-no hana* : wall-GEN flower (flower on the wall)
- c. *yamato-nadesiko* : Japanese-pink flower (a kind of Japanese pink flower)
- d. *yoru-no choo* : night-GEN butterfly (night butterfly)
- e. *uguisu-joo* : nightingale-girl
- f. *kago-no tori* : cage-GEN bird (a bird in a cage)

All of these examples refer to women. The expression (3a) refers to a female worker in an office, (3b) a woman who cannot join the conversation at a party and just stands close to the wall, (3c) an ideal Japanese lady who has tender, graceful and well-disciplined behavior, (3d) a woman working at pubs serving for men, (3e) a female announcer whose voice is beautiful, (3f) a woman kept in a house or a room by her husband or employer, not allowed to go out freely. In these examples, women are conceptualized as flowers, butterflies, or birds. There are many other examples of metaphors in Japanese that conceptualize women as some kind of animals or plants (see 6. Appendix).

### 4.2. Some Mapping Gaps and Asymmetry

What should we call this kind of metaphors? If we generalize the above expressions into formulae in accordance with Lakoff and Johnson’s convention, we may get something like WOMEN ARE ANIMALS or WOMEN ARE PLANTS. However, these names are insufficient; they do not grasp the details of mapping precisely enough. Actually, some mapping gaps are observed in these metaphors. Not all kinds of animals and not all kinds of plants are used for women; only some of the animals and plants function as source concepts for woman metaphors. For example, women are very often conceptualized as

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<sup>2</sup> We have found other important metaphorical mappings such as WOMEN ARE GOODS.

flowers, butterflies, or pet animals, as seen in the examples in (3), while big trees, parts of plants like leaves or branches, or wild and/or large animals like wolves, bears and others are not mapped onto women. If we call a woman a pine tree, a leaf, or a branch, it makes no sense. If we call a person a wolf or a bear, we may think that the person is a man, but we never imagine a woman. This is one of the mapping gaps involved in woman metaphors that take animals or plants as the source concept.

Even within the animals and plants used for women, not all properties are actually mapped. For example, having four legs, tails, beaks, wings, and so forth are some salient properties of animals, but they are not mapped onto the concept of woman. Similarly, photosynthesis is a salient property of plants, and pollen, that of flowers, but they are not involved in the mapping either. This is the second type of mapping gap.

Furthermore, these metaphors referring to men and women have asymmetrical mapping systems. For example, we do not mean a male person by *kabe-no hana*, nor do we have expressions such as *\*kabe-no musu* (bug on the wall) for male. On the other hand, we have an equally rich set of man metaphors using animals or plants: e.g., *furu-danuki* (old raccoon dog), *nora-inu* (homeless dog), *okuri ookami* (escort wolf), *deku-no boo* (wooden doll), *nure-otiba* (wet fallen leaves), etc. These expressions are specific to men (see 6. Appendix).

In the following section, we discuss what properties of animals and plants are actually mapped onto the concept of woman, so that these mapping gaps can be explained.

### 4.3. Properties Involved in the Mapping

By analyzing various kinds of animals and plants in terms of their properties that are mapped or unmapped, we have found a set of properties that are crucial in woman metaphors: SIZE, PET-LIKE FUNCTION and PASSIVE FUNCTION. Let's examine them one by one.

(A) SIZE: Animals or plants that are relatively small and easy to handle are mapped onto women.

Ontological Correspondence:

< Source Domain >	< Target Domain >
Size of plants -----	Size of human beings
Size of animals -----	Size of human beings

These correspondences seem to have some physical motivation, since average women are smaller than average men. However, wild dogs and raccoon dogs are not mapped onto women even if they are “relatively small” in the set of all animals. This shows that what is crucial here is not just physical smallness but also “social smallness,” that is, the property of being cute and easy to handle.

(B) PET-LIKE FUNCTION: The properties of animals or plants that are perceptually enjoyable for the owner or the observer are mapped onto women.

Ontological Correspondence:

< Source Domain >	< Target Domain >
Perceptually enjoyable property ----- of plants	Perceptually enjoyable property of women

In this mapping, what is crucial is the property of being perceptually enjoyable for men, such as beauty of appearance or voice, softness of touch, and cute and lovable behaviors or motion. What counts as beautiful or lovable, however, depends on how men evaluate these properties in women. Thus, this is also a kind of “social value” interpreted especially by men.

- (C) PASSIVE FUNCTION: The function as prey or as objects of being physically affected is mapped onto women.

Ontological Correspondence:

< Source Domain >	< Target Domain >
Passiveness of prey or objects -----	Passiveness of women

Again, this mapping involves social interpretation. It is not at all clear whether women are physiologically passive or not, but they are socially interpreted as passive beings, at least in Japan. In sexual relationships, men are usually seen as active, hunter-like beings, whereas women are usually seen as passive, prey-like beings. The relationship between certain animals such as wolves and their prey is mapped onto this socially interpreted relationship between men and women.

As shown by the above three properties involved in the mappings, what is mapped onto women seems to be a passive, patient-like function, while men are conceptualized as active agents who interact with the patient.

#### 4.4. Socio-cultural Codes

The properties in woman metaphors are fundamentally based on the socio-cultural codes. The general model presented in 4.2 can be applied to woman metaphors. The structure of mappings seems to presuppose the following components:

- (i) There is a socio-cultural code that registers certain animals or plants as pets or ornaments that give us enjoyment.
- (ii) There is a socio-cultural code that registers women as passive, patient-like beings that are enjoyable for men.
- (iii) The similarity between (i) and (ii) serves as the motivation for the metaphorical mapping from the domain of animals or plants to that of women.

The components in (i) and (ii) exist independently in our society and function as the basis for woman metaphors. Animals and plants are concrete, ordinary things we encounter in our daily life or in folk tales, whose images are conventionalized in our own culture. This seems to be the basis for using animals and plants as source concepts for woman metaphors. Note that (i) and (ii) do not indicate any serial order such as historical change or psychological processing of these metaphors. Both must exist as the basis of this mapping, but at present, we cannot determine which of (i) and (ii) comes first, historically or psychologically.

Below are metaphors that reflect gender-differentiating socio-cultural codes.

- (4)
  - a. *furu-danuki* : old-raccoon dog (an experienced and sly tactician)
  - b. *furu-gitune* : old-fox (an experienced and sly woman)
  - c. *nora-inu* : homeless-dog (a single man wandering without fixed job or home)
  - d. *neko* : cat (geisha)
  - e. *uguisu-joo* : nightingale-girl (a female announcer)

Notice that (4a) and (4b) are similar in meaning and yet, they are counterparts; the former refers to male and the latter female. In Japanese culture, raccoon dogs are commonly associated with men, while foxes are associated with women. There is another pair of animals that are assigned particular gender: dogs and

cats.<sup>3</sup> The examples (4c) and (4d) seem to reflect the socio-cultural code that registers dogs as men and cats as women, since there is no apparent reason otherwise. There are some physical characteristics of these animals that suggest the motivation of mapping such as the size of cats being smaller, and their body shape being round. However, the socio-cultural codes are mainly based on socio-cultural characteristics. Some dogs are trained to serve as a watchdog, guide dog, life-saver dog, hunting dog, etc., but cats are seldom trained. Another interesting aspect is that dogs are usually considered faithful, whereas cats are considered whimsical. According to the conceptualization in Japanese, human male is considered a work force, whereas human female is considered untrained. Thus, dogs are perceived as faithful, working animals which are related to men, while cats are perceived as whimsical, untrained animals which are related to women. The last example, (4e) shows that the biological sex of the source concept (animals) is not an issue for woman metaphors, since nightingales that sing beautifully are male. It is the socio-cultural codes that make fox, cat, and nightingale feminine in Japanese.

Considering the socio-cultural codes, the majority of woman metaphors seem to be based on the perspective of men. Men seek in women certain properties (i.e., passiveness, patienthood, etc. [6]) which are similar to what hunters seek in prey and what people seek in pets. This relationship can be summarized as below:

- (A) Women are to men what prey is to hunters.
- (B) Women are to men what pets are to their owners.
- (C) Women are to men what the patient is to the agent of an action.

The process of mapping here is complex compared to other types of metaphor such as primary metaphor and image metaphor discussed earlier. We suggest that what gets mapped in the woman metaphors are not the properties of animals and plants themselves, but rather, the relationships between hunters and prey, owners and pets, and agent and patient and so forth. Accordingly, socio-cultural metaphor involves the mapping of relationships, so the study of this kind requires the understanding of social and cultural backgrounds to discover various relationships and social codes that motivate the metaphors.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4.5. Social Structures and Interpretation of Woman Metaphors

As discussed above, certain metaphors require that the social and cultural contexts be examined. This comes as no surprise, given the nature of language that “verbal interaction is a social process in which utterances are selected in accordance with socially recognized norms and expectations” (Gumperz [7]). In the area of sociolinguistics, researchers have been engaged in the task of examining the interaction between language and shared norms of behavior, as proposed by Fishman [8].

When we consider metaphor from the position expressed by Gumperz and developed by Fishman, metaphors, as an essential part of our language, are naturally expected to reflect our social norms and expectations. If certain changes occur in the social norms and expectations, the use and interpretation of the language – including metaphors – which are in accordance with the social/cultural environment should also see changes. Japanese metaphors which are used to describe women and men might well have undergone some changes in their interpretations and usage as the time has seen changes in the social norms and the alternation of generations. Hiraga [5] notes that some of the expressions she finds

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<sup>3</sup> We do not consider the words *cat* and *dog* that serve as a type of prefix to modify other nouns or verbs. Here are some examples: *neko-nade-goe* (cat-pet-voice: a coaxing voice), *inu-jini* (dog-die: die uselessly). It seems to be a type of grammaticalization, and thus gender differentiation is not involved.

<sup>4</sup> We suppose that this is not unique to Japanese. The extent to which this kind of motivation is universal would be a topic for further study.

inadequate (e.g., expressions regarding men as food) have become widely accepted by university students. Actually we do find such expressions as *shun no otoko* (the man in season) in magazines and *kanojo-wa wakai otoko-ni ueteiru* (she is hungry for young men) in daily conversations.

In order to confirm possible occurrences of such changes, a small-scale questionnaire survey was carried out among 112 native Japanese speakers ranging in age from 18 to 43, female and male, representing a number of different professions. Twelve sentences, each including a metaphorical expression normally used to describe a physical or psychological characteristic of a person, were given. The respondents were to consider the use of each metaphorical expression and choose whether it referred to a male, female, either, or was indeterminate. The questionnaire served as a test to identify some metaphorical expressions that have been neutralized or even changed in terms of gender, due to recent changes in gender roles in Japan.

The results show the dynamic nature of socio-cultural metaphor (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). While there are expressions which were strongly associated with either female (e.g. *ofisu-no hana*) or male (e.g. *ookami*), there were also a number of expressions for which the traditional interpretation now appears to have been neutralized or moved into an indeterminate category. The items with inconsistent results were these expressions: *furu-danuki* (old raccoon dog), *dooki-no sakura* (cherry blossom of the same year), and *udo-no taiboku* (large tree-lookalike weed). More than a third of the respondents answered that these expressions refer to both male and female, whereas *ookami* (wolf) and *nora-inu* (homeless dog) were judged by the majority to be predominantly male. Yet, it should be mentioned that at least 20 respondents were not familiar with these expressions: *furu-danuki* and *dooki-no sakura* (Table 1).

It was found in our survey that older respondents are more likely to have a traditional or conservative interpretation. We compared the results between professionals (ages 23-43) (N=75) and college undergraduates (ages 18-22) (N=37) (see Tables 2 and 3).

A drastic change from older (Table 2) to younger (Table 3) generation is seen in the results for *dooki-no sakura* (cherry blossom of the same year). Whereas more respondents in the former group judged it to refer to male, this choice was the least preferred among those in the latter group. The expression *dooki-no sakura* originally comes from a military academy song in which the trainees and soldiers used it to call other comrades who entered the military in the same year they did. It is difficult to imagine that women were originally counted as comrades. On the other hand, the case is the opposite for *udo-no taiboku* (large tree-lookalike weed). The dominant interpretation seems to shift from neutral to male. *Udo* itself means a kind of plant that grows as high as two meters which is used to be eaten fairly commonly. The expression, *udo-no taiboku*, is used to refer to someone – either male or female – who is tall and big in physique and yet practically useless and unreliable, because *udo*, although it might look like a solid tree, is in fact not so much as a tree as a weed. The younger generation, who are not familiar with the plant *udo*, seems to have interpreted *udo-no taiboku* simply as a large tree, because they could make out *taiboku* – large tree – but not *udo*. As stated earlier, the relative size of the plant or the animal that appears in the metaphor corresponds to the physical, relative size of either women or men. A large tree seems to have inspired an image of a man, not of a woman, among the young people.

The judgment given to *furu-danuki* (old raccoon dog) was distributed among male, female and both. Traditionally, raccoon dogs have been associated with men in Japanese folk tales, joking and swearing. *Furu-danuki* invokes the image of an old, wise, uncanny man with power. How can we account for such changes in the interpretation of these socio-cultural metaphors?

The diversity in use and interpretation of the above metaphorical expressions, we suggest, are attributed to changes in Japanese society. Changes in Japanese social structure could have led to those linguistic changes, and the fact that there are more and more Japanese of the younger generation who are ignorant about the origin of a given expression can be the cause of generating or accelerating the changes in use and interpretation of the metaphor.



Table 1.

Total (N=112)	judgment	female	male	both	don't know
expressions	original use				
ofisu-no hana	female	111	1	0	0
yoru-no choo	female	103	0	9	0
kireena bara...	female	99	1	11	1
kousagi-chan	female	77	2	22	10
takane-no hana	female	86	0	20	6
ookami	male	1	99	10	2
nora-inu	male	2	94	10	6
deku-no boo	male	0	82	22	8
rooboku	male	0	53	38	21
furu-danuki	male	5	48	39	20
dooki-no sakura	male	23	28	41	20
udo-no taiboku	both	0	62	44	6

Table 2.

Ages 23-43 (N=37)	judgment	female	male	both	don't know
expressions	original use				
ofisu-no hana	female	36	1	0	0
yoru-no choo	female	35	0	2	0
kireena bara...	female	32	1	3	1
kousagi-chan	female	24	1	5	6
takane-no hana	female	27	0	8	2
ookami	male	1	34	2	0
nora-inu	male	2	28	5	2
deku-no boo	male	0	25	10	2
rooboku	male	0	21	11	5
furu-danuki	male	4	14	18	1
dooki-no sakura	male	6	18	13	0
udo-no taiboku	both	0	18	18	1

Table 3.

Ages 18-22 (N=75)	judgment	female	male	both	don't know
expressions	original use				
ofisu-no hana	female	75	0	0	0
yoru-no choo	female	68	0	7	0
kireena bara...	female	67	0	8	0
kousagi-chan	female	53	1	17	4
takane-no hana	female	59	0	12	4
ookami	male	0	65	8	2
nora-inu	male	0	66	5	4
deku-no boo	male	0	57	12	6
rooboku	male	0	32	27	16
furu-danuki	male	1	34	21	19
dooki-no sakura	male	17	10	28	20
udo-no taiboku	both	0	44	26	5

Let us take *dooki-no sakura* as an example. It was obvious (and was confirmed in interviews which followed the questionnaire survey) that those who considered *dooki-no sakura* as referring to female did not know the origin of the expression. Military songs that were popular during World War II are unknown to many belonging to the younger generations today. Access to such wartime linguistic expressions is limited to reading books or hearing them used by older generations. Changes in the socio-cultural environment in Japan over the last twenty years or so could also contribute to new meanings given to already existing metaphorical expressions. As more women start to find themselves in the workplace and join what so far had been a male-dominated world, female bosses and colleagues are becoming common. Now women can be comrades. To cite comments given in the questionnaire:

It somehow seems that expressions which have been traditionally used to describe men are now beginning to be used as more neutral expressions. (age 38, male)

I think that expressions which are basically used to refer to men are used as such only because men have been socially (and historically) the majority. As the social structure changes, those expressions which I have judged to be "man metaphor" may be used to refer to women as well. At the same time, what I have judged to be "woman metaphor" here seem to accentuate the sex of women, so they may be used less often in the future. (age 32, female)

As long as language is used and interpreted in accordance with the social and cultural contexts, changes in the socio-cultural sphere (its structure, norms and expectations) should cause changes in the language. The socio-cultural metaphors dealt with in this study are not exceptions. The fact that interpretations given to the man and woman metaphors show some variations among people supports the socio-cultural metaphor model. Compared to conceptual metaphor which is based on physical image schema and therefore less susceptible to change, socio-cultural metaphor is more dynamic by nature, influenced by the social structure and the cultural context.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study has proposed a further distinction among resemblance metaphors by introducing "socio-cultural metaphor." In this type of metaphor, the source and target concepts are socio-culturally determined, and the mapping between them is motivated by the similarity between socio-culturally-interpreted source and target concepts. This has been illustrated by examining metaphors in Japanese that conceptualize women as plants or animals. We have argued that it is necessary to examine our social and cultural backgrounds in order to understand the motivation for Japanese woman metaphors involving animals and plants.

It is important to be aware of such metaphors because a complete typology of metaphor should include those that involve socio-cultural backgrounds in their mapping. Further research is needed to fully understand the nature of the mapping involved in the socio-cultural metaphor. For example, we should analyze data from other languages to see if similar socio-cultural motivation is found, investigate the relationship between interpretation of socio-cultural metaphors and the context in which they occur, and observe how other source-domain concepts like PRECIOUS THINGS, GOODS, and others are mapped onto men or women.

In spite of its limitation, our study made evident that metaphors are not independent of socio-cultural settings, but metaphor, and thus cognition, is deeply related to our understanding of society and culture.

## 6. APPENDIX

### Examples of Japanese Metaphors with Animals and Plants as Source Concepts

#### 1. Examples specific to women

##### (1) Plants

*kabe-no hana* (flower on the wall: a woman who cannot join the conversation and only stands by the wall), *ofisu-no hana* (flower in an office: female worker), *ryoote-ni hana* (flowers in both hands: a man with women on both sides), *tateba shakuyaku*, *suwareba botan*, *aruku sugata-wa yuri-no hana* (a tall peony when standing, a short peony when sitting, and a lily when walking: a graceful lady), *takane-no hana* (a flower on a high mountain top: a woman who is hard to get), *kireena bara-ni-wa toge-ga aru* (a beautiful rose has thorns: a beautiful woman may cause troubles for men), *hana-o taoru* (to pick flowers: to have sexual intercourse with a virgin), *yamato-nadesiko* (Japanese pink flower: an ideal Japanese lady who is beautiful, graceful and well-disciplined)

##### (2) Animals

*uguisu-joo* (nightingale girl; female announcer), *yoru-no choo* (night butterfly: women working in pubs, etc.), *kotori* (little bird: honey; used by men), *emono* (prey: a sex target), *tori-kago* (bird-cage: a house or a room to keep a woman in), *kago-no tori* (a bird in the cage: a woman kept in the house), *furu-gitune* (old fox: an experienced and sly woman)

#### 2. Examples specific to men

##### (1) Plants

*nure otiba* (wet fallen leaves: a retired husband who sticks around his wife), *dooki-no sakura* (cherry blossom of the same year: men who entered the military or business in the same year), *deku-no boo* (a wooden doll: a man with little ability)

##### (2) Animals

*furu-danuki* (old raccoon dog: an experienced and sly tactician), *nora-inu* (homeless dog: a single man wandering without fixed job or home), *ookami* (wolf: a man seeking women as sex prey), *okuri ookami* (escort wolf: a man who kindly offers to escort a woman home but tries to rape her on the way), *ippiki ookami* (single wolf: a man who does not join any group), *wakai tubame* (young swallow: a young lover of a married woman), *tane-uma* (seed-horse: a stallion, a man who provides sperm), *sarabureddo* (thoroughbred: a man raised in the upper-class family), *kedamono* (beast: a man who acts violently esp. to women)

#### 3. Examples used for both men and women

##### (1) Plants

*uki-gusa* (floating grass: a person with unstable occupation), *ne-nasi-gusa* (unrooted grass: a person without fixed affiliation), *moyasi* (bean sprout: a spineless child), *dote kabocha* (bank pumpkin: a fool), *udo-no taiboku* (large tree-lookalike weed: a big useless person)

##### (2) Animals

*haiena* (hyena: one who seeks for advantage), *hebi-ni niramareta kaeru* (a frog faced with a snake: one who is scared by a superior person), *fukuro-no nezumi* (a rat in a bag: a person who is trapped), *tonde hi-ni iru natu-no musu* (a summer insect flying into fire: a person who gets into the trap by herself), *gokuraku tomo* (heaven dragonfly: an easy rider), *hiyoko* (chick: an immature person), *manaita-no ue-no koi* (a carp on the cutting board: a person left to his fate), *kingyo-no fun* (droppings of a goldfish: a person who follows somebody else), *buta* (pig: a fat person), *morumotto* (a guinea pig: a person used for experiment), *kome-tuki batta* (a "rice-pounding" grasshopper: a person who bows repeatedly), *kyuuso neko-o kamu* (a mouse in trouble even bites at a cat: a person who has no escape becomes very aggressive), *sisi sinchuu-no musu* (an insect inside a lion: thorn in one's own side), *kettoosho-tuki* (pedigree dog: a person from an upper-class family), *kiba-o muku* (to bare one's fangs: to attack aggressively), *mure-o nasu* (go in a pack: make a group of many people)

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