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English Metaphors and Their Czech Equivalents Based on the Link to the Animal World

Metafory se zvířecí tematikou v angličtině a jejich české ekvivalenty

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List of Abbreviations

CID	Cambridge Idioms Dictionary
DAI	McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs
EG	English Guides 7: Metaphor
e.g.	example gratia (for example)
esp.	especially
etc.	et cetera
IC	Intercorp (multilingual corpus)
i.e.	id est (that is)
no.	number
ODCIE	Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English
S	Seznam.cz
sb	somebody
sth	something
TTEM	Thesaurus of Traditional English Metaphors
W	Wiktionary.org

Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with English metaphors and their Czech equivalents based on the link to the animal kingdom. Its aim is to emphasize that metaphors are an essential part of our everyday communication and that they should be viewed as common rather than unique device used in language. The theoretical part focuses on a characterization of metaphor and figurative language in general. The opening chapter of the analytical part presents the methodology of this part and refers to the corpus of collected animal metaphors and their detailed description. The aim of the analytical part is to compare English animal metaphors and their Czech equivalents. It also deals with the question whether the collected metaphors are actively used among the native speakers of the English language or not. A particular group of actively used metaphors is then examined in order to find out whether they are recognized also by Czech learners of English.

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá anglickými metaforami se zvířecí tematikou a jejich českými ekvivalenty. Jejím cílem je zdůraznit, že metafory jsou podstatnou součástí naší všednodenní komunikace, a proto by měly být nahlíženy spíše jako běžné než jedinečné vyjadřovací prostředky jazyka. Teoretická část se soustředí na výklad metafory a charakterizaci přeneseného jazyka vůbec. Praktická část je uvedena kapitolou, jež představuje metodologii této části a odkazuje na korpus nasbíraných metafor a jejich detailní popis. Cílem analytické části této práce je porovnat anglické zvířecí metafory a jejich české ekvivalenty. Výzkumná část praktické části se zabývá otázkou, zdali jsou nasbírané metafory aktivně užívané v jazyce rodilých mluvčích anglického jazyka či nikoliv. Vybraná skupina těchto aktivně užívaných metafor je dále v rámci dotazníku předložena českým mluvčím, studentům anglického jazyka, za účelem zjištění, zdali jsou jim tyto metafory známé či neznámé.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that metaphor is generally considered to be a poetic or rhetorical device, a source of literary embellishment, there are linguistic opinions grounded in thorough research claiming that metaphor is a ubiquitous phenomenon in language. This thesis aims at exploring the usage of metaphor especially in everyday language and that is why it emphasizes the importance of the ground-breaking paper of Johnson and Lakoff *We Live By*. In their paper, Johnson and Lakoff develop and prove the idea that metaphor is an essential part of our everyday communication and that it influences not only the way we talk, but also the way we think and act. To restrict the enormous number of existing metaphors, this thesis is devoted only to those that are based on the link to the animal kingdom. Animal metaphors appear to be not only unique, but also particularly interesting.

Firstly, the theoretical part divided into the three main sections is presented. The first section offers three different approaches to metaphor in the strict sense of the word; metaphor is thus considered from the point of view of literary science, linguistics and Lakoff and Johnson's theory, i.e. cognitive science. The second section is devoted to the figurative language in general. It describes different devices such as simile, proverb, hyperbole, etc., which are metaphorical in their nature, but are not usually classified as metaphors in the strict sense of the word. All of these linguistic phenomena are illustrated with examples of particular animal metaphors. The last section of the theoretical part of this thesis presents the relation between metaphor and idiom. Even though that these two phenomena are very much alike in many aspects, it is necessary not to confuse one with another.

The opening chapters of the analytical part of the thesis present the methodology of this part and refer to the corpus of English animal metaphors collected by the author that serves as a ground for the analytical part as such. Each of the 200 collected metaphors is presented along with its meaning, usage example and source of the meaning when available.

Similarly as the theoretical part, also the analytical part is divided into the three main sections. The first section compares the collected English metaphors to their

Czech equivalents. The main attention is paid to whether there is any correspondence between the two counterparts in their reflection of the animal aspect. The second section presents the outcomes of the questionnaire designed to find out which of the collected metaphors are used actively among the native speakers of the English. Those metaphors that are marked as actively used by most of the native speakers and simultaneously can be considered as semantically opaque for Czech speakers serve as a ground for the third section, the questionnaire designed to find out which of the listed metaphors are known also among the Czech students and teachers/lectures of the English language. The output of this questionnaire should be a list of metaphors whose meaning would certainly be useful to be recognized by the Czech learners of English, however, it is not.

2 THEORETICAL PART

2.1 METAPHOR

Metaphor is a phenomenon that can be considered from various points of view. The perception of metaphor has been radically changed through centuries alongside with the investigations by researchers in literature, linguistics and psychology. Initially, metaphor was a subject of discussions mainly among philosophers or poets who emphasized its ability to make language, especially literature, more vivid and charming. Blasko (1999: 1676) suggests that language was viewed as fundamentally literal and thus the true figurative nature of metaphor based on ambiguity was rather denied. As he further clarifies (ibid.), “many students of language simply ignored the problem, happy to relegate metaphor to the realm of a literary embellishment, nice but not necessary.” With the advent and development of the field of linguistics in the early 1900s metaphor began to be considered in a new way, as a matter of language, its form as well as the meaning. Its ambiguity was no longer a taboo and the aspect of figurativeness became to be admitted, accepted and researched. Later on, in the early 1980s a new radical concept of metaphor was introduced by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who challenged the established ways of perceiving metaphor and suggested that it is not only a subject of our language, but also and most importantly of our mind. Apart from linguistics their revolutionary model connected metaphor also with the cognitive science, psychology and communication theory.

It is evident that there is a variety of theories dealing with metaphor and its perception. It must be emphasized that this section does not aim at presenting all the possible attitudes in detail. For one thing it was already managed by others and for another this thesis does not aim to develop a new theory or criticism, but to be innovative in its analytical part. For these reasons, only carefully selected theories are outlined.

2.1.1 Literary metaphors

When the times of ignorance of figurative language were over, the ambiguous and figurative meaning of metaphor began to be emphasized and the principle of functioning of metaphor in literature could thus be finally explained. It is necessary to

mention that metaphor is considered to be a strong poetic device also by the contemporary theories on this subject. However, this does not concern metaphor in its widest sense, but only so called *literary*, sometimes also *novel*, *creative* or *poetic metaphor* existing alongside the *conventional* one, which is described in the chapter 2.1.2.1.2 *Conventional metaphors* of this thesis in more detail.

From the literary point of view the term metaphor can be applied to several different phenomena, whether linguistic, poetic or rhetorical, which are commonly used by writers of literary texts. These devices of non-literal language or tropes are described below in the thesis (in the section 2.2 *Figurative language*) for this chapter aims to present metaphor in the strict sense, specifically the literary type. However, it is not an easy task to do since most of the metaphor definitions are inevitably applicable to other tropes as well, such as the following:

“Metaphor is a trope, or figurative expression, in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes new meanings.” (Preminger and Brogan, 1993: 760)

“A figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable; an instance of this, a metaphorical expression.” (Joel, A., 2013: 78)

Some critics even call all the phenomena connected with non-literal language simply metaphors. The truth is that the devices of figurative language such as simile, proverb, irony, hyperbole etc. are more or less metaphorical in nature, yet all of them have their own characteristic features typical of them only and that is why they should be considered separately.

Semino and Steen (2008: 233) most likely try to evade this problematic point by using the phrase *metaphorical expressions* that are typically found in literature and by the majority of scholars considered to be “more creative, novel, original, striking, rich, interesting, complex, difficult, and interpretable than those we are likely to come across in non-literary texts.” They also present the idea that metaphor is often used by literary writers in order to go beyond and “extend out ordinary linguistic and/or conceptual resources, and to provide novel insights and perspectives into human experience” (ibid.).

Knowles and Moon (2006: 4) use the term *creative metaphor* or *novel metaphor* for those “which a writer/speaker constructs to express a particular idea or feeling in a particular context, and which a reader/hearer need to deconstruct or ‘unpack’ in order to understand what is meant.” They claim that creative metaphors typically offer new images causing poetic effects and are thus mostly associated with literature, where they function as a source of artistic embellishment. For their decorativeness creative metaphors are easily noticeable in the text, written or spoken, and that is why they contrast with *conventional metaphors* described in the chapter below.

Kövescec (2010: 49) agrees with the ideas that poets and writers are the ones who create new, original images and that metaphors in literature are apparent at first sight, to be more precise they “often “jump out” of the text; they have a tendency to be noteworthy by virtue of their frequently anomalous or strange character.” These metaphors are in his opinion strongly unconventional and are created “in order to offer a new and different perspective on an aspect of reality” (ibid.). Kövescec (2010: 49) uses the term *literary metaphors* to refer to metaphors that are original, creative and “typically less clear but richer in meaning than either everyday metaphors or metaphors in science.” However, at the same time he points out the fact that literary metaphors seem to occur in literature less frequently than “those metaphors that are based on our everyday, ordinary conceptual system.” This statement leads to the presumption that the original power of metaphor, i.e. to stand out in the text, is gradually overshadowed by the simplicity and inconspicuousness of everyday conventional metaphor, which occurs increasingly in literature. To a certain extent it is also a result of the character of literature in general, which has significantly changed through centuries alongside with its function. While mainly high literature typical of using literary metaphors was created in the past, current literary production concentrates mostly on popular literature, which tries to depict our everyday experience and often uses language of everyday communication with all its possible aspects, i.e. dialects, slangs, swearwords etc. and also metaphors, of course, but in most cases those conventional that usually stay unnoticed.

Similarly as Kövescec (2010) also Lakoff and Turner (1989: xi) emphasize the fact that the occurrence of ordinary conceptual metaphors in literature is very high and as an afterthought they present the idea that even great poets use these metaphors intentionally and the only thing “what makes them different is their talent for using

these tools, and their skill in using them, which they acquire from sustained attention, study and practice.”

Last but not least it is essential to introduce Lakoff’s approach to novel metaphor, however briefly. In his paper *The contemporary theory of metaphor* (1992: 32), also Lakoff points out the fact that the term metaphor was at the time “taken to mean *novel metaphor*, since the huge system of conventional metaphor had been barely noticed. For that reason, the authors never took up the question of how system of conventional metaphor functions in the interpretation of novel metaphor.” Apparently, Lakoff does not consider novel metaphor as something extraordinary in the text. On the contrary, he calls it common, even though the occurrence of novel metaphor is much less frequent in comparison to conventional metaphor, which can be found in most of the utterances we write or say. Lakoff’s contribution to the theory of novel metaphor lies in his previous linguistic study of metaphor in general and thus in his original point of view. With his colleague Mark Turner he is probably the first linguist to approach novel metaphor in terms of the conventional one. In their study *More than cool reason* (1989) Lakoff and Turner introduce “three basic mechanisms for interpreting linguistic expressions as novel metaphors: Extensions of conventional metaphors; Generic-level metaphors; Image-metaphors. Most interesting poetic metaphor uses all of these superimposed on one another.” (Lakoff, 1992: 32) Let us briefly consider image metaphors and generic-level metaphors in the following chapters.

2.1.1.1 Image-metaphors

Image metaphors differ from conventional metaphors in a way that they do not work on the bases of mutually connected concepts. As Lakoff and Turner (1989: 89) suggest they are “more fleeting metaphors which involve not the mapping of concepts but rather the mapping of images.” While conventional metaphor “maps one conceptual domain onto another, often with many concepts in the source domain mapped onto many corresponding concepts in the target domain”, image-metaphors “are ‘one-shot’ metaphors: they map only one image onto one other image.” (Lakoff, 1992: 25) In other words “metaphoric image-mapping work in just the same way as all other metaphoric mappings – by mapping the structure of one domain into the structure of another. But here, the domains are conventional mental images.” (Lakoff, 1992: 25-26) Lakoff also claims that image-metaphors are represented by two types of structures – attribute

structure and part-whole structure. Part-whole structure is not described any further since there is no example of it in my corpus of collected metaphors.

According to Lakoff and Turner (1989: 90) attribute structure “includes such things as colour, intensity of light, physical shape, curvature and, for events, aspects of the overall shape, such as continuous versus discrete,” etc. In the manner of Lakoff and Turner’s approach, let us consider the following example of the metaphor *to come out of one’s shell*. When we interpret this metaphor, we most probably superimpose the image of a snail coming out of its shell onto the image of someone’s behaviour by the virtue of their common action or character of motion. Similarly, the metaphor *a zebra (crossing)* is based on a superimposition of the image of a zebra, an animal, onto the image of the place where we cross the street by the virtue of their common structure given by shape (stripes) and colour. “It is the existence of such structure within our conceptual images that permits one image to be mapped onto another by virtue of their common structure.” (Lakoff and Turner, 1989: 60)

2.1.1.2 Generic-level metaphors

As Lakoff and Turner (1989: 81) suggest, generic-level metaphors are those metaphors that “lack specificity in two respects: they do not have fixed source and target domains, and they do have fixed lists of entities specified in the mapping.” They explain (ibid.) that the mapping of such a metaphor is based rather on higher-order constraints than on a list of fixed correspondences. As it follows, generic-level metaphors are parts of much more general and unspecified concepts and thus might be harder to comprehend. As Lakoff (1992: 27) claims, the existence of generic-level metaphors was hypothesized mainly to deal with *personification* and *proverbs*, both of which require understanding of analogy. Proverbs are a subject of description in the chapter 2.2.2 *Proverb* and personification is not in the focus of this thesis. However, it seems appropriate to mention *animalification* and *zoomorphism*, which are based on a very similar principle.

In contrast to personification using human kingdom as the source domain, animalification is a process of the superimposition of the features of animal kingdom onto inanimate entities, events, actions, etc. Zoomorphism then concerns not only inanimate entities, but also the world of humans and their behaviour. See more detailed description of this phenomenon in the chapters *2.1.3.2.2.1 Personification and*

zoomorphism and 2.2.10 *Zoomorphism*. Obviously, the working mechanism of personification, animalification and zoomorphism is very similar. In the spirit of Lakoff's theory we can consider metaphors or metaphorical concepts such as HUMANS ARE ANIMALS, HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, etc. These generic-level metaphors or metaphorical concepts offer rich ground for further specification, i.e. for being realized or represented by specific-level metaphor, such as those presented in my corpus of collected metaphors.

2.1.1.3 *Extension of conventional metaphors*

I shall not elaborate on extensions of conventional metaphors any further since it is a very general process difficult to locate, much less to describe. For illustration, the only example given by Lakoff and Turner (1989: 67) is cited. "In Hamlet's soliloquy, Shakespeare extends the ordinary conventional metaphor of death as sleep to include the possibility of dreaming: To sleep? Perchance to dream! Ay, there's the rub; For in that sleep of death what dreams may come?"

2.1.2 Linguistic point of view

Let us open this chapter focusing on the linguistic point of view on metaphor with several definitions of metaphor from that field.

"A word or phrase used to describe sb/sth else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful." (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010: 931)

"Metaphor is the application of a word or phrase to something it does not literally denote, on the bases of a similarity between the objects or ideas involved." (Preminger and Brogan, 1993: 761)

"When we talk about metaphor, we mean the use of language to refer to something other than what it was originally applied to, or what it 'literally' means, in order to suggest some resemblance or make a connection between the two things." (Knowles and Moon, 2006: 2)

All these definitions meet in three main points; more precisely they include the three main attributes characteristic of metaphor:

- metaphor is a matter of language

- the meaning of metaphor is not literal, but figurative
- metaphor is a device based on similarity

2.1.2.1 Metaphor and language

It is obvious that in the field of linguistics metaphor is not considered to be a trope, a figure of speech or a poetic device of literary embellishment any more. It is the use of language and the main emphasis is put on its components and their overall meaning. According to Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) in relation to individual words “metaphor is basic process in the formation of words and word meanings. Concepts and meanings are lexicalized, or expressed in words, through metaphor.” In his paper *Expression and Meaning* also Searle (1979) views metaphor as a process connected with words and meanings, or as the communication between the hearer and the speaker, which is processed by our brains as language. However, it is necessary to mention that not all metaphors are processed in the same way. This depends on a degree of their integration into the language. From this point of view two main types of metaphor are distinguished; poetic metaphors and conventional metaphors.

2.1.2.1.1 Poetic metaphors

Poetic metaphors are already described in detail above in this the chapter *2.1.1 Literary metaphors*. These metaphors are considered to be easily noticeable in the text since they are mostly a source of literary embellishment. In other words, poetic metaphors more or less stand out in the language which they cause to be more vivid, interesting and imaginative. However, current theories suggest that also poetic or novel metaphors are undoubtedly a part of present-day English without being recognized as something extraordinary.

2.1.2.1.2 Conventional metaphors

Conventional metaphors are strongly lexicalized and thus viewed as a part of ordinary language. Knowles and Moon (2006: 5) claim that conventional metaphors are “institutionalized as part of the language. Much of the time we hardly notice them at all, and do not think of them as metaphorical when we use or encounter them.” In many discussions the term *dead metaphor* is used instead of conventional metaphor, especially in those cases when a particular metaphor is not even recognized as metaphorical in everyday language.

As Lakoff (1987: 143) points out, the interpretation of the term dead metaphor was slightly different in the past. It was defined as “a linguistic expression that had once been novel and poetic, but had since become part of mundane conventional language [...]”. The truth is that there are many now conventional metaphors that were originally poetic, on the other hand, it is not conditional for conventional metaphor to be initially poetic; it can be conventional from the very beginning. Plus, it does not seem right to call a metaphor which is used in everyday communication dead metaphor. That is why Lakoff (1987: 146) suggests avoiding of the term dead metaphor, at least in connection with conventional metaphors.

In connection with conventional metaphors, Kövescec (2010: 33) talks about a degree of their conventionality. He emphasizes the fact that it is necessary to distinguish between *conventional conceptual metaphors* such as ARGUMENT IS WAR and *conventional linguistic metaphors* that are basically concrete linguistic manifestations of the first type mentioned. Since the existence of conventional conceptual metaphors is based on the cognitive theory of metaphor, i.e. it is connected with the way we think, there is no need to elaborate on them any further in this chapter. As for the conventional linguistic metaphors, they are, on the other hand, connected with the way we talk; more precisely the way we verbally realize our abstract thoughts. Kövescec (2010: 34) claims that conventional conceptual metaphors “are deeply entrenched ways of thinking about or understanding an abstract domain,” whereas “conventional metaphorical linguistic expressions are well worn, clichéd ways of *talking about* abstract domains.” He also adds that “both conceptual and linguistic metaphors can be more or less conventional” (ibid.).

Before proceeding to the next chapter devoted to another attribute characteristic of metaphor, let us consider the question of a degree of conventionality. The original assumption of this thesis was to categorize all the collected metaphors into groups according to a degree of their figurativeness, i.e. the strength of their poetic power, which is in fact the principle presented by Kövescec (2010: 35), only taken from the opposite point of view, viz. his concept of the *scale of conventionality*. He claims that there are highly conventional metaphors at one end of this scale and “highly unconventional or novel metaphors” at the opposite. Afterwards, he supports his argument by giving an example of both:

“LIFE IS A JOURNEY

- (a) He had a *head start* in life.
- (b) Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.”
(Kövescec, 2010: 35)

As Kövescec (ibid.) adds, “both of these examples are linguistic metaphors that manifest the same conceptual metaphor” – LIFE IS A JOURNEY. He further suggests that in the (b) example Frost, the author, “uses the conventional LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor in unconventional ways” that are not worn out or cliched so even though they “strike us as unconventional or novel, [...] the conceptual metaphor that they realize remains conventional.” This leads us to the conclusion that also novel metaphors are conventional in their nature, i.e. they are realizations of conventional metaphorical concepts.

At the first sight most of the collected metaphors seem to be rather unusual or extraordinary so that one might think that they serve only as devices of embellishment that make the language more vivid. However, as the survey for the native speakers of English presented below in this thesis shows, the majority of these metaphors are as well actively used in everyday communication, which confirms their conventional character. On the other hand, there is no denying that even though a degree of integration of different metaphors into the language is very similar, some of them make more poetic impression than others. It is also important to keep in mind that this whole question is very subjective and thus cannot be generalized.

In the manner of Kövescec’s example, I shall present one of mine. Provided that we accept the existence of conceptual metaphor HUMANS ARE ANIMALS or HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, we can then think about different metaphorical linguistic manifestations of these concepts, which can be realized by metaphors more or less conventional, or more or less poetic. Consider the following metaphorical expressions:

- (a) *bull-headed*
- (b) *to be as stubborn as a mule*

Even though both examples express exactly the same thought, we feel that a degree of their conventionality differs. While *bull-headed* makes the impression of

rather ordinary and thus conventional expression, *to be as stubborn as a mule* inclines more to the poetic end of the scale. However, the outcomes of the questionnaire designed for the native speakers of English suggest that both of these metaphors are used actively to a very similar extent, which only supports the thoughts of Kövescec mentioned above.

For illustration purposes or rather as a matter of interest, let me consider my corpus of collected metaphors and choose those that are the least poetic/most ordinary on one hand and the most poetic/least ordinary on the other. It should be mentioned once more that the process of marking a particular metaphor as more poetic or more ordinary is very subjective.

Among the most poetic I would rank the following metaphorical expressions:

an albatross around/round one's neck

to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom

Fine feathers make fine birds.

to kill the goose that lays the golden egg

to raise like phoenix from the ashes

As for the opposite end of the scale of conventionality, it is very hard to choose representative examples since the majority of the collected metaphors are actively used in everyday communication. In my view, the shorter the expression is the more ordinary impression it makes. Simple metaphorical noun and verb phrases seem to be better integrated into the language than, for example, proverbs or other more complex metaphorical expressions and thus their aspect of figurativeness stays rather unnoticed by the speaker as well as the hearer. See the following examples:

an ass

a bitch

to buzz off

to hatch (something) up

to pigeonhole someone (as something)

Now, let us proceed to the next chapter focused on another attribute characteristic of metaphor, its figurative meaning.

2.1.2.2 *Metaphor and its meaning*

All the definitions of metaphor given at the beginning of the chapter 2.1.2 *Linguistic point of view* suggest that the meaning of a particular metaphorical expression is different from its original literal meaning. Phrases such as “different from its normal use”, “something it does not literally denote” or “something other than what it was originally applied to, or what it ‘literally’ means” are used. Also Searle (1979: 77) supports the idea that many linguists who write on the subject of metaphor “think there are two kinds of sentence meaning, literal and metaphorical.” However, he hurries to express his disagreement with them by claiming that “sentences and words have only the meanings that they have.” Searle (ibid.) maintains that the meaning of metaphor is based on “possible speaker’s intentions”, i.e. on “what a speaker might utter it to mean, in a way that departs from what the word, expression, or sentence actually means.” He then distinguishes *speaker’s utterance meaning*, which corresponds to “what a speaker means by uttering words, sentences, and expressions” and *word, or sentence meaning*, which is basically the term representing the literal meaning. To finish this thought, Searle (ibid.) adds that “metaphorical meaning is always speaker’s utterance meaning.” The differentiation between sentence meaning and utterance meaning seems to be an appropriate and useful tool since it helps us to become conscious of the difference between the original literal meaning of a particular expression and its metaphorical usage.

In connection with the clarification of the question of the only right meaning of metaphor, Searle (1979: 86) also denies that there is a change of meaning in metaphor. He successfully defends this thought by the following explanation:

“The metaphorical utterance does indeed mean something different from the meaning of the words and sentences, but that is not because there has been any change in the meanings of the lexical elements, but because the speaker means something different by them; speaker meaning does not coincide with sentence or word meaning.” (Searle, 1979: 87)

From the thoughts presented above, it is obvious that Searle’s point of view on metaphor is not strictly linguistic, but rather pragmatic, which is apparent also from his dedication to the question many other linguists put – *how do we comprehend the figurative meaning of metaphor* or simply *how do we understand metaphor?*

2.1.2.2.1 *Figurative meaning and its processing*

From many existing theories that aim to describe the process of metaphor comprehension, I shall present the one of Searle (1979: 103-104) who asks himself questions such as the following:

“How is it possible for the speaker to say [something] and mean [something else], when [something] plainly does not mean [something else]?” and “How is it possible for the hearer who hears [something] to know that the speaker means [something else]?”

Searle tries to identify a set of principles enabling hearers to understand the figurative meaning of metaphorical utterances and speakers to produce such metaphorical utterances. As a result, he presents three steps, or sets of steps through which a hearer must go in order to comprehend the figurative meaning of metaphors. These are the strategies Searle (1979: 105) maintains every hearer need to apply:

- (1) strategy for determining whether a particular utterance requires to be interpreted metaphorically or not
- (2) strategy for computing possible attributes or meanings presented along with the metaphorical utterance (applied in case the previous strategy was positive, i.e. the utterance was evaluated as metaphorical)
- (3) strategy for deciding which of these possible attributes or meanings is likely to be the one meant also by the speaker

To illustrate these steps necessary for metaphorical meaning comprehension, Searle (ibid.) uses the example perfectly fitting with the main focus of my thesis “Sam is a pig.” He approaches this utterance from the hearer’s point of view.

- (1) First of all, the hearer needs to decide whether the utterance can be true and thus understood literally or not. He knows that “the utterance, if he tries to take it literally, is radically defective.” (ibid.) This defectiveness is then according to Searle the key element forming the strategy underlining the first step: “*Where the utterance is defective if taken literally, look for an utterance meaning that differs from sentence meaning.*” (ibid.) Searle adds that “this is not the only strategy on which a hearer can tell that an utterance probably has a metaphorical meaning, but it is by far the most common” (ibid.).

- (2) In case the hearer decides to seek an alternative meaning, there is a number of principles or strategies by which he can decode possible attributes or meanings associated with what the speaker actually said, in other words the hearer is to “*look for salient, well-known, and distinctive features*” of words, expressions or sentences uttered. (Searle 1979: 106) To be able to go through this step, the hearer needs to activate his/her factual knowledge of the world around us, in this case of pigs. He/she can thus “come up with such features as that pigs are fat, gluttonous, slovenly, filthy, [...] pigs have a distinctive shape and distinctive bristles” (ibid.).
- (3) In the third step the range of possible meanings is restricted and the one appropriate for the situation and at the same time the one most probably intended by the speaker is comprehended. By the words of Searle (ibid.), “the hearer has to use his knowledge of [Sam and a pig] to know which of the possible values [that he invented in the second step] are plausible candidates for metaphorical predication.”

In my view, the description of the whole process of metaphor comprehension by Searle is still very indefinite, which might be the result of the fact that his research is based on pragmatics and thus it is deprived of the principles offered by more analytical way of thinking. Searle (1979: 85) admits that to understand metaphorical utterance “the hearer requires something more than his knowledge of the language, his awareness of the conditions of the utterance, and background assumptions that he shares with the speaker” and that is why he tries to state the principles mentioned above as an answer. However, he seems to be struggling with those principles being stated precisely without any further questions arising. Let me conclude this chapter at this point and elaborate a bit more on the question “metaphor and its meaning”.

2.1.2.2.2 The ambiguity of metaphor

It was already stated above that there is a difference between literal sentence meaning and metaphorical utterance meaning which is the only one that can be associated with metaphor. Still, even though that literal meaning of metaphor does not exist, its metaphorical meaning may be ambiguous. White (1996: 37-38) points out the fact that “in case of metaphor, the phenomenon of *metaphoric* ambiguity has been completely ignored in philosophical writing on metaphor, even though the possibilities of ambiguity in the case of metaphor are far more extensive than those of literal

discourse.” Searle (1979: 81) as well is aware of the fact that there might be more than one metaphorical meaning of a particular word, expression or sentence.

White (1996: 38) is concerned with the question “How do such ambiguities arise?” In other words, he aims to state the reasons of the fact that “the same metaphorical sentence can have two radically different meanings.” In White’s point of view “the most obvious source of ambiguity is that if [he compares] *A* with *B*, there may be a wide variety of different properties of *B*, each of which could give a point to the comparison” (ibid.). This is actually what Searle suggests is happening in the second step through which a hearer must go when processing metaphorical expression. Similarly as Searle, also White (ibid.) uses the example from the world of animals: “in comparing Achilles to a lion, I may have in mind the lion’s strength, ruthlessness, pride, or whatever.” The resolution of the ambiguity coming from the source mentioned is seen by White (ibid.) in context which in most cases offers only a little difficulty in spotting the meaning uttered by the speaker.

2.1.2.3 Metaphor and similarity

If we look at those definitions of metaphor given at the beginning of the chapter *2.1.2 Linguistic point of view* once more, we can see that all of them interpret the meaning of metaphor on the basis of similarity.

It is worth pointing out that this similarity does not originate from the linguistic expressions as such but from their meanings, i.e. from the entities they denote. Along similar lines Kövescec (2010: 77) describes the occurrence of similarity “between the two entities compared” as the necessary “constraint that limits the excessive production of metaphor.” He adds that in case where “the two entities are not similar in some respect, we cannot metaphorically use one to talk about the other.” Kövescec evidently considers the question of similarity from the point of view of the speaker/writer and thus from the point of view of the production of metaphorical expressions.

Miller (1993: 380), on the other hand, emphasizes the role of the hearer/reader. As he states, in order to understand metaphor the hearer must search for resemblances between the metaphorical text, spoken or written, and “what he knows of the real world.” In Miller’s thoughts, it can be easily observed that he concentrates on the metaphor comprehension, i.e. the relationship between the hearer/reader’s real life experience and the metaphorical entity rather than the relationship between the two

entities denoted by two different linguistic expressions, which is typical of the speaker's point of view.

However, it is necessary to mention that the relationship between these two points of view is very close and thus they are rather based on each other than trying to become different. It is obvious that the aspect of similarity is absolutely essential for both the production as well as the comprehension of metaphor.

When analysing metaphors, also Knowles and Moon (2006: 7) encounter the question of similarity. They “identify and consider three things: the **metaphor** (a word, phrase, or longer stretch of language); its **meaning** (what it refers to metaphorically); and the **similarity** or **connection** between the two.” Similarly as Kövescec, also Knowles and Moon (ibid.) talk about “the relationship between the literal and metaphorical meanings” but instead of similarity they pay attention to “which particular features of the literal meaning of the vehicle [i.e. linguistic expression] are being transferred to the topic [i.e. the intended metaphorical meaning].” There is no denial that the recognition of these particular features is based on the principle of similarity applied to the observation and knowledge of the world around us, whether from the point of view of the speaker or reader. The connection of the metaphorical language to the real life experience is thus indisputable.

2.1.3 Lakoff and Johnson's approach

By analysing metaphor more in depth, linguists have realized that the connection of metaphor with high literary style, and later with language in general, does not suffice to understand how metaphors really work. As a result a new approach based especially on our mind and the way we perceive the world around us was developed. The main attention became to be focused on the principles enabling us to produce and comprehend metaphors that create very complex conceptual domains existing not only in our language but most importantly in our mind. As Lakoff (1992: 1) claims, “the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another.”

This original approach to metaphor first presented in the early 1980s by George Lakoff and Mark Turner is partly outlined above in this thesis in the chapter *2.1.1 Literary metaphor*, precisely to the Lakoff's point of view on novel metaphor, which will be described in due course. At this point it is necessary to mention that before

Lakoff and Johnson's radical model of metaphor was published, also other linguists were conscious of the fact that metaphor needs to be approached from another point of view, different from the strictly linguistic one, in order to be fully understood. For instance Searle (1979), in the whole chapter devoted to metaphor refers to something that a speaker and a hearer share and that enables them to communicate in metaphorical language effectively and with none or only very little misunderstanding. Despite his exertion and efforts, Searle is not able to designate this 'something' in concrete terms.

In the few following chapters, I shall present Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphor, which has radically changed the way we approach metaphors today. It also clarifies the questions that Searle was not able to answer. The main focus will be on the metaphors that Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 102) call *conventional* metaphors, "that is, metaphors that structure the ordinary conceptual system of our culture, which is reflected in our everyday language."

2.1.3.1 *Concepts we live by*

Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 8) state that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature." They add that "since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what the system is like" (ibid.). In other words they claim that metaphors pervade not only our language, but also the way we think and act more than we realize and yet remain rather unnoticed. In the spirit of Lakoff and Johnson's theory, it is appropriate to point out that our everyday communication is strongly influenced by metaphorical conceptual systems that are deeply rooted in our minds and thus it is more or less regulated by already existing concepts, concepts we live by.

The first metaphorical concept Lakoff and Johnson present in their work is ARGUMENT IS WAR. They point out that the way we behave when we argue reflects the features of actual physical battle – "attack, defense, counterattack, etc." (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 9) Thus, the metaphorical concept ARGUMENT IS WAR "structure (at least in part)¹ what we do and how we understand what we are doing when we argue"

¹ „The structure is partial, because only selected elements of the concept WAR are used." (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 64)

(ibid.). On the basis of their observation Lakoff and Johnson (ibid.) claim that “the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.” They call this kind of metaphor *structural metaphor*. The truth is that also other linguists understand and define metaphor in a very similar way, however, in the majority of cases, they do not include the aspect and importance of our real life experience, at least not in the same way as Lakoff and Johnson do. In any case, from what has been mentioned above, it is evident that any metaphorical expression is not just an arbitrary use of language, but a result of a very complex and systematic conceptual network, which represents the way we perceive the world around us. To avoid any possible misunderstanding further in this chapter, it is necessary to mention that Lakoff and Johnson very often use the term *metaphor* for what they call *metaphorical concept* and the term *metaphorical expression* for the linguistic realization of this concept.

At this point, I would like to apply the above stated to the actual topic on which this thesis concentrates, i.e. animal metaphors. As it was already mentioned in the chapter 2.1.1.2 *Generic-level metaphors*, in the spirit of Lakoff and Johnson’s theory, we can consider metaphorical concept such as HUMANS ARE ANIMALS. Even though that this metaphorical concept is highly abstract and exists only at the level of our thoughts, it can be verbally realized by various metaphorical expressions that display our actions and behaviour, such as those presented in my corpus of collected metaphors. Moreover, it surely covers many other, less extensive metaphorical concepts, such as HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, HUMAN APPEARANCE IS ANIMAL APPEARANCE, HUMAN QUALITIES ARE ANIMAL QUALITIES, etc. These metaphorical concepts, concepts we live by, then reflect the way we think, act and communicate. However, it is necessary to mention that this application of Lakoff and Johnson’s approach to animal metaphors is only illustrative and does not follow the principle of structural metaphors to the full extent.

2.1.3.2 *Other kinds of metaphors*

Besides structural metaphors mentioned in the previous chapter, Lakoff and Johnson distinguish also *orientational metaphors* and *ontological metaphors*.

2.1.3.2.1 *Oriental metaphors*

Oriental metaphor “does not structure one concept in terms of another [as structural metaphors do] but instead organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another.” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 16) Oriental metaphors, such as HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN, are evidently based on spatial orientations plus “our physical and cultural experience” (ibid.). Everything depends on people and the way they use their language, the way they perceive the world around us, and their values. The orientational metaphors HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN are probably shared by most of the cultures since the physical manifestations of these emotions are more or less the same for all humans. Compare the examples of English orientational metaphors given by Lakoff and Johnson (ibid.) with their Czech equivalents²:

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

That *boosted* my spirits. – *Zvedlo* mi to náladu. *Pozvedlo* to mého ducha.

I *fell* into a depression. – *Upadl* jsem do deprese. *Utápím* se v depresi.

As a matter of interest, let me cite Czech metaphorical expressions that respect these concepts as well as reflect the world of animals.

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

Být šťastný jako blecha. – A flea is famous for its jumping power, i.e. for doing UP direction moves.

Mít náladu pod psa. – Dogs are often associated with something bad, like in the English metaphor *to go to the dogs*. When we have mood worse than a dog, we feel DOWN a lot.

2.1.3.2.2 *Ontological metaphors*

Similarly “as the basic experience of human spatial orientations give rise to orientational metaphors, [...] our experiences with physical objects (especially our own bodies) provide the basis for and extraordinary wide variety of ontological metaphors [...]” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 23) A few pages later Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 27) specify the areas of use of ontological metaphors: “We use ontological metaphors to comprehend events, actions, activities, and states. Events and actions are conceptualized metaphorically as objects, activities as substances [placed into containers], states as

² The translation is mine.

containers.” From the above mentioned, it seems that it is natural to use ontological metaphors in order to describe any abstract concept. It is easier to think about our experience in concrete terms that are easier to comprehend and thus to deal with it rationally. Moreover, ontological metaphors “are so natural and so pervasive in our thought that they are usually taken as self-evident, direct descriptions of mental phenomena.” (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 25) Most people do not even realize their metaphorical nature, which is actually typical of the majority of conventional metaphors. Even though that Lakoff and Johnson mostly deal with highly conventional metaphors, it is necessary to keep in mind that the presented principles can be easily applied also to the less conventional ones, such as some of those metaphors collected in my corpus. See the examples below.

come out of one's shell – a state is conceptualized as a container

open a can of worms – a situation is conceptualized as a container

2.1.3.2.2.1 Personification and zoomorphism

Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 28) identify the examples of personification “where the physical object is further specified as being a person” as the cases of “the most obvious ontological metaphors.” In their view, personification “allows us to comprehend a wide variety of experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human motivations, characteristics, and activities.” Very similar working mechanism may be applied also to the metaphors with the link to the animal kingdom. Thus it can be implied that not only personification, but also zoomorphism, or animalification, which is in fact a kind of reversed personification, is the process leading to the production of ontological metaphors. Another thought along similar lines is that zoomorphism “allows us to comprehend a wide variety of experiences with nonhuman entities [as well as human beings] in terms of [animal] motivations, characteristics, and activities” (ibid.). See some of the examples of ontological metaphors based on zoomorphism chosen from my corpus below:

He *barked* questions *at* her.

Have you been *hatching up* a deal with her?

He usually got home at around seven o'clock, *dog-tired* after a long day in the office.

He's completely *bull-headed*. I ask him not to throw out that old table, but he did it anyway.

I saw the boy who stole my bag with that gang of trouble makers last night – well, *birds of a feather flock together*, they say.

In my opinion, also simile might be considered to be a very explicit kind of zoomorphism since it clearly compares two different entities and thus assigns attributes of one to another. See the examples below:

(as) cunning/sly as a fox

(as) fat as a pig

to be as busy as a bee

to be as stubborn as a mule

The importance of metaphors based on zoomorphism, or animalification, lies in the fact that they make abstract concepts existing in human world easier to comprehend by using concrete examples from the animal kingdom, which is very close to us and in most cases more definite. Animal world is thus an aid for understanding the human one.

2.1.3.2.3 Phrasal lexical items

In the spirit of structural metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 40) mention also a group of expressions that belong among “literal expressions structured by metaphorical concepts.” Expressions of this sort fit the metaphor and are part of our everyday language similarly as those kinds of metaphor described above. However, they are special in a way that their form is fixed. Lakoff and Johnson (ibid.) call them phrasal lexical items and gather them into sets, each “coherently structured by a single metaphorical concept.” By way of illustration, they present a set of phrasal lexical items that are instances of LIFE IS A GAMBLING GAME metaphor such as the following.

I'll take my chances.

The odds are against me.

I've got an ace up my sleeve.

Lakoff and Johnson (ibid.) emphasize that in the case of using these kinds of expressions, “you would not be viewed as speaking metaphorically but as using the normal everyday language appropriate to the situation. Nevertheless, your way of

talking about, conceiving, and even experiencing your situation would be metaphorically structured.” Thus it is evident that metaphor production as well as comprehension is rather a matter of the inner process of our mind than a matter of language per se. Let me choose some of the examples similar to those above also from my corpus of collected metaphors.

LIFE IS A CORRIDA

For Claire, the suggestion of a women-only committee was *like a red rag to a bull*.

Why don't you *take the bull by the horns* and tell him to leave?

LIFE IS A HORSE RACE

It was only after we'd invested all the money we discovered we'd been *backing the wrong horse*.

LIFE IS A MAGIC SHOW

He's one of those players who, just when you think the game's over, can *pull a rabbit out of the hat*.

It is worth mentioning that most of the linguists call the expressions of this sort of *idioms*. Since there is a separate chapter focused on idioms below in this thesis in the chapter 2.3. *Metaphor and idiom*, I shall not elaborate on them any further at this point.

2.1.3.2.4 Literal vs. figurative language, idiosyncratic metaphorical expressions

Before proceeding to the next chapter devoted to the metaphors we live by, it is necessary to mention the approach of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) to the position of these metaphors with regard to the distinction between literal and figurative language. In the previous chapter and its “literal expressions structured by metaphorical concepts” citation, it is already indicated that Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 42) consider the kinds of metaphor presented above to be a part of “the domain of normal literal language.” There is no doubt that these metaphors are highly conventional given the fact that they are deeply rooted in our conceptual system and systematically used in our ordinary language without even being coded and decoded as metaphorical. However, we need to realize that even though these metaphors are very subtle and essential part of our everyday communication, they are simply different from true literal expressions with which thus cannot be put on a par, especially from the point of view of meaning

production and comprehension. I personally understand the logic of considering the mentioned kinds of metaphor to be a part of literal language, but on the other hand, I would assume that in that case, it should be emphasized that the meaning of these metaphors remains metaphorical, i.e. figurative. Even though Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 41-43) present their theory of literal expressions/metaphors quite confidently, they themselves seem to have difficulties to follow it consistently. For instance, they (2003: 42) give an example of the expression *to construct a theory* and state it as a case of a literal expression, but on the following page, they use the same example and state it as a case of a metaphorical expression, which “is used within a whole system of metaphorical concepts – concepts that we constantly use in living and thinking.” Thus they make this whole theory rather confusing.

What Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 41-43) classify as a part of figurative or imaginative language are idiosyncratic metaphorical expressions such as “the *foot* of the mountain” or “the *leg* of a table, etc.” Even though that these expressions are fixed by convention just as the linguistic expressions mentioned above are, Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 42) do not consider them to be a part of literal language since they “are not used systematically in our language or thought” and are rather “isolated instances of metaphorical concepts.”

2.1.3.3 *Conventional metaphors and similarity*

As Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 107) point out, “many of the similarities that we perceive are a result of conventional metaphors that are part of our conceptual system.” The creation of similarity³ is typical of all kinds of metaphor mentioned. Lakoff and Johnson’s (ibid.) opinion works on the assumption that “we see similarities in terms of the categories of our conceptual system and in terms of the natural kinds of experience we have (both of which may be metaphorical).” Their theory only supports thoughts mentioned in the chapter devoted to metaphor and similarity in general (2.1.2.3 *Metaphor and similarity*) that the connection of metaphorical language to the real life experience cannot be denied.

³ *The creation of similarity* is an expression used by Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 107).

2.1.4 Why do we use metaphors?

According to Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) one of the principal ways in which metaphor is important lies in its relation to discourse. “Metaphor is important because of its functions – explaining, clarifying, describing, expressing, evaluation, entertaining.” As Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) point out, there are “many reasons *why* we use metaphors in speech or writing: not least, because there is sometimes no other word to refer to a particular thing.” Also Searle (1979: 83) mentions metaphors whose meaning is impossible to be expressed literally; therefore, these metaphors serve to fill potential semantic gaps. On the other hand, in most cases we have a choice between a metaphorical and a literal version of a particular thought, and we very often choose the metaphorical expression over the literal one. But why is that? One of the reasonable answers is given by Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) when they suggest that we choose metaphor over the literal expression “to convey a meaning in a more interesting or creative way.” Thus it may be implied that metaphor is used only in order to make language more interesting and vivid. That is why I shall present the opinion of Searle (1979: 82-83) who considers this idea from a slightly different point of view.

It was already stated that in metaphorical text, we do not mean exactly what we say. Thus, in case we want to compare metaphorical and literal realizations of a particular idea in order to answer why the metaphorical expression is most often preferable, the key element is the meaning. In Searle’s (1979: 82) words, to be able to tell the difference, we shall need “first the sentence uttered metaphorically, and second a sentence that expresses literally what the speaker means when he utter the first sentence and means it metaphorically.” Searle (1979: 83) then compares particular examples of metaphor and their literal paraphrases. See some of the pairs he presents below.

(MET) It’s getting hot in here.

(PAR) The argument that is going on is becoming more vituperative.

(MET) Sally is a block of ice.

(PAR) Sally is an extremely unemotional and unresponsive person.

As Searle (ibid.) notices, “in each case we feel that the paraphrase is somehow inadequate, that something is lost.” Unfortunately, not even in this case is Searle (1979) able to designate this “something” which is probably what makes us choose the metaphorical expression over the literal one in concrete terms. In my opinion, the power

of metaphor is based on its connotative character that leads to the complete satisfaction of a particular semantic need of the speaker/writer.

2.2 FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

There is no denying that metaphor is the best-known and probably the most common form of figurative language, but it should be mentioned that there are others too. As Knowles and Moon (2006: 5) suggest “the term metaphor itself covers several different linguistic phenomena. What they have in common is that they are non-literal, figurative uses of language” and thus metaphorical in nature. As it follows there are two different ways of perceiving the term metaphor. Firstly, it is a matter of thought, an abstract concept and a device of figurative language on its own as suggested in the section describing a metaphor in general (2.1 *Metaphor*). And secondly, it serves as an umbrella term for most of the devices used within non-literal, figurative language.

The following parts of the thesis present the devices that can be found in the corpus of collected metaphors and are not metaphors in the strict sense, however metaphorical in nature. Most people consider them to be special in the way that they are usually used as stylistic devices in literature and writing to make it more colourful and less monotonous. Yet, it should be noted that the majority of these devices are used also within a spoken form of language, where they serve as elements of the language making it more vivid, easier to comprehend and/or memorize. Their rhetorical function thus presents itself.

2.2.1 Simile

Simile is a figure of speech which explicitly compares two things by using a connecting word, either *like* or *as*. According to Preminger and Brogan (1993: 1149) the function of such a comparison is the revelation of an unexpected similarity between two seemingly different things. In literature it is a widely and consistently used device of both art or experimentation and explanation. On the one hand it can be thus a source of confusion by making the text more colourful and sometimes harder to comprehend, but on the other hand it helps the reader/hearer to create the image by comparing an unfamiliar thing to the one which is most probably familiar.

Simile is however used not only in literature, but also in everyday communication where it serves as a device of understanding. As it has been already mentioned above, it helps people to visualize and thus better comprehend concepts that might initially be a cause of incomprehension.

As Čermák (2009: 486) suggests, all of the similes that can be found in dictionaries and/or taught from other people are classified as set phrases. However, he further claims that it is necessary to keep in mind that apart from these set phrases there are also similes which cease to exist in order to fulfil the immediate communicative need of a creative speaker with the ability to perceive the world around and similarity in general. Even though such similes are not a part of common lexicon and in contrast to set phrases cannot be found in dictionaries, they are understood among people.

2.2.1.1 Constituents of simile (a formal point of view)

Each simile consists of two main constituents, one standing before the connecting word and the other after that. While the left position of simile is usually filled with a bare adjective or a bare verb, the right position is in most cases filled with a noun, which can be modified by another constituent or constituents, sometimes even by a phrase, typically a prepositional phrase. The examples below represent the three most frequently occurring structures of similes found in the corpus of collected metaphors.

verb + like + (a) + (modified) noun

to watch someone like a hawk

to work like a beaver/mule/horse

to look like a drowned rat

to run around like a headless chicken

verb + like + (a) + noun + prepositional phrase

to be like a bear with a sore head

to be like a bull in a china shop

to be like a cat on a hot tin roof

to be like a fish out of water

(as) + adjective + as + (a) + (modified) noun

(as) cunning as a fox

(as) hungry as a bear

as gentle as a lamb

as poor as church mice

Not only from the examples given, but also from other similes found in dictionaries the rule of the usage of a particular connecting word might be deduced. When the connecting word is preceded by a verb, it is realized as the conjunction *like* and when there is an adjective standing before the connecting word, it is realized as the conjunction *as*. It is also worth mentioning that the connecting word *as* very often works in pair with another *as*, which is then the case of correlative conjunctions.

2.2.1.2 Constituents of simile (a semantic point of view)

Since simile is a universal figure of speech functioning in the same way in both Czech and English language, a renowned text in Czech lexicology serves as a source of information in this chapter. The only difficulty is the terminology, which is slightly modified when being translated from Czech to English language⁴. Latin expressions are preserved.

The common structure of simile from the semantic point of view is as follows (Čermák 2009: 494-497):

(Kd) – R – (Tk) – k – Kt

e.g. *John (Kd) is (R) as gentle (Tk) as (k) a lamb (Kt).*

Kathy (Kd) works (R) like (k) a beaver (Kt).

Each particular component then represents:

Kd = comparandum – a component always provided within context only. Its nominal character enables the whole simile to behave like a predicate specifying and referring to this component.

R = relating element – a component usually of a verbal character filling the left position of simile and creating the basis of its predicate character.

Tk = tertium comparationis – a component explicitly expressed only in some cases. It defines a feature to which the whole simile is related and creates a metaphorical semantic relation between this feature and the same feature of something or somebody else.

k = connecting word – a conjunction, the only formal component of the whole simile, creating the relation of similarity.

⁴ The translation is mine.

Kt = comparatum – a generalized model, a prototype, i.e. semantically always simple, even though formally sometimes complex, component filling the right position of simile. It is the core of the whole simile clarifying a comparandum.

2.2.1.3 *Simile and metaphor*

The meaning of simile is in most cases non-literal which is the reason of the fact that this device is very often compared to metaphor. The traditional view considers metaphor to be a compressed simile, distinguishable from simile only in using an implicit comparison rather than the explicit one and the principle of equating two things rather than simply comparing them. *Jack is as gentle as a lamb* would be the example of simile, whereas *Jack is a lamb* would be the example of metaphor. From the semantic point of view there are two components typical of simile missing in the structure of metaphor, a tertium comparationis and a connecting word. The result is that the meaning of metaphor is more subtle and thus rhetorically stronger.

Preminger and Brogan (1993: 1149) mention also the conclusion of others that “not all metaphors and similes are interchangeable – that metaphor is a “use of language”, whereas comparison itself is a “psychological process”.” However, this statement is strongly inconsistent with the theory of metaphor presented by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their ground-breaking piece of work *Metaphors We Live By* where metaphor is viewed as a matter of thought rather than a linguistic device.

Knowles and Moon (2006: 6) express the opinion that even though there seems to be only little difference between simile and metaphor, “just an arbitrary change of phraseology”, there is in fact a significant philosophical distinction. They explain that “a metaphor is literally impossible or untrue” and thus it presents itself as a paradox or falsification. As to relate this idea to the example given earlier in this chapter, Jack (a person) is Jack (a person) and not a lamb (an animal). In contrast, they state that “a simile is literally possible or true, even if it is not especially appropriate or clear.” It means that Jack can never be a lamb, but he may act like one or at least in a similar way. This thought strongly supports the theory considering metaphor not as a use of language or a play of words but as an abstract concept which must be understood through the non-literal point of view. The metaphor *Jack is a lamb* then does not suggest that Jack is a lamb in reality but that he has some of the qualities or abilities traditionally associated with lambs.

In my view, every single simile is metaphorical in its nature, which is partly supported by Alm-Arvius (2003: 125) who points out “that the semantic affinity between metaphors and similes makes them co-occur or shade into each other in some cases.” Also Čermák (2009: 486) argues along similar lines. Even though he divides similes into two groups, literal and metaphorical, he emphasizes the fact that there is no clear boundary between them and that most of the literal similes, classified as set phrases, have the tendency to convert into metaphorical similes to a greater or lesser extent. In my opinion no such lexical unit as literal simile even exists, there are only similes which can be more or less metaphorical. It means that someone who is *(as) free as a bird* is not as free as a bird literally, someone who is *(as) cunning as a fox* does not have exactly the same slyness as foxes do. Each simile thus clearly proposes only a concept on the basis of which we can easily understand the reality around us.

As suggested above, the extent of the metaphorical aspect of each simile differs. For instance, the simile *to be like a bull in a china shop* is obviously more metaphorical than the simile *to be (as) fat as a pig*, which noticeably affects also the scope of their usage. While the first example would be used by poets or well-educated people, the second example fits into everyday language better and its metaphorical nature is likely to remain unnoticed.

2.2.2 Proverb

This chapter does not aim to define the term *proverb* in an exhaustive way, i.e. present all existing theories and approaches. On the contrary, it would relate to the topic of this thesis rather marginally. Moreover, it is not an easy task to give a definition of the term proverb which would be universally applicable. For the purposes of this thesis and the reasons presented I have chosen only one main definition of proverb which seems to be very comprehensive. Brunvand (2006: 1253) describes proverbs as:

“Concise traditional statements of apparent truths with currency among the folk. More elaborately stated, proverbs are short, generally known sentence of the folk that contain wisdom, truths, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and momerizable form and that are handed down orally from generation to generation.”

The questions how we recognize proverb and what markers we should identify stir scholarly interest in the matter. Brunvand (ibid.) points out several features which

denote that the analysed text can be called proverb. First of all, as the definition itself suggests the aspects of currency and traditionality are very important to be established. Similarly, proverbs always have a fixed structure, are relatively short and typical of use of metaphors. According to Brunvand (ibid.) proverbs also “usually exhibit at least some, if not all, of the following poetic and stylistic features:” alliteration, rhyme, parallelism, ellipses, personification, hyperbole and paradox. Meider (2004: 7) supports this idea by claiming that “it is universally agreed that proverbial ‘style’ incorporates, to varying degrees, poetic devices, such as parallelism, ellipses, alliteration and rhyme, and also semantic device such as metaphor, personification, paradox, and hyperbole.” Those markers relevant to this thesis, not only to proverbs but to the metaphorical language in general, are described and illustrated by examples in the chapters below.

2.2.2.1 *Subgenres of proverbs*

Brunvand (2006: 1253) distinguishes between true proverbs that do not need to be integrated into a sentence and subgenres as “proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, proverbial exaggerations, and twin (binary) formulas, which are but fragmentary metaphorical phrases” that cannot stand by themselves, i.e. a sentential context is always required. Like true proverbs they are traditional and metaphorical, and their occurrence in spoken and written texts is even more frequent. As other devices using figurative language they are valuable by adding colour and expressiveness to communication. Below see brief definitions and examples of the subgenres mentioned that can be also found in the sample of collected metaphors.

Proverbial expression – in most cases verbal phrases.

to cast pearls before swine

to feed/throw someone to the lions

to not look a gift horse in the mouth

Proverbial comparisons – there are two major groups of this subgenre.

The first group follows the structure of ‘as X as Y’.

(as) cunning as a fox

(as) fat as a pig

(as) free as a bird

The second group uses a verbal comparison with the connecting word ‘like’.

to fight like cat(s) and dog(s)

to look like a drowned rat

to run around like a headless chicken

The subgenre *proverbial comparison* is doubtlessly only a different term for simile, definition of which can be thus extended by the characteristic typical of proverb subgenres. Simile is then not only metaphorical but also proverbial in its nature. The first group clearly corresponds with the group of similes using correlative conjunctions.

2.2.2.2 Grammatical structure of proverbs

It is no surprise that in various languages there are diverse kinds of grammatical proverb structures. The form of these structures of course depends on the system of grammatical structures existing in a particular language in general. In English the following structures can be found, in addition to others:

Declarative sentence – in a declarative sentence there is normally the subject present and preceding the verb. The primary function of such a sentence is to convey information. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 2006: 231)

A barking dog never bites.

Birds of a feather flock together.

Positive imperative – in an imperative sentence there is normally no overt grammatical subject and the verb is in its base form. The primary function of such a sentence is to instruct somebody to do something. (ibid.)

Let sleeping dogs lie.

Negative imperative – in the case of a negative imperative, an initial *Don't* or *Do not* is added and assertive items are replaced by non-assertive where necessary. The primary function of such a sentence is logically the opposite of the previous structure, i.e. to instruct somebody to not do something. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 2006: 243)

Don't put the cart before the horse.

Don't count your chickens (before they're hatched).

Parallel phrases – Coinnigh (2012: 8) describes parallelism as a rhetorical device used in order to emphasize or foreground sections of the text (in this case proverb) and implies structural symmetry between these sections, which are then juxtaposed contiguously for the purpose of suggesting comparisons and analogies between opposing constituents. The connection may be realized either through syndetic coordination or asyndetic coordination, where the conjunction is absent. Many scholars proved in their studies that parallelism belongs among the most important and frequently occurring phenomena in the structure of proverbs.

If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

When/while the cat's away (the mice will play).

Rhetorical question – even though a rhetorical question is a question in its form, it shows a strong assertion. When this question is asked, no answer is expected since it is considered to be evident or known. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 2006: 240)

Do bears shit in the woods?

Has the cat got your tongue?

However, it is important to mention that in many cases only a part of proverb is actually verbally realized, which is a consequence of the economy principle more or less influencing all existing languages. It is more likely to hear or say *A bird in a hand*. instead of *A bird in a hand is worth two in the bush*. or *Birds of a feather*. for *Birds of a feather flock together*. Since proverbs are considered to be sentences of the folk and are generally known among people as a result, there is usually no difficulty to deduce the meaning of the whole proverb, even though only a part of it is quoted. Next to the fact that proverb is a fixed expression usually existing in the language for a long time, I would assume that one of the aspects contributing to this easy comprehension of what was not explicitly expressed is also the fact that the meaning of the whole proverb is metaphorical, i.e. it cannot be guessed from the original and literal meanings of the words it consists of. Thus, it is not necessary to express a particular metaphor by its whole original structure; the meaning is not incorporated in the words. This shows that metaphor is not just a play with language as it might be seen by many people, especially those ignorant of linguistics and poetry, but it is clearly a matter of abstract concepts existing in our mind, a matter of tradition generally known among people. In the

opposite case, it would not be possible to understand the meaning of the whole proverb from only a fraction of it and the missing words would be necessary for the right and complete comprehension of the proverb. Intentional omitting of a text of any length can be as well considered a case of ellipsis.

2.2.2.3 *Ellipsis and proverbs*

Quirk (1985: 82) describes ellipsis as grammatical omission. Similarly Preminger and Brogan (1993: 326) propose that ellipsis is “the most common term for the class of figures of syntactic omission (deletion).” That shows that ellipsis is usually considered from the structural point of view (grammatical, syntactic), none of these definitions refers to the actual meaning of the omitted part or the part quoted. The absence of the semantic point of view indicates that the meaning of the part that have been left out is not important for complete understanding of the whole message, which supports also the definition given in online dictionary Merriam-Webster.com saying that proverb is “the act of leaving out one or more words that are not necessary for a phrase to be understood.”⁵ In case of proverbs the meaning is obvious on the basis of a particular situation as well as the fact that proverb is a sentence whose meaning is generally known among people.

2.2.2.4 *A difference between proverb and saying*

There is no strict boundary between proverb and *saying*. In fact, many scholars simply do not distinguish between these two terms and either use only one of them or confuse them with each other. On the other hand, in many texts on the issue the term *proverb* is classified as a type of saying, from which it is clear that the term saying is more general and universal. For instance Preminger and Brogan (1993: 994) describe proverb as “a traditional saying, pithily or wittily expressed.” This theory is supported also by one of the most frequently used online dictionary TheFreeDictionary.com gathering information from various sources, where proverb is defined as “a short pithy saying in frequent and widespread use that expresses a basic truth or practical precept” or as “a short, memorable, and often highly condensed saying embodying, esp. with bold imagery, some commonplace fact or experience.”⁶ The term saying is in fact

⁵ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/proverb>

⁶ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/proverb>

presented as a synonym of the term proverb, i.e. that in some cases these two terms might be interchangeable. Given the superordinate position of the term saying, it is always possible to call a generally known sentence saying but not all analysed sentences are the case of proverb. However, as noted above there are no criteria contributing to a decision whether a sentence is saying as well as proverb or saying but not proverb.

2.2.2.5 The origin of English proverbs

Strictly speaking, there are only two basic sources of proverbs – spoken narratives and written records. Many proverbs were coined during the period of Greek and Latin antiquity. Especially ancient-wisdom literature, in most cases religious works such as the Bible or the Talmud, appears to be a major source of proverbs. From the poets in general Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare are the ones having the greatest influence. Since proverb is a matter of tradition and is closely connected with culture, it is no wonder that many proverbs occurring in English language are more or less literal translations from foreign languages brought to English speaking countries by different groups of immigrants. (Brunvand, 2006: 1254-1255)

Brunvand (2006: 1255) raises the question whether proverbs are still coined in our modern technological society. Not only is his answer “of course they are”, he also proposes that modern-day society represents another boom of proverbs and he maintains that if a particular statement used by an individual “exhibits at least one of the proverb markers mentioned above it might just catch on – it might gain currency in a family setting, a village, a city, a state, the entire nation, and eventually even the world.” Considering the advanced level of technology enabling the communication among people all over the world and the great influence of mass media such as television, radio and even newspapers, it is not surprising that “the speed in which new and possible proverbial wisdom” can be spread is truly remarkable, especially compared to the earlier times (ibid.). As it follows the time of the formation of new proverbs and proverbial expressions using the language of metaphor is on no account over, which only supports the idea that metaphor in general is a very common and popular element of modern everyday language without being considered something special.

2.2.3 Hyperbole

According to Preminger and Brogan (1993: 546) *hyperbole* is “any extravagant statement used to express strong emotion, not intended to be understood literally”, thus it is obviously metaphorical in its nature. Hyperbole is not only a trope or a figure of speech used in literature by poets and writers but also a device commonly employed in daily conversation to emphasize the actual. For instance, the statement *I could eat a horse* is clearly exaggerated and could be easily replaced by simply saying *I am hungry*, but in that case the need or idea of the speaker would not be expressed unequivocally and urgently enough.

2.2.3.1 *Hyperbole and metaphor*

There are two main tendencies that attempt to depict the relationship between hyperboles and metaphors. The first tendency describes the overlap between these two concepts and subsequently equates them with one another to greater or lesser extent. For instance, Lausberg (1998: 263) defines hyperbole as “a metaphor with vertical gradations”. Similarly, the website Wisegeek.com considers both hyperbole and metaphor as literary devices using figurative language “to express an idea rather than a literal statement or description” and suggests that “the term metaphor encompasses a range of these devices, with hyperbole being the specific subset related to exaggeration of the actual.”⁷ To relate hyperbole to metaphor seems to be reasonable especially in view of the fact that the meaning of hyperbole is in most cases metaphorical or at least shows a high degree of implausibility.

In addition to that, Sperber and Wilson (2008: 94) point out that “there is a continuum of cases between hyperbole and metaphor” and suggest that even though hyperbole is very often considered a device using only a quantitative change, while metaphor involves also a qualitative one, “the quantitative/qualitative distinction is not sharp.” See the following examples:

- (1) *The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling at a snail’s pace.*
- (2) *The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling incredibly slowly.*
- (3) *The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling very slowly.*

⁷ <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-the-difference-between-hyperbole-and-metaphor.htm>

According to Sperber and Wilson (ibid.), both (1) and (2) “would generally be classified as hyperboles rather than metaphors, although there is both a quantitative and a qualitative difference between something that is credible and something that is not,” or between a snail’s pace and an ordinary slowness. In any case, as Sperber and Wilson (ibid.) further propose, “whether they are classified as hyperboles or metaphors,” both (1) and (2) “would be interpreted in the same way: the encoded concept helps to activate contextual implications that make the utterance relevant as expected, and the concept conveyed by the hyperbole/metaphor is one of an outstanding” type of slowness characterized by these implications.

Even though being formally expressed differently, (1), (2) and (3) describe only one particular situation. Yet, they cannot be comprehended in the same way. While (3) can be perceived and understood strictly literally, (1) and (2) must be viewed as cases of figurative language because their literal meanings are not credible. However, also (1) and (2) need to be distinguished from each other.

The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling incredibly slowly. As Sperber and Wilson (ibid.) suggest that at first blush it might seem that this example involves only a quantitative difference but since it cannot be comprehended literally, the presence of a qualitative difference is equally relevant. Still, I hold the opinion that it is not right to call this example metaphor per se since the aspect of qualitative difference is very weak if any. By all means there is no semantic shift in hyperbole, only a semantic modification. I believe that in this case it would be perfectly suitable to use the term **hyperbole** considering it a type of metaphor, a device of figurative language with a certain degree of implausibility.

The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling at a snail’s pace. The meaning of this example is not only obviously metaphorical but also includes the aspect of an overstatement which is typical of hyperbole. The degree of figurativeness is evidently higher as well. In other words, this example represents the co-occurrence of metaphor and a hyperbolic use. My suggestion is to call cases of this sort **hyperbolic metaphor**. Furthermore, I imagine applying a similar principle also on the relationship between hyperbole and simile. Cases like *(as) fat as a pig* or *(as) hungry as a bear* which are clearly exaggerated would represent the co-occurrence of simile and a hyperbolic use and thus would be called **hyperbolic simile**.

Despite the fact that the analysis of the few cases mentioned above was really brief and thus very limited, it proves that it is not possible to follow the continuity thesis presented and defended by Sperber and Wilson (2008) without reservation.

Very interesting is a paper of Rubio-Fernández, Wearing and Carston (2013: 46) successfully trying to contradict the strong claim that “there are no interesting differences (in interpretation or processing) between hyperbolic and metaphorical uses.” For the purposes of this thesis, it is not relevant to present their paper in detail. However, outlining some of their conclusions opposing the strong continuity thesis of Sperber and Wilson (2008) seems to be appropriate.

Via four experiments Rubio-Fernández, Wearing and Carston (2013) have managed to prove that there are significant differences between hyperbolic and metaphorical interpretations, despite the fact that they are both classified as types of loose use of language. In their view (2013: 58) one of the main differences is the following:

“Hyperbolic interpretations are semantically closer to the literal meaning than metaphorical are. This is because hyperbolic interpretations involve a simple quantitative shift along one dimension of the literal meaning, while metaphorical meanings involve a qualitative shift in which a defining property of the literal meaning is dropped and peripheral properties are promoted (what some theorists talk of as a ‘domain shift’).”

Their claim that the relation of hyperbolic and metaphorical interpretations to the literal meaning differs is supported by the experiment in which participants were to judge presented hyperbolic and metaphoric uses as literally false. This experiment showed that to judge hyperbolic uses as literally false takes longer than to do the same with metaphorical uses, which logically leads to the conclusion that hyperboles are closely connected to their literal meaning than metaphors. Moreover, in the case of hyperbolic interpretations there is no meaning shift involved as is in the case of metaphorical ones. However, it is necessary to note that these thoughts can be applied only on hyperboles in the strict sense. Hyperbolic metaphors would then represent the combination of both hyperbolic and metaphorical interpretations.

When comparing hyperbolic and metaphorical uses, another important difference worth mentioning arises. I would assume that the hyperbolic aspect is more noticeable than the metaphorical one. In other words, hyperbolic uses are always

evident and striking while metaphorical uses are often subtle and not even registered, which is a result of the fact that metaphors are in most cases deeply rooted in general language knowledge and do not aim to shock or exaggerate as hyperboles do.

2.2.4 Euphemism and dysphemism

Similarly as hyperbole, also euphemism and dysphemism are cases of semantic modification, both based on a change of intensity. Euphemism is a mild or indirect expression used to replace one that may be considered offensive, harsh or suggesting something unpleasant. Euphemisms are very often used to present taboo topics such as religion, sexuality, death or disability in a polite way so that the social harmony in communication is preserved and possible emotional implications are avoided. However, using euphemistic language is in most cases a matter of subjective choice or attitude of the speaker/writer influenced by a particular social context. This idea is strongly supported by the website describing different literary devices [Literary-devices.net](http://literary-devices.net) presenting the thought that “euphemism depends largely on the social context of the speakers and writers where they feel the need to replace certain words which may prove embarrassing for particular listeners or readers in a particular situation.”⁸

It is important to mention that the softened meaning does not necessarily need to be expressed by means of figurative language, i.e. in some cases euphemisms are literally true. However, this cannot be applied to the following examples, which are clearly metaphorical. *The birds and the bees* is a euphemism for sex and reproduction. *To see a man about a horse* is usually a euphemism for going to the toilet or to have an alcoholic drink. Also the website [Literary-devices.net](http://literary-devices.net) considers euphemism “an idiomatic expression which loses its literal meanings and refers to something else in order to hide its unpleasantness” (ibid.).

According to Jamet (2012: 3) “euphemism is not the only way of dealing with taboos, as taboos can be avoided through another means: by using dysphemisms.” In fact, as Allan and Burridge (1991: 7) suggest euphemisms and dysphemisms are “obverse sides of the same coin.” Dysphemism is a harsh, offensive or derogatory expression used as a substitution for a neutral or euphemistic one in order to humiliate and degrade other, usually disapproved, people. Using dysphemistic language and thus

⁸ <http://literarydevices.net/euphemism/>

breaking social taboos may function as an emotional release as a follow-up to expressing negative feelings or disapproving attitudes. The sample of collected metaphors includes dysphemisms in the form of insults such as *a bitch* or *a cow* as well as in the form of disapproving expressions of the following sort. For instance, *to rabbit on* (*about something/someone*) is a dysphemism for talking about unimportant or uninteresting things in a noisy or excited manner.

Rawson (1989: 13) points out that in dysphemistic epithets, classified as one of the types of dysphemism, animal names are commonly used. Calling someone for instance *a bitch*, *a pig*, *a cow*, *a swine* or *a viper* is very offensive and brings a strong degradation of one's humanity. Animal names are thus evidently used as insults for people.

2.2.5 Irony

Similarly as hyperbole, euphemism or dysphemism also irony is a device resulting from the process of semantic modification. There are many types of irony from which the only relevant for this thesis is verbal irony. Irony is a rhetorical device or a figure of speech conveying a message whose meaning is the opposite of the literal meaning. In words of Preminger and Brogan (1993: 635) in verbal irony "one meaning is stated and a different, usually antithetical, meaning is intended." Also, the expressed meaning is usually positive and mild while the intended meaning is often negative and intense.

Very important is the claim of Preminger and Brogan (*ibid.*) that the irony "of a statement often depends on context." Clearly, it is easier to decode irony when there is an evident contradiction between the reality and its description, eventually between the possible and the stated. For instance, the statement *Pigs might fly* is obviously impossible to be true, which is in fact what makes it ironic. However, not always is the meaning of the ironic statement apparent only from the context. For instance, the meaning of the expression *to be the bee's knees* may be intended both negatively/ironically and positively depending not only on a particular situation, i.e. context, but also on the subjective opinion and attitude of the speaker. If one watches the movie star catching people's attention by making funny comments and remarks to a friend simply "*He really is the bee's knees.*" with no further context provided, the true

intention of the speaker is not clear at all. The meaning of the statement might be meant positively, thus admiringly, as well negatively, thus ironically. It seems that other aspects of communication must be taken into consideration such as intonation or facial expression of the speaker. Whether the message is received correctly or not then depends on the ability of the hearer to decode, perceive and comprehend irony.

2.2.6 Cliché

Since there is only one example classified as *cliché* in the collected sample of metaphors, namely (*as*) *hungry as a bear*, this chapter aims to introduce the term cliché only very briefly. Online dictionary Merriam-Webster.com describes the term cliché as “as phrase or expression that has been used so often that it is no longer original or interesting.”⁹ Blake and Bly (1993: 85) propose that such an overused phrase or expression not only loses its original meaning or effect, but also becomes trite or even irritating.

I would assume that the process of marking a text of any form as cliché might be in many cases problematic and most importantly very subjective. There are various factors which need to be considered such as the length and frequency of the usage of a particular text, a degree of its acceptance and popularity among people, its structure, varieties of English characteristics, i.e. type of regional variation, social variation, etc. In other words, what is perceived as cliché by one person might be perceived as a common neutral text by another and vice versa. For this reason it would be useful to consider a further division of what is called cliché into different subtypes. I personally imagine a division of the following character (please note that the following division is invented by the author of this thesis, i.e. by a non-linguist).

Personal cliché – every text which is considered cliché by an individual (from a very subjective point of view), usually a consequence of overusing a particular expression or a phrase among people around, i.e. family, more or less narrow circle of friends or any other group of people with which an individual shares time. However, the term personal cliché covers in many cases not only the above mentioned but also public cliché.

⁹ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/clich%C3%A9>

Public cliché – considered cliché by most of the society (from rather objective point of view), usually a consequence of overusing a particular expression or a phrase in various communication channels, media, different types of writings (from modern magazines to classic literature), etc. Public cliché is most probably not perceived as cliché by every single person in the world, i.e. it is not everyone’s personal cliché.

As a result it would be possible to talk about three different combinations depending on a subjective perception of reality. From the point of view of an individual:

1. A phrase or an expression is considered personal cliché.
 - a. It is considered cliché also by the majority of the society, i.e. it is public cliché as well.
 - b. It is not considered cliché by the majority of the society, i.e. it is not public cliché.
2. A phrase or an expression is considered neutral but it is considered cliché by the majority of the society.

2.2.7 Catch phrase

Since there is only one example in the corpus of collected metaphors classified as *catch phrase*, namely the expression *to have to (go and) see a man about a horse*, this chapter describes the term catch phrase only very briefly. TheFreeDictionary.com defines the term catch phrase as “a phrase in wide or popular use, especially one serving as a slogan for a group or movement.”¹⁰ The suggested link of catch phrase to a particular group or movement may be traced down also in case of the example given, or at least its variant *see a man about a dog*. According to TheFreeDictionary.com “this euphemistic term dates from Prohibition of the 1920s, when buying liquor was illegal, and, after repeal, was transferred to other circumstances” (ibid.).

Kleiser (2008: 176) describes catch phrases as familiar verbal patterns which were once clever and original, but as a result of being over-used by different writers and speakers, these phrases have become automatic and almost meaningless. Since the aspect of over-use and being worn-out is typical of clichés as well, it is appropriate to mention the relation between catch phrases and cliché. Kleiser (ibid.) claims that cliché is “a particularly stale catch phrase – especially one which was once particularly clever”

¹⁰ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/catch+phrase>

and adds that “essentially, a cliché is a catch phrase which can make people groan out loud, but the difference between the two is not that important.” It seems that clichés are considered to be more irritating than catch phrases and that the loss of the original effect is stronger in case of these worn-out expressions. However, the decision whether a particular statement is catch phrase or cliché might be problematic and most importantly very subjective.

2.2.8 Rhyming expressions

There are a few examples of rhyming metaphors or idioms in my corpus of collected metaphors. The definition of the term *rhyme* is almost exclusively restricted to the area of literature, especially poetry. The online dictionary Oxforddictionaries.com describes rhyme as “correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry.”¹¹ However, it is important to mention that the rhyme mechanism does not necessarily need to be a matter of poetry only since there are numerous phrases existing and being used in the language of everyday communication.

Two main types of rhyming phrases might be noticed in the corpus of collected metaphors. There are combinations that not only rhyme but also make perfect sense together and show a high degree of logic and accuracy even though their meaning is metaphorical. For instance, the figurative meaning of the expression *a culture vulture* is nicely reflected by the literal meanings of the words *culture* and *vulture* when viewed separately, which is not typical of metaphors. In other words, linking of these particular words and meanings together is so ingenious and apposite that the final image, ideally put into a context, presents itself. See other examples below.

an eager beaver

to have ants in one's pants

a snail mail

The second group involves expressions that are most probably formed in order to rhyme only since they do not display any degree of logic or accuracy in terms of meaning. Similarly as the examples presented above, also these expressions were created by a combination of already existing words. Yet, the literal meanings of these

¹¹ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/rhyme>

words do not indicate the figurative meaning of the whole expression at all or at least do not make sense when being linked together. See the examples below.

as drunk as a skunk

be the bee's knees

horses for courses

to turn turtle

It seems then that in case of some metaphors it is easier to guess the meaning from the isolated meaning of their parts than in case of others. However, the function of all the rhyming expressions is very similar, if not the same. They serve not only as catching devices that are pleasant to hear, but also as mnemonic devices facilitating the language comprehension.

2.2.9 Onomatopoeia

Similarly as rhyme presented in the preceding chapter, also *onomatopoeia* belongs to the group of rhetorical sonic devices. According to Preminger and Brogan (1993: 860) onomatopoeia “is a traditional term for words which seem to imitate the things they refer to,” as in the expression to *buzz someone in*. The example given is a proof that onomatopoeia is not restricted to the language of poetry but it is as well a device used in ordinary communication.

2.2.10 Zoomorphism

Zoomorphism is a (literary) technique through which all the metaphors presented in this thesis came to existence. Many dictionaries describe zoomorphism as a process of attributing of animal qualities, forms or characteristics to deities, less of them then, for instance Thefreedictionary.com, as “use of animal forms in symbolism, literature, or graphic representation.”¹² And finally, there are only a very few resources presenting the term zoomorphism also as an opposite of anthropomorphism, i.e. as a process of “viewing human behaviour in terms of the behaviour of animals”¹³, which is the definition most relevant to the purposes of this thesis. However, sometimes not only humans and their qualities, moods or activities are involved. Zoomorphism can be

¹² <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/zoomorphism>

¹³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoomorphism>

applied also to things, situations, events, etc. as in *a zebra crossing, a white elephant, to turn turtle* and many others. Broadly speaking zoomorphism serves as a device providing an effective and very precise description of human world and everything belonging to it. It is a technique using figurative language and working on the basis of a comparison of two worlds – the animal world and the human world.

It is important to bear in mind that zoomorphism is a very general term that can be combined or realized with other, more specific literary devices described above. Like in this instance, “*What’s more unpleasant to see than the herd spirit in humans? The manipulation led to the stage when humans behave like dumb sheep.*”¹⁴ Here sheep are used as simile to show how people behave these days. In case of simile the process of comparison typical of zoomorphism is even more evident since simile works on the basis of comparison as well. The connection between animal and human world is then expressed in a very explicit way. A different example of zoomorphism would be the expression *You stupid little bitch!*, where the word bitch is used as dysphemism, as an insult. The comparison of animal and human world is in this case expressed implicitly, which is in fact an attribute typical of metaphor. That clearly manifests that zoomorphism and metaphor are closely connected.

¹⁴ <http://archive.news.softpedia.com/news/Humans-Really-Behave-Like-Sheep-in-a-Herd-78913.shtml>

2.3 METAPHOR AND IDIOM

With regard to the fact that many of the collected metaphors are not only metaphorical, but also idiomatic in their nature, it seems appropriate to pay attention to *idioms* as well. However, since the main concern of this thesis is metaphor, I shall not go into any unnecessary particulars when presenting the concept of idiom, but rather look at it in relation to metaphor.

2.3.1 Definition of idiom

Knowles and Moon (2006: 15) define the term idiom as conventionalized phrase, where “the meaning of the whole phrase is different from the meaning which might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase.” Since they restrict the use of this term only to the metaphorical phrases such as “*spill the beans* or *jump the gun*”, it is not surprising that their definition of idiom might be easily applicable also to metaphor. Similarly, idioms, same as metaphors, “are more or less transparent, and we can see why they mean what they do; others are completely opaque, and their origins are obscure” (ibid.). Even though that a metaphor and an idiom share a lot of common features, it is not possible to interchange these phenomena. The question then remains what is the relationship between them. Knowles and Moon (2006: 17) consider the meaning of a particular idiom to be derived from the metaphor it contains. In other words we can say that idioms are realized by metaphors similarly as metaphors incorporate devices such as hyperbole, simile etc.

This thought is supported by Kövescec (2010: 231) who claims that “the class of linguistic expressions that we call idioms is a mixed bag.” He assumes that it involves not only metaphors, but also other devices such as metonymies, binominals, similes, sayings, phrasal verbs, etc. Similes and sayings are discussed above in the section 2.2 *Figurative language* and metonymies are not considered to be relevant for this thesis.

2.3.1.1 Binominals

Binominals are linguistic expressions or pairs of words also called irreversible binominals or Siamese twins. Gramley and Pätzold (2004: 58) define this phenomenon as a connection of words that are used together in order to express a particular idea and thus might be viewed as an idiomatic expression. The connecting word is usually *and*,

in the minority of cases *or*. Similarly as the elements constituting idiom in general, also a pair of words is fixed in terms of the word order, i.e. the elements it consists of cannot be reversed. See the examples of Siamese twins that occur in my inventory of collected metaphors below.

to be neither *fish nor fowl*
to be raining *cats and dogs*
the birds and the bees
a *chicken and egg* situation
to play *cat and mouse*

2.3.1.2 Multi-word verbs

According to the terminology suggested by Greenbaum and Quirk (2006: 336) the term *multi-word verb* covers two main verb constructions consisting of a verb and a particle, either an adverb or a preposition. The combination of a verb and an adverb is called *phrasal verb* and the combination of a verb and a preposition is called *prepositional verb*. Less common though equally important are so called *phrasal-prepositional verbs* consisting of a verb and two particles, an adverb and a preposition, always in that order.

Verb + adverb

to buzz off
to horse about/around

Verb + preposition

to bark at
to fish for

Verb + adverb + preposition

to chicken out of
to beaver away at

However, the terminology presented above cannot be viewed as obligatory since the terminology of phrasal verbs in general is highly inconsistent. Probably the most common is the terminology used also by Knowles and Moon (2006) employing the term phrasal verb to both the combination of a verb and an adverb and the combination of a verb and a preposition. This terminology is widely followed by the authors of the

EFL/ESL literature presenting the lists of both main types of multi-word verbs mentioned and referring to them as phrasal verbs.

The meaning of the semantic unit created by combining a verb and an adverb or/and a preposition usually cannot be guessed from the meaning of its parts in isolation. It means that from the semantic point of view phrasal verbs need to be viewed as a whole which can be identified as the characteristic feature of idioms. Another idiomatic feature of phrasal verbs is offered by Allerton (2006: 166) who states that the overall meaning of phrasal verbs is at least partly unpredictable. All these ideas are supported by Cobuild (1990: 147) and his reference to the process of the extension of the usual meaning of the verb or the creation of a new meaning when combining a verb and a particle.

Cobuild (ibid.) also comments on a group of phrasal verbs whose first part does not function independently as a verb. For example, there is the phrasal verb *chicken out of* but no verb *chicken*.

2.3.2 Idioms from the traditional point of view

Idioms are traditionally considered to be “a matter of language alone; that is, they are taken to be items of the lexicon (i.e. the mental dictionary) that are independent of any conceptual system.” (Kövescec: 2010: 231) They are thus predetermined to be isolated units that share no mutual system on the basis of which they might be produced and comprehended. Also Gibbs (1993: 57) points out that “scholars generally have assumed that idioms exist as frozen, semantic units within speaker’s mental lexicons [...]” It follows that from the traditional point of view idioms are viewed not only as the units of language that are isolated from each other, but also as the units that are frozen and thus have no further potential to be creative or interesting.

Along similar lines, Gibbs (ibid.) presents the basic difference between metaphor and idiom shared by the scholars supporting the traditional approach to idiom: “compared to metaphors, which are thought to be “alive” and creative, idioms traditionally have been viewed as dead metaphors or expressions that were once metaphorical, but that have lost their metaphoricity over time.” The meaning of idioms is not therefore viewed as metaphorical, i.e. figurative anymore, nevertheless, as Gibbs (ibid.) states it is not presumably viewed as literal in the true sense of the word either.

He further supports this statement by presenting the traditional thoughts that the real literal meanings of idioms are rather rejected as inappropriate or at least not taken into consideration when comprehending idioms. The question stands what is the meaning of idiom then. According to Gibbs's opinion (1993: 58), in the traditional view, where idioms are treated as dead metaphors, the meaning of idiom is simply considered to be idiomatic and it is listed as one of the literal meanings of a particular phrase, a particular idiom. Similarly as I cannot identify myself with Lakoff and Johnson's theory of "literal metaphor" presented in the chapter 2.1.3.2.4 *Literal vs. figurative language, idiosyncratic metaphorical expressions*, I have difficulties to follow this point of view that suggests the same of idioms, i.e. that the true meaning of idiom is not metaphorical anymore, but it is counted as one of the literal meanings of a particular phrase formally corresponding to a particular idiom. Gibbs (1993: 57) himself does not share this treatment of idioms either and that is why he develops a different theory based on the assumption that "idioms are not dead metaphors."

2.3.3 Idioms from the alternative point of view

Gibbs (1993: 57-77) aims to prove that the assumption that idioms are dead metaphors is wrong. He (1993: 58) identifies himself with the traditional point of view that "idioms are thought to have been metaphorical once because often we can trace back a phrase to its fully metaphorical uses in earlier stages of the languages." However, he does not agree with the idea that the metaphoricity of idioms can vanish only because they are frequently used in our ordinary language. On the contrary, Gibbs (1993: 59) emphasizes the fact that "even words that appear to be classic examples of dead metaphors have vitally alive metaphorical roots." Moreover, as it was already mentioned, the term dead metaphor traditionally covers all conventional metaphors whose meanings are considered to be literal, which is something Gibbs cannot follow as well. That is why he (1993: 60) supports the theory that much of our everyday communication is comprised of conventional metaphorical expressions that are "part of our live conceptual system" even though that many theorists "hold the belief that all metaphors that are conventional and seemingly literal must be dead."¹⁵ On the basis of

¹⁵ "The mistake derives from an assumption that things in our cognition that are most alive and most active are those that are conscious. On the contrary, those that are most alive and most deeply entrenched, efficient, and powerful are those that are so automatic as to be unconscious and effortless." (Gibbs, 1993: 60)

these thoughts he builds the theory that idioms are not dead metaphors similarly as conventional metaphors are not dead.

As a result of his analysis, also Kövescec (2010: 233) comes to the conclusion that not only conventional metaphors but also most of idioms “are products of our conceptual system and not simply a matter of language (i.e., a matter of the lexicon).” The meaning of idiom is thus considered to be linked to our “general knowledge of the world embodied in our conceptual system.” That is also why it is not arbitrary, but conceptually motivated.

The link between idioms and our conceptual system that is evident from the above mentioned logically leads also to the link between idioms and metaphors that are part of our conceptual system as well. As Gibbs (1993: 61) suggests, the figurative meaning of many idiomatic phrases is understood only “due to our ability to conceptualize experience in a metaphorical manner.” That implies that the meaning of many idioms is actually metaphorical. Kövescec (2010: 234) even proves that “conceptual metaphors provide semantic motivation for the occurrence of particular words in idioms” and he calls these idioms generated by conceptual metaphors *metaphorical idioms*.

It seems appropriate to conclude this chapter with the Gibb’s (1993: 74) statement:

Idioms’ “rich figurative meanings are motivated by the metaphorical knowledge people possess of the domains to which idioms refer. These metaphorical mappings between source and target domain knowledge often are conventionalized in the sense that they are so much a part of our everyday cognition as to be unconscious and automatic.”

All in all, many idioms, as products of conceptual metaphorical systems that structure the way we think, act and communicate, are similarly as conventional metaphors a live part of our everyday language. However, it is important to realize that this conventional point of view cannot be applied to all idiomatic expressions and that is why it should be considered to be an alternative rather than a replacement of dead metaphor point of view (ibid.).

3 ANALYTICAL PART

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The following chapter presents not only the methodology of the analytical part of the thesis, but also refers to the corpus of collected metaphors. Some of the examples have already been mentioned above as a source of illustration and support for different theoretical insights. However, this corpus plays its most important role in the actual analytical part of the thesis. It serves as a ground not only for the translation part, but also for the research parts.

3.1.1 The collection of metaphors

The collection of metaphors was driven by several criteria stated in advance. As the main source of metaphors were established texts that are primarily meant for students of English. Metaphors appearing in these texts are considered to be chosen by specialists in language teaching and thus marked as important and useful in the process of acquiring of the English language. Also, different dictionaries focusing on metaphors and/or idioms proved to be a valid source of metaphorical expressions. The selection of metaphors gathered in these dictionaries was based mainly on my intuition and experience with the English language. The preference was given to the examples that I encountered during my studies, i.e. seminars, lectures, communication with English native speakers, books, TV series, etc.

Next to the different sets of textbooks used by advanced learners of the English language and the dictionaries mentioned below, the following titles were used as sources of metaphors:

- Wright, John: *Idioms Organiser: Organised by metaphor, topic and key word*
- Gough, Chris: *English Vocabulary Organiser*
- McCarthy, Michael; O'Dell, Felicity: *English Idioms in Use*

3.1.2 The sources of reference

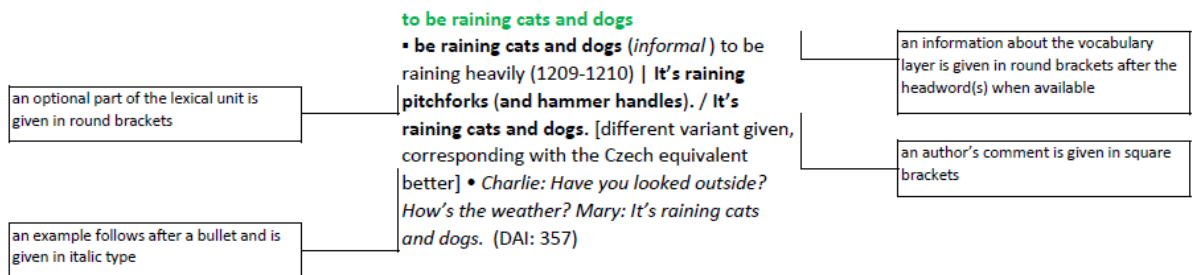
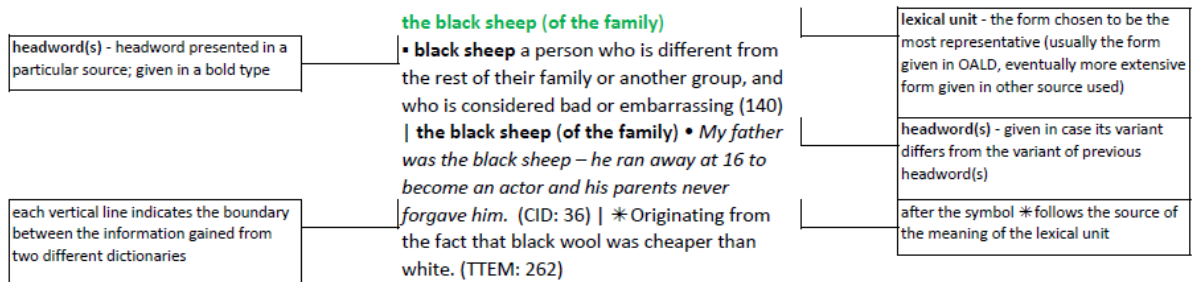
Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary was established to be the major and representative source of reference given in the entry of each metaphor for 3 main reasons. Firstly, the fact that it was published in 2010 makes it a relatively recent source compared to other available dictionaries. Secondly, it belongs to the group of general dictionaries, i.e. it does not concentrate on any specific area of language and that is why it is expected to contain language widely used among people. And thirdly, it is primarily designed for learners of the English language and focuses on using natural language in everyday communication.

The data gained in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* were afterwards compared to the information given to the same lexical units in five other dictionaries (see the list below) and complemented by all the extra information presented in their entries. The following list of dictionaries is arranged in accordance with the rate of their importance and relevance for this diploma thesis. The abbreviations applied in the text are adduced in brackets.

- *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (There is no abbreviation used for this dictionary since it is considered to be the core one. Only the number of a relevant page is provided when referring to this dictionary.)
- *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* (CID)
- *Thesaurus of Traditional English Metaphors* (TTEM)
- *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English. Vol 2: Phrase, Clause and Sentence Idioms.* (ODCIE)
- *McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs* (DAI)
- *English Guides 7: Metaphor* (EG)

3.1.3 The content and arrangement of the entries

Each entry is basically arranged as follows: *headword*, its *meaning*, *usage example* and *source* of the meaning when available. See the example below.



3.1.4 The corpus of collected metaphors

The list of 200 collected metaphors is arranged in the alphabetical order where the presence of an article at the beginning of the phrase, even though it is an essential part of a particular metaphor, is not taken into account, i.e. the metaphor *a paper tiger* can be found under the letter P not the letter A. Similarly also pronouns such as *someone* or *something* are not taken into account regardless of their placement in the phrase. The corpus is attached to this thesis as Appendix no. 1.

3.2 ENGLISH ‘ANIMAL’ METAPHORS AND THEIR CZECH EQUIVALENTS

The aim of this section is to compare English metaphors based on the link to the animal world and their Czech equivalents. The main attention is paid to whether there is any correspondence between the two counterparts in their reflection of animal aspect. On the basis of this criterion the collected metaphors are divided into four different categories:

- the same animal in Czech equivalent
- a different animal in Czech equivalent
- the same animal as well as a different animal in Czech equivalent
- no animal in Czech equivalent

3.2.1 EN – CS comparison – the same animal

The analysis has shown that a great number of metaphors express a similar meaning by using the same animal in both Czech and English language. I believe that there are two main reasons for this correspondence. Firstly, a common origin, i.e. the metaphors might originate in the same language or the same source of knowledge such as the Bible or other worldwide known pieces of work, especially fables, fairy tales and folk literature in general. And secondly, cultural correspondence, i.e. people of different nations approached a particular reality in the same or a very similar way, which is strongly influenced by the fact that a particular animal is often a key element of the whole metaphor and thus a carrier of the attribute determining its meaning. See the examples of both cases presented below.

A common origin

- *to cast pearls before swine* – *házet perly sviním* → from the title of a story by Hans Christian Andersen from a biblical quotation
- *the lion's share* – *lví podíl* → from the Aesop's fable
- *an ugly duckling* – *ošklivé káčátko* → from the title of a story by Hans Christian Andersen

A culture correspondence

- *to be as busy as a bee* – *být pilný jako včelka* → a bee is an insect generally known to be hardworking and always busy, the attribute of diligence is thus typical of this kind of animal
- *to be packed like sardines* – *mačkat se jako sardinky* → from the way that many sardines are packed into a can, which is a well-known fact for all countries producing, selling or consuming sardines in a can
- *to pull a rabbit out of the hat* – *vytáhnout králíka z klobouku* → all over the world magicians are pulling rabbits out of their hats, the moment of suddenly surprising someone is thus connected with this activity

English metaphors and their Czech equivalents that belong to this category may be divided also from the formal point of view in general. There are metaphors that are formally completely identical, i.e. not only in the usage of the same animal but also in the formal expression. Then there are those with the same animal but they more or less differ in their overall form. See the examples of both cases presented below.

Formally completely identical

a flea market – *bleší trh*

to have a memory like an elephant – *mít paměť jako slon*

a sacrificial lamb – *obětní beránek*

to shed/weep crocodile tears – *prolévat krokodýlí slzy*

Formally partially identical

The early bird catches the worm. – *Ranní ptáče dál doskáče*

goose bumps – *husí kůže*

to not look a gift horse in the mouth – *Darovanému koni na zuby nehled'.*

One swallow does not make a summer. – *Jedna vlaštovka jaro nedělá.*

3.2.2 EN – CS comparison – a different animal

The minority of collected English metaphors differ from their Czech equivalents in the use of a different animal. The examination of such occurrences suggests that in most cases it is a consequence of cultural divergence, i.e. different perception of reality given not only by mentality and experience of a particular nation but also by different

surroundings. For instance, it is more likely to see a bee than a beaver in the Czech Republic which is probably why we use the metaphor *a busy bee* instead of *an eager beaver*. However, it is important to mention that it does not mean that we are not able to comprehend the meaning of the form used by other nations, in this case *an eager beaver*, since the knowledge of beavers being hardworking is easily transmittable among people/nations and thus it is a part of general awareness all over the world.

It is likely that English metaphors and their Czech equivalents belonging to this category came into existence independently of each other. From this point of view it is interesting that both cultures/languages use an animal element for expressing a particular idea. It only shows how close the connection between the animal and human world is. Similarly as in the previous category of metaphors, the extent of formal correspondence of English metaphors and their Czech equivalents in general differs from case to case. See the examples below.

can talk the hind leg(s) off a donkey – vymámit z jalové krávy tele

a cold fish – studený jako psí čumák

(as) hungry as a bear – mít hlad jako vlk

a guinea pig – pokusný králik

In some cases the difference between Czech and English language is only marginal as regards the animal used. Very often the concept of hyponymy is present within the pair of particular metaphors such as in the following examples.

The same level (coordinate terms)

to have a bee in one's bonnet – mít brouka v hlavě

to kill the goose that lays the golden egg – zabít slepici, která nese zlatá vejce

A different level (superordinate term – subordinate term and vice versa)

Birds of a feather flock together. – Vrána k vráně sedá, rovný rovného si hledá.

a night owl – noční pták

3.2.3 EN – CS comparison – the same as well as a different animal

Metaphors of this category combine the two categories mentioned above. Some of the English metaphors are possible to be translated to the Czech language by using two or more different animals, one of which is identical to the English version. It is the

result of a general ability of a language to express one thought in various ways. See the examples below.

to be no spring chicken – nebýt žádný zajíc/kuře

a big fish – velké zvíře/ryba

to feed/throw someone to the lions – předhodit někoho psům/vlkům/lvům

to watch someone like a hawk – hlídat koho jako jestřáb/ostříž

wouldn't hurt/harm a fly – neublížit ani kuřeti/mouše

It is necessary to mention that the English language itself works in a very similar way since it as well contains different variants of one metaphor expressing the same meaning by using two or more different animals in their form such as in the following examples.

to work like a beaver/mule/horse

to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom

to have to (go and) see a man about a horse/dog

3.2.4 EN – CS comparison – no animal in Czech equivalents

A great number of English metaphors do not have the Czech equivalent that would express the same meaning by using an animal denotation. Similarly as in the second category the main reason is cultural divergence, i.e. different perception of reality given not only by mentality and experience of a particular nation but also by different surroundings. For instance, it is not likely to use the metaphor *to be as dead as a dodo* in the Czech Republic since most of the people living in this country do not even know what dodo is or how it looks. It is an animal typical of a different culture from the Czech one.

According to the way of expressing the meaning of the English metaphors in the Czech language, this category is divided into two different subcategories.

The Czech version is expressed in a metaphorical language.

to be (like) water off a duck's back – Je to jako když hrách na stěnu hází

to be another/a different kettle of fish – být jiná písnička

to be the cat's whiskers – sníst všechnu moudrost světa

a white elephant – danajský dar

The Czech version is expressed in a literal language.

to buzz someone in – pustit někoho dovnitř

to chicken out (of something) – ztratit odvahu

a culture vulture – člověk okázale dychtící po kulturním vyžití

a wolf whistle – obdivné hvízdnutí

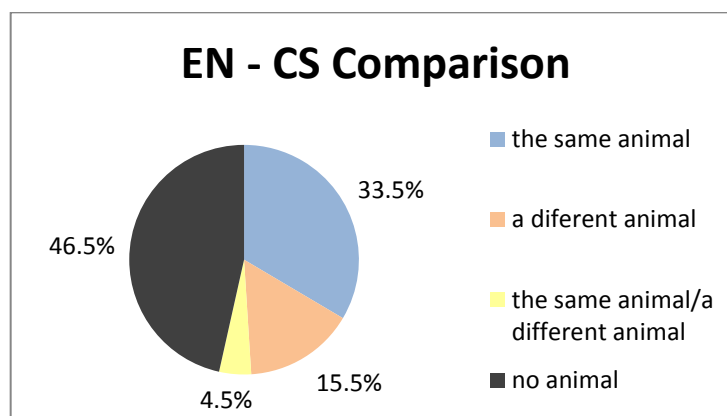
3.2.5 EN – CS comparison, Table 1 and Figure 1

The following Table 1 and Figure 1 depict the proportions of each of the four categories presented above in the relation to the whole amount of collected metaphors. Exactly 107 (53.5%) of 200 collected English metaphors have their Czech equivalents that use the animal element as well; in 67 (33.5%) of 200 cases Czech equivalents use the same animal, in 31 (15.5%) cases a different animal, in 9 (4.5%) cases both the same animal and a different animal depending on their particular variant. The rest, i.e. 93 (46.5%) of 200 collected English metaphors, do not have their Czech equivalents that would use the animal element as well. See Table 1 and Figure 1 below.

Table 1 EN - CS comparison of collected metaphors

Category	Occurrence	%
The same animal in Czech equivalent	67	33.5
A different animal in Czech equivalent	31	15.5
The same as well as a different animal in Czech equivalent	9	4.5
No animal in Czech equivalent	93	46.5
Total	200	100.0

Figure 1 EN - CS comparison of collected metaphors



3.2.6 EN – CS comparison, an overview

Table 2 following below offers an overview of English metaphors and their Czech equivalents. An animal used identically in both languages is marked by a blue color and an animal used only in the Czech language is marked by an orange color.

For translating collected English metaphors to the Czech language, two main sources were used, namely *Anglicko-český frazeologický slovník* and more importantly a parallel multilingual corpus Intercorp (IC). There is no abbreviation for Anglicko-český frazeologický slovník in the table, only the number of the relevant page is provided when referring to this dictionary. In cases when these sources were not sufficient enough, the online dictionaries on Seznam.cz (S) or Wiktionary.org (W) and also my own language sense were taken into consideration.

Table 2 English metaphors and their Czech equivalents

an albatross around/round one's neck	nést si břímě na zádech
an animal	zvíře; bestie; dobytek (S)
to ape someone/something	opičít se; napodobovat (S)
(as) cunning as a fox	mazaný jako liška
(as) drunk as a skunk	ožralý jako doga
(as) fat as a pig	tlustý jako prase (75)
(as) free as a bird	volný jako pták (IC)
(as) hungry as a bear	mít hlad jako vlk
as the crow flies	přímo (82); vzdušnou čarou (82)
an ass	osel (IC); hajzl (IC); hajzlík (IC); vykuk (IC); trouba (IC); pitomec (IC)
at a snail's pace	šnečí tempo (IC); hlemýždí tempo (IC, 214); <i>go at</i> ~ táhnout se jako hlemýžď (173)
to back the wrong horse	vsadit na špatnou kartu (264); vsadit na nesprávného koně (128); vsadit na špatného koně
to bark something (at someone)	štěkat na někoho; vyštěknout
someone's bark is worse than their bite	Pes, který štěká, nekouše. (273)
A barking dog never bites.	Pes, který štěká, nekouše. (282)
to be another/a different kettle of fish	být něco (zcela) jiného (IC); být jiná písnička (79); být jiné kafe (79)
to be as busy as a bee	být pilný jako včelka (22)
to be as dead as a dodo	být pasé; být za zenitem; být konzerva
to be as gentle as a lamb	být mírný jako beránek (88)
to be as poor as church mice	být chudý jak kostelní myš (182)
to be as stubborn as a mule	paličatý jako beran (IC); tvrdohlavý jako mezek
to be barking up the wrong tree	být na falešné stopě (264); plakat na špatném hrobě (264); být na špatné adrese (20); plakat na

	cizím hrobě (20)
to be dropping like flies	padat jako mouchy (IC, 82)
to be like a bear with a sore head	být nabručený (120); koukat jak jezevec z díry (120)
to be like a bull in a china shop	být jako hrom do police (32); slon v porcelánu (32)
to be like a cat on a hot tin roof	být jako na trní (128)
to be like a fish out of water	být jako ryba na suchu (IC, 255)
to be like a red rag to a bull	být jako červená vlajka pro býka ; jako červený hadr pro býka
to be (like) water off a duck's back	Je to jako když hrách na stěnu hází. (273)
to be neither fish nor fowl	nebýt ani ryba , ani rak ; nebýt ani takový, ani makový (79)
to be no spring chicken	nebýt žádný zajíc (41); mít už svá léta (41); nebýt žádná mladice (IC); nebýt žádné kuře
to be packed like sardines	mačkat se jako sardinky
to be raining cats and dogs	padat nejen trakaře, ale i traktory (IC); lít jako z konve (38)
to be the bee's knees	být borec
to be the cat's whiskers	sníst všechnu moudrost světa (38); napařovat se (38); být skvělý/výborný/úžasný
to be up with the lark	<i>get up</i> ~ vstávat se slepicemi (92)
to beaver away (at something)	dřít jako mezek (S)
a big fish	velké zvíře (S); velká ryba
A bird in the hand (is worth two in the bush).	Co je doma, to se počítá. (IC, 274) Lepší vrabec v hrsti, nežli holub na střeše. (274)
a bird's-eye view (of something)	ptačí perspektiva (IC, 24)
a bird-brain	mít ptačí mozek (24)
the birds and the bees	jak to dělají včeličky
Birds of a feather flock together.	Vrána k vráně sedá, rovný rovného si hledá. (IC, 286)
a bitch	mrcha (IC); kurva (IC); děvka (IC)
the black sheep (of the family)	černá ovce rodiny (IC)
a bookworm	knihomol (IC)
bull-headed	tvrdohlavý (IC)
a bullshit	hovadina (IC); nesmysl (IC); pitomost (IC); kravina ; kecy (32); žvásty (32); pohádky (32); voloviny (32)
(to buy) a pig in a poke	koupit zajíce v pytli (177)
to buzz someone in	pustit někoho dovnitř
to buzz off	Běž! (<i>urgentně</i>) (IC); odchod (34)
a buzzer	bzučák (IC)
by a whisker	s odřenýma ušima; o fous ; o chlup (S)
a can of worms	<i>open</i> ~ píchnout do vosího hnízda (IC); zapeklitý problém (36)
can talk the hind leg(s) off a donkey	vymámit z jalové krávy tele (233)
(a case of) dog eat dog	člověk člověku vlkem

to cast pearls before swine	Je to jako házet perly sviním . (317)
a catnap	trochu prospat (IC); šlofik; zdřimnutí (S)
a cattle market	trh s bílým masem
catty	uštěpačný (IC); zlomyslný (S); škodolibý (S)
a chameleon	chameleon (IC)
to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom	hřát si na prsou hada (IC, 252)
a chicken and egg situation	Co bylo dřív/první - vejce nebo slepice ?
chicken feed	nic (IC); pakatel (41)
to chicken out (of something/doing something)	vzdát se (IC); ztratit odvalu (IC); vycouvat
the chickens come home to roost	Tak dlouho se chodí se džbánem pro vodu, až se ucho utrhne. Jak se do lesa volá, tak se z lesa ozývá.
to clam up (on someone)	držet jazyk za zuby (IC); zmlknout (IC)
a cold fish	studený jako psi čumák (IC); psi čumák (IC); <i>be as cold as a fish</i> být jako studený psi čumák (44)
to come out of one's shell	vylézt z ulity
a cow	kráva (<i>o ženě</i>) (IC)
to cry wolf	dělat planý poplach (51)
a cuckoo in the nest	kukaččí mládě/dítě
a culture vulture	člověk okázale dychtící po kulturním vyžití (S)
Curiosity killed the cat.	Nebud' zvědavý, budeš brzy starý. (276) Kdo se moc ptá, moc se dozví. (276) Zvědavost se nevyplácí. (276)
Do bears shit in the woods?	Sere medvěd v lese?
dog-tired	znavený (IC); utahaný (IC)
Don't count your chickens (before they're hatched).	Nechval dne před večerem. (277) Neříkej hop, dokud nepřeskočíš. (277)
Don't put the cart before the horse.	předbíhat událostem (IC); <i>positive variant</i> jít na co z opačného konce/popadnout co za špatný konec (188)
a donkey work	nevolnická otročina (IC); otročina (261)
donkey's year	celá věčnost
down the rabbit hole	x
an eager beaver	snaživec (21); horlivec (S); pilná včelička (S)
an early bird	ranní ptáče (IC, 24)
The early bird catches the worm.	<i>the 1st meaning</i> Ranní ptáče dál doskáče. (274) <i>the 2nd meaning</i> Kdo dřív přijde, ten dřív mele.
to feed/throw someone to the lions	hodit lvům (IC); předhodit někoho psům/vlkům/lvům
to ferret someone/something out	vypátrat (IC); vyčmuchat (S); vyčenichat (S); vysлідit (S)
to fight like cat(s) and dog(s)	být na sebe jako psi
Fine feathers make fine birds.	Šaty dělají člověka (286).
to fish for compliments	lovit komplimenty (79)
to fish in troubled waters	lovit v kalných vodách (79)
a flea market	bleší trh (IC)

to flog a dead horse	mlátit prázdnou slámu (128); zbytečně se namáhat (128)
a fly on the wall	be ~ dívat se komu do karet (82)
to frogmarch	vést s rukama za zády (S)
to get one's goat	být komu proti srsti (91)
Give a dog a bad name.	~ <i>and hang him</i> nasadit komu psí hlavu (94)
to give someone a buzz	cinknout někomu; zavolat někomu
to go ape	zešilet
to go to the dogs	přijít na mizinu/být na mizině (IC); jít od desíti k pěti (62)
goose bumps	husí kůže (IC); <i>goose flesh/pimples</i> husí kůže (104)
a guinea pig	pokusný králik (IC, 107)
Has the cat got your tongue?	Ztratil jsi řeč? (38)
to hatch something (up)	vymyslet; dát dohromady; zosnovat
to have a bee in one's bonnet	mít brouka v hlavě (112)
to have a frog in one's throat	mít nakřáplý hlas (237); mít knedlík v krku
to have a memory like an elephant	mít paměť jako slon ; mít sloní paměť
to have a whale of something	<i>a whale of</i> ukrutně (IC)
to have ants in one's pants	být neposedný (173); být jako na jehlách (115)
to have bigger/other fish to fry	mít jiné želízko v ohni (IC, 117)
to have butterflies (in one's stomach)	chvění kolem žaludku (IC); mít motýlky v břiše
to have to (go and) see a man about a horse	muset si něco zařídit; odskočit si
a hen night/party	babinec (174); dámská jízda (174); slepičinec
Hold your horses!	dej si pohov (IC); ne tak zhurta! (128); neunáhlej se! (127)
to horse about/around	dělat blbiny (128); jančit (128); chovat se jako janek (128)
Horses for courses.	účelově upravená taktika/plán (S)
hot enough to burn the polar bear's butt	být vedro na padnutí
to hound someone	pronásledovat (IC); dohnat někoho někam (IC)
I could eat a horse.	mám hlad jako vlk (128)
If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.	Kdo chce víc, nemá nic.
It's a dog's life.	nezáviděníhodný život (IC); <i>dog's life</i> psí život (IC, 62); život pod psa
a kangaroo court	soudní maškaráda (IC)
to keep the wolf from the door	odhánět bídu od dveří (260)
to kill the goose that lays the golden egg	zabít slepici , která nese zlatá vejce (138)
to kill two birds with one stone	vzít to při jednom (IC); zabít dvě mouchy jednou ranou (223)
A leopard can't/doesn't change its spots.	Lidská přirozenost se nezapře. (296) Sám sebe nezapřeš. (296)
Let sleeping dogs lie.	nechme to plavat (62); Nehas, co tě nepálí. (282)
to let the cat out of the bag	odkrýt karty (38); prořeknout se (38); vyzvonit co (prozradit) (38); vyžvanit (38); vybreptat co (38)

like a bat out of hell	jako šílenec (IC); jako blesk (20); jako by mu za zadkem hořela koudel (20)
like sheep	jako ovce
the lion's share	lví podíl (146)
A little bird told me (so).	doneslo se mi (24), si štěbetají ptáci na střeše
a lone wolf	vlk samotář (IC, 260)
to look like a drowned rat	být jako zmoklá slepice (149)
a male chauvinist pig	mužské šovinistické prase (IC)
a monkey business	machinace (IC); hlouposti (IC); koniny
a monkey suit	smoking
a night owl	noční pták (IC)
none of one's beeswax	nebýt něčí věc/starost; nebýt někomu do něčeho
to not look a gift horse in the mouth	darovanému koni na zuby nekoukej (IC, 293)
not room to swing a cat	nedá se tu ani pohnout (195); není tam k hnutí (38)
one swallow doesn't make a summer	Jedna vlaštovka jaro nedělá. (317)
a one-horse town	zapadákov (IC); Kocourkov (128)
an outbreak monkey	roznašeč bacilů
a paper tiger	pouze loutka
to parrot someone/something	papouškovat
parrot-fashion	nazpaměť
a party animal	zvíře (v dobrém slova smyslu)
pet	~ subject koníček (IC); ~ theory nejhýčkanější teorie (IC)
a pet	oblíbenec (IC); mazánek
a pig	čunák (IC); čunáček (IC); prase IC
to pigeonhole someone (as something)	zaškatulkovat někoho
Pigs might fly.	Nemaluj straky na vrbě. (308); kecy (177); žvásty (177); pohádky (177); věšet bulíky na nos
to play cat and mouse	hra na kočku a myš (IC); hrát si s někým jako kočka s myší (IC); cat-and-mouse game hrát si s někým jako kočka (179)
to pull a rabbit out of the hat	vytáhnout králíka z klobouku
puppy love	studentská známost (IC); dětská láska
to pussyfoot (about/around)	být nerozhodný (185)
to put/set the cat among the pigeons	"To jsem tomu dal." (IC)
to rabbit on (about someone/something)	mlít pantem (190); žvanit (190)
to ram something down someone's throat	vnucovat něco někomu; cpát něco někomu
to ram (something) into something	narvat to někam; nabourat
to run around like a headless chicken	lítat jako hadr na holi (197); běhat jako bezhlavé kuře
a sacrificial lamb	obětní beránek (IC, 141)
a scarecrow	strašák (o člověku) (IC)
to separate the sheep from the goats	tell the sheep from the goats vidět rozdíly mezi tím či oním (IC)
a shaggy-dog story	trapná historka

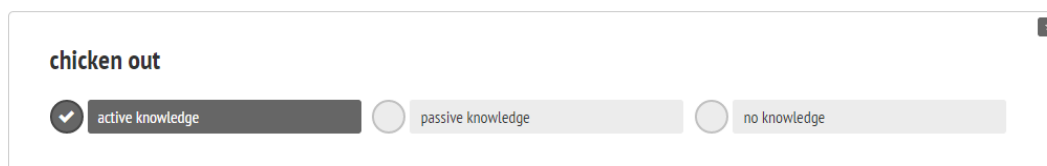
to shed/weep crocodile tears	prolévat krokodýlí slzy (IC, 234)
to smell a rat	pojmout podezření; mít zlou předtuchu (W); tušit zradu (W)
to smell fishy	<i>there is something fishy about it</i> za tím nevězí nic dobrého (79); smrdět průserem; za tím bude nějaká levárna
a snail mail	běžná/klasická/papírová pošta (S)
to squirrel something away	nakřečkovat si něco; našetřit
(straight) from the horse's mouth	z první ruky (128)
the straw that breaks the camel's back	něčí číše přetekla (IC); Poslední kapkou pohár přeteče. (316)
to swan	poflakovat se
the swansong	labutí píseň (konec slávy) (S)
a swine	pakáž (IC); sketa (IC); prasák (IC); svině (IC); sviňák (IC)
to take the bull by the horns	popadnout býka za rohy (IC); vzít věc za pravý konec (231)
to talk turkey	mluvit bez obalu (233)
there are plenty more fish in the sea	Pro jedno kvítí slunce nesvítí. (IC)
There's more than one way to skin a cat.	problém má zpravidla více řešení (W); všechny cesty vedou do Říma (W)
to raise like phoenix from the ashes	vstát jako bájný fénix z popela
to turn turtle	vzhůru nohama
a turtle neck (sweater)	rolák (IC)
an ugly duckling	ošklivé káčátko
until the cows come home	Dokud neopadá listí z dubu. (IC) až naprší a uschne (127); až do soudného dne (49)
vermin	verbež (IC); chamrad' (IC); havěť
a viper	zmije (IC)
to watch someone like a hawk	hlídat koho jako jestřáb (IC); hlídat koho jako ostříž (IC, 255)
When/While the cat's away (the mice will play).	Když kocour není doma, myši mají pré. (276)
a white elephant	danajský dar (257); zbytečná přítěž (258)
wild horses would not drag, make, etc. someone (do something)	nedostane mě tam ani párem volů (258)
a wolf in sheep's clothing	vlk v rouše beránčím (260)
a wolf whistle	obdivné hvízdnutí (IC)
wolfish	lačný (IC)
to work like a beaver/mule/horse	dřít se jako mezek (128); dřít se jako kůň
the world is one's oyster	svět někomu leží u nohou
to worm someone's way into something	vetřít se; nahlodat někoho
wouldn't hurt/harm a fly	neublížít ani kuřeti (IC); <i>he ~</i> neublížil by ani kuřeti/ani mouše (111)
wouldn't say boo to a goose	ani nepípnout
You can't teach an old dog new tricks.	Starého psa novým kouskům nenaučíš. (282)
a zebra crossing	přechod; zebra

3.3 QUESTIONNAIRE NO. 1 – NATIVE SPEAKERS

The questionnaire no. 1 was designed to find out which of the collected metaphors are used actively among the native speakers of the English language and are thus certainly useful to be known also among foreign learners of the English language. For this purpose, each of its items (metaphors) was presented along with the following three options from which respondents were supposed to choose only one.

- active knowledge
- passive knowledge
- no knowledge

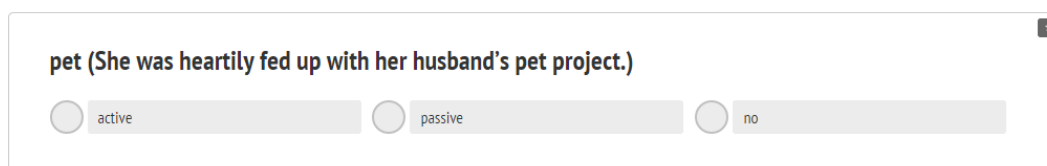
All fourteen respondents were instructed to perceive all the items as metaphors, i.e. as expressions whose meaning is figurative, not literal. They were asked to choose **active knowledge** in case that they know the given metaphor and use it actively when communicating with their friends, colleagues, family, etc., **passive knowledge** in case that they know the given metaphor, understand its meaning but do not use it actively when speaking or writing and **no knowledge** in case that they have never heard the given metaphor or/and are not able to perceive it figuratively. In case of possible ambiguity, the required meaning of a particular metaphor was demonstrated through an exemplary sentence. See the examples below.



chicken out

active knowledge passive knowledge no knowledge

The item presented along with three possible options one of which is already marked as an answer.



pet (She was heartily fed up with her husband's pet project.)

active passive no

The case of possible ambiguous meaning of a particular metaphor presented along with the exemplary sentence.

Before presenting the outcomes it is necessary to mention that at the beginning of this questionnaire all respondents were also asked to give the following information.

- name
- age

- place of birth
- other living destinations (including the length of the stay)
- profession

The original intention was to take these data into consideration, especially the territorial aspect was considered to be very important. However, as the brief assessment of the outcomes shows, it would lack any possible perspective since the individual answers are very varied and do not correspond to each other in terms of territorial correspondence. In other words, a particular metaphor is very often perceived differently by the native speakers born and living in the same country and on the other hand equally by the native speakers from different continents. As for the aspect of age the principle is similar. By way of illustration, in Table 3 see the comparisons of a degree of familiarity with two randomly chosen metaphors, *ram (something) into somebody/something* and *to turn turtle*, among the native speakers from four different countries – the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Ireland.

Table 3 The comparison of a degree of familiarity with two randomly chosen metaphors

Metaphor	<i>ram (sth) into sb/sth</i>	<i>to turn turtle</i>
Duncan (UK, 21)	active knowledge	no knowledge
Reuben (UK, 24)	passive knowledge	no knowledge
Mark (UK, 32)	active knowledge	active knowledge
David (UK, 34)	passive knowledge	passive knowledge
Zachary (UK, 39)	active knowledge	active knowledge
John (UK, 75)	active knowledge	active knowledge
Samantha (USA, 27)	active knowledge	no knowledge
Mike (USA, 30)	passive knowledge	passive knowledge
Christopher (USA, 51)	active knowledge	no knowledge
Eric (USA, 53)	active knowledge	active knowledge
Richard (USA, 54)	no knowledge	no knowledge
Ryan (USA, 54)	active knowledge	no knowledge
Christina (Canada, 49)	active knowledge	no knowledge
Colm (Ireland, 41)	no knowledge	no knowledge

The examples presented in the table above clearly demonstrate that the attributes such as age and a place of birth have very little to no relevance to the individual answers of respondents. Similarly, most of the other collected metaphors are also perceived variously, which only supports the thought mentioned. Besides, when analyzing English from the point of view of territorial differentiation, it is necessary to bear in mind that the boundary between the individual dialects of different nationalities, i.e. British,

American, Australian, etc. is not that as strict as it used to be earlier. In other words, the distinctions between the different nationalities in the English language appear to be fading away.

On the other hand a certain degree of correspondence between the answers of the native speakers who come from the same country is expected and it can be assumed that if a specific place of birth, i.e. a concrete state or a part of a country, was taken into consideration, the conclusions might be a bit different. Unfortunately, the data gained from fourteen respondents are not sufficient enough to elaborate on this assumption and it is not even desirable for the purposes of this thesis. Moreover, every single language is a very flexible phenomenon which is able to adapt to the merest change and that is why it would be really difficult to analyze it in a strict isolation from the influence of its various dialects or other languages. As a consequence of all these arguments, only those metaphors that are a part of active vocabulary of most of the respondents are used for further examination.

3.3.1 Assessment of the questionnaire no. 1

3.3.1.1 Assessment of respondents' personal information

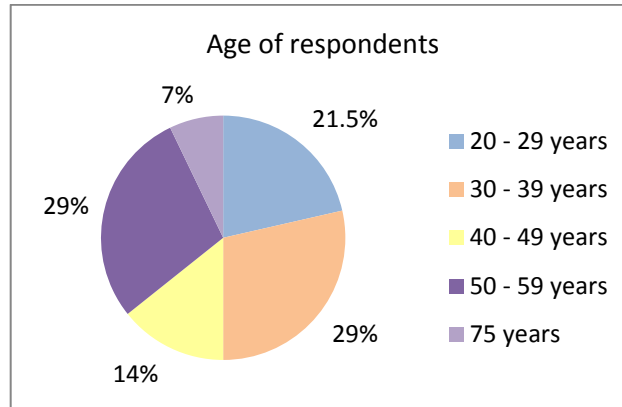
For the reasons mentioned above, the data gained at the beginning of the questionnaire are treated as information that serves simply as a source of orientation. The following commentary is therefore only very brief.

In general, the age of respondents ranges mainly from 21 to 54, one respondent is older, 75 years of age. The age of 3 (21.4%) of 14 respondents ranges from 20 to 29 years, the age of 4 (28.6%) of 14 respondents ranges from 30 to 39 years, the age of 2 (14.3%) of 14 respondents ranges from 40 to 49 years, the age of 4 (28.6%) of 14 respondents ranges from 50 to 59 years, the age of 1 (7.1%) of 14 respondents is 75 years. See the Table 4 and Figure 2 below. The language of younger generations is considered to adapt more easily to different changes, modifications, neologisms etc. and since this thesis aims to deal with language as current and alive as possible, it is positive that most of the respondents are younger than 50 years of age. On the other hand, as it was previously mentioned, the aspect of age is not that determinant for the final results, at least in the case when the number of respondents is quite low and thus not representative.

Table 4 Age of respondents

Age of respondents	Occurrence	%
20 – 29 years of age	3	21.4
30 – 39 years of age	4	28.6
40 – 49 years of age	2	14.3
50 – 59 years of age	4	28.6
75 years of age	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Figure 2 Age of respondents

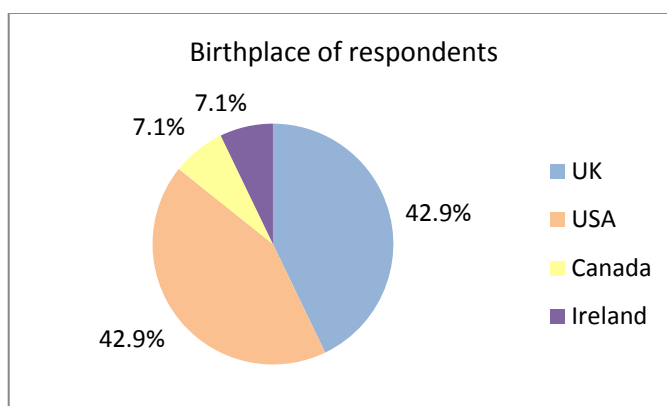


As for the place of birth, most of the respondents come either from the United Kingdom or the United States; 6 (42.9%) of 14 respondents come from United Kingdom and 6 (42.9%) of 14 respondents come from the United States. Only 1 (7.1%) of 14 respondents comes from Ireland and 1 (7.1%) of 14 respondents comes from Canada. See the proportion of different places of birth in Table 5 and Figure 3 below.

Table 5 Birthplace of respondents

Birthplace of respondents	Occurrence	%
UK	6	42.9
USA	6	42.9
Canada	1	7.1
Ireland	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Figure 3 Birthplace of respondents

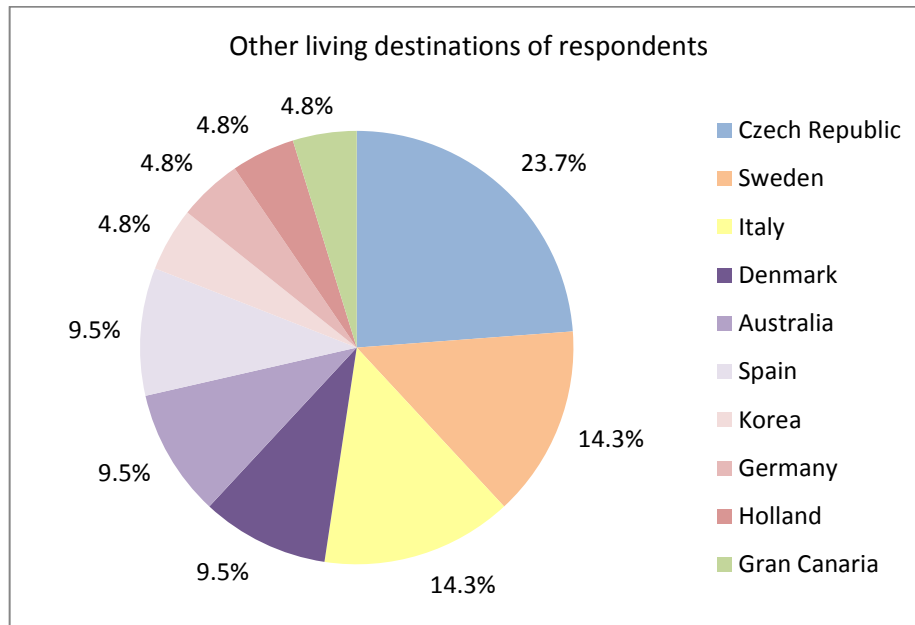


The next item of the questionnaire – other living destinations (including the length of the stay) offers interesting answers. Most of the respondents state at least one other living destination, which only supports the previously mentioned idea that at these times when travelling has become a natural part of our lives it would be really difficult to analyze any language in isolation. Of 14 respondents, 5 (23.7%) stated Czech Republic as other living destination, 3 (14.3%) Sweden, 3 (14.3%) Italy, 2 (9.5%) Denmark, 2 (9.5%) Australia, 2 (9.5%) Spain, 1 (4.8%) Korea, 1 (4.8%) Germany, 1 (4.8%) Holland and 1 (4.8%) Gran Canaria. See Table 6 and Figure 4 below.

Table 6 Other living destinations of respondents

Other living destinations	Occurrence	%
Czech Republic	5	23.7
Sweden	3	14.3
Italy	3	14.3
Denmark	2	9.5
Australia	2	9.5
Spain	2	9.5
Korea	1	4.8
Germany	1	4.8
Holland	1	4.8
Gran Canaria	1	4.8
Total number of answers	21	100.0

Figure 4 Other living destinations of respondents

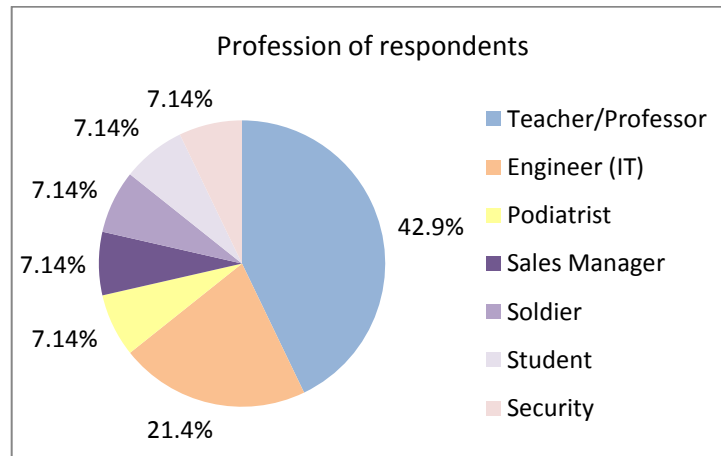


The range of stated professions is not that various as the answers to the previous item of the questionnaire. Of 14 respondents, 6 (42.9%) are teachers or professors, which is viewed as a good aspect more or less influencing the results of this questionnaire since teachers/professors are considered to be well-educated people whose language should be highly representative and rich. Of 14 respondents, 3 (14.3%) are engineers, 1 (7.14%) is a podiatrist, 1 (7.14%) is a sales manager, 1 (7.14%) is a soldier, 1 (7.14%) is a student and 1 (7.14%) is a security guard. See Table 7 and Figure 5 below.

Table 7 Profession of respondents

Profession	Occurrence	%
Teacher/Professor	6	42.9
Engineer (IT)	3	21.4
Podiatrist	1	7.14
Sales manager	1	7.14
Soldier	1	7.14
Student	1	7.14
Security guard	1	7.14
Total	14	100.0

Figure 5 Profession of respondents



3.3.1.2 Assessment of respondents' familiarity with 'animal' metaphors

The following chapter aims to present the data gained in the main part of the questionnaire described above. These data show a degree of familiarity of the respondents with the collected metaphors, which are marked either as a part of their active or passive knowledge or as an unfamiliar concept. Only the overall results are presented in this part of the thesis. The individual outcomes connected with each particular metaphor are attached as Appendix no. 2. Moreover, in order to present the overall result in a well-arranged way, respondents are divided into 6 categories. Each category then represents a particular range of number of 14 respondents in the following manner: 0 respondents, 1 – 3 respondents, 4 – 6 respondents, 7 – 9 respondents, 10 – 13 respondents, 14 respondents. Notice that only the endpoints of the scale are kept separately since they are considered to be especially interesting.

3.3.1.2.1 Active knowledge

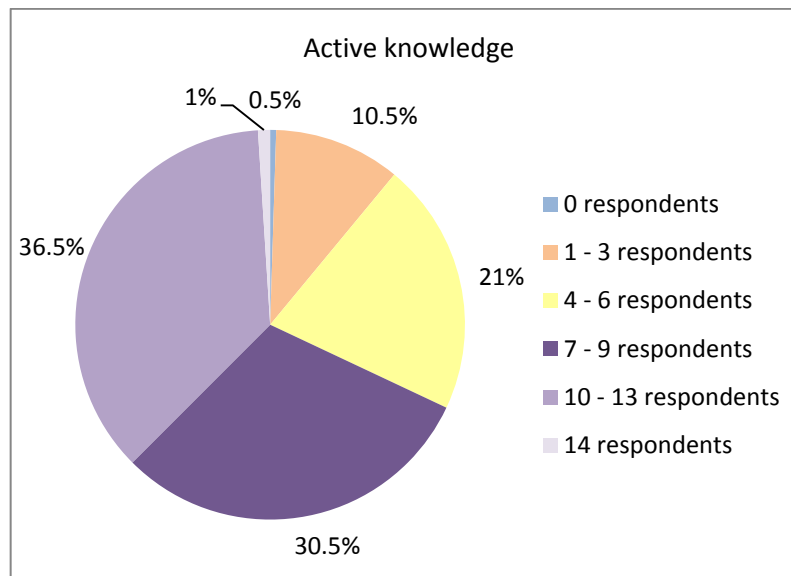
As stated above, respondents were asked to choose **active knowledge** in the case that they know the given metaphor and use it actively when talking to or writing with their friends, colleagues, family, etc. See the results in Table 8 and Figure 6 below.

Table 8 Number of metaphors marked as a part of active knowledge

Number of respondents	Metaphors marked as actively used	%
0 respondents	1	0.5
1 – 3 respondents	21	10.5
4 – 6 respondents	42	21.0
7 – 9 respondents	61	30.5
10 – 13 respondents	73	36.5

14 respondents	2	1.0
Total	200	100.0

Figure 6 Number of metaphors marked as a part of active knowledge



The majority of the metaphors in this category, precisely 136 (68%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as actively used by more than a half (or exactly a half) of 14 respondents; 61 (30.5%) of 200 metaphors by 7 – 9 respondents, 73 (36.5%) of 200 metaphors by 10 – 13 respondents, and 2 (1%) of 200 metaphors by 14 respondents. It shows that the choice of metaphors was rather successful and that the figurative language is undoubtedly an essential part of everyday communication.

As a matter of interest, these two metaphors were marked as a part of their active knowledge by all the respondents.

I could eat a horse.

a party animal

It is certainly useful to mention also the metaphors that belong to the ‘10 – 13 respondents’ category and were marked as actively used by 13 respondents, i.e. the upper limit of this scope, since they are evidently broadly used among the native speakers of the English language. See the examples below.

an ass

a bird-s eye view

a bitch

a bookworm

a bullshit
a catnap
to chicken out (of something/of doing something)
to cry wolf
goose bumps
to kill two birds with one stone
to pussyfoot (about/around)
to ram something down someone's throat
wouldn't hurt/harm a fly

The rest of the collected metaphors, i.e. 64 (32%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as actively used by less than a half of the respondents, 1 (0.5%) of 200 metaphors by 0 respondents, 21 (10.5%) of 200 metaphors by 1 – 3 respondents, and 42 (21%) of 200 metaphors by 4 – 6 respondents. *To frogmarch* is the only metaphor that was not marked as actively used by anyone.

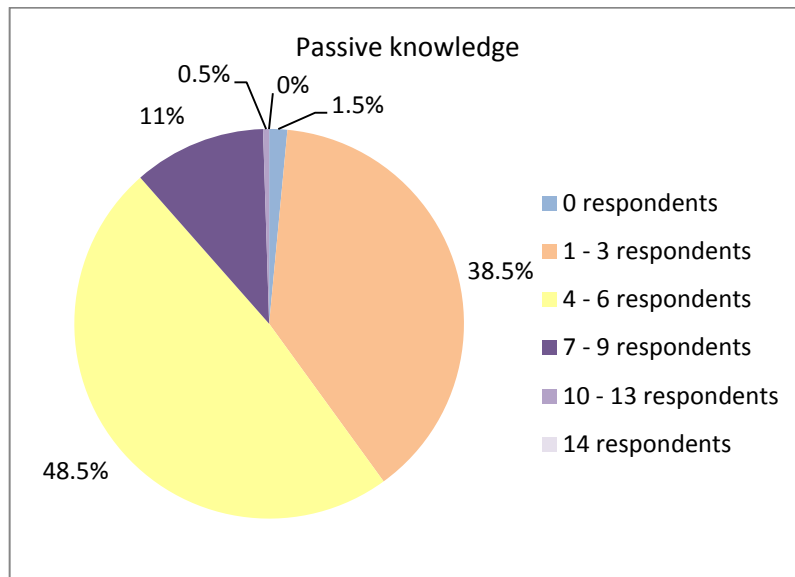
3.3.1.2.2 *Passive knowledge*

Respondents were asked to choose **passive knowledge** in the case that they know the given metaphor, are able to comprehend its meaning but do not use it actively when speaking or writing. Yet, they encounter metaphors placed into this category when reading or listening to other people. See the results in Table 9 and Figure 7 below.

Table 9 Number of metaphors marked as a part of passive knowledge

Number of respondents	Metaphors marked as passively used	%
0 respondents	3	1.5
1 – 3 respondents	77	38.5
4 – 6 respondents	97	48.5
7 – 9 respondents	22	11.0
10 – 13 respondents	1	0.5
14 respondents	0	0.0
Total	200	100.0

Figure 7 Number of metaphors marked as a part of passive knowledge



The majority of the metaphors in this category, precisely 177 (88.5%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as passively used by less than a half of respondents; 3 (1.5%) of 200 metaphors by 0 respondents, 77 (38.5%) of 200 metaphors by 1 – 3 respondents, and 97 (48.5%) of 200 metaphors by 4 – 6 respondents. It shows that the passive knowledge of the collected metaphors is not that common among the native speakers of the English language. In other words, most of the respondents chose a different category for them than ‘passive knowledge’ and given the results connected with the ‘active knowledge’ presented above and ‘no knowledge’ presented below, it is more than appropriate to conclude that ‘active knowledge’ category is the one chosen by the majority of the respondents in most of the cases.

The rest of the collected metaphors, i.e. 23 (11.5%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as passively used by more than a half (or exactly a half) of the respondents; 22 (11%) of 200 metaphors by 7 – 9 respondents, 1 (0.5%) of 200 metaphors by 10 – 13 respondents, and 0 (0%) of 200 metaphors by 14 respondents. It is definitely useful to know the meaning of these metaphors but it is not necessary to be able to use them actively in everyday conversation. See some of the examples below.

- 10 of 14 respondents
a cuckoo in the nest
- 9 of 14 respondents

to fish in troubled waters

(to buy) a pig in a poke

- 8 of 14 respondents

to ape someone/something

to be like a cat on hot tin roof

a bird-brain

the chickens come home to roost

to hatch something (up)

to look like a drowned rat

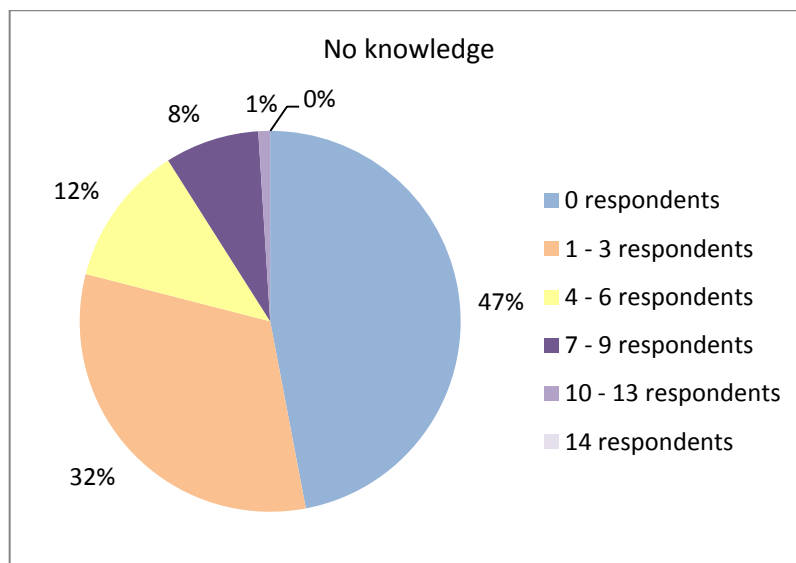
3.3.1.2.3 No knowledge

And finally, respondents were asked to choose **no knowledge** in the case that they have never heard or read the given metaphor and/or are not able to perceive it figuratively, i.e. do not understand its metaphorical meaning. See the results in Table 10 and Figure 8 below.

Table 10 Number of metaphors marked as unfamiliar concepts

Number of respondents	Metaphors marked as unknown	%
0 respondents	94	47.0
1 – 3 respondents	64	32.0
4 – 6 respondents	24	12.0
7 – 9 respondents	16	8.0
10 – 13 respondents	2	1.0
14 respondents	0	0.0
Total	200	100.0

Figure 8 Number of metaphors marked as unfamiliar concepts



The majority of the metaphors in this category, precisely 182 (91%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as unknown or not understood by less than a half of the respondents; 94 (47%) of 200 metaphors by 0 respondents, 64 (32%) of 200 metaphors by 1 – 3 respondents, and 24 (12%) of 200 metaphors by 4 – 6 respondents. It is very positive that nearly in a half of the cases respondents chose a different category. It means that at least nearly a half of the collected metaphors are used among the native speakers of English, either actively or passively. The number of metaphors marked as unknown by 1 – 3 respondents only is quite high as well.

The rest of the collected metaphors, i.e. 18 (9%) of 200 collected metaphors, were marked as unknown by more than a half (or exactly a half) of the respondents, 16 (8%) of 200 metaphors by 7 – 9 respondents, 2 (1%) of 200 metaphors by 10 – 13 respondents, 0 (0%) of 200 metaphors by 14 respondents. It is not useful to know these metaphors since the comprehension of their meaning evidently causes problems even to the native speakers of the English language. Since the influence of territorial differentiation of English vocabulary and age of the respondents was proved to be very low and not correspondent with the actual outcomes, other aspects must be taken into consideration when detecting the reason why some of the metaphors are not used actively and/or passively by all of the respondents but remain unfamiliar for minor or major part of them. Before presenting these aspects, see the concrete cases below.

- 7 of 14 respondents

A barking dog never bites. (proverb)

to be up with the lark (old-fashioned)

a donkey work (informal)

donkey's year (informal)

If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

- 8 of 14 respondents

to be like a bear with sore head (informal)

to frogmarch

Horses for courses.

one swallow doesn't make a summer (saying)

parrot-fashion

a scarecrow

to turn turtle

- 9 of 14 respondents

to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom

Fine feathers make fine birds. (proverb)

a viper (formal)

wolfish

- 10 of 14 respondents

hot enough to burn the polar bear's butt (rural)

- 11 of 14 respondents

an outbreak monkey

3.3.2 Possible factors influencing the familiarity/unfamiliarity of the collected metaphors

It is necessary to mention that the fact whether a particular metaphor is familiar to someone or not is very subjective and can be influenced by many factors. From those factors that might be viewed objectively the following should be mentioned.

3.1.2.1 Stylistic differentiation of English vocabulary

From the stylistic point of view there are informal expressions on one hand and very formal on the other. Informal expressions such as *a donkey work*, *donkey's year* or *to be like a bear with sore head* are not expected to be known by everybody. As stated above, not even age influences the answers on familiarity/unfamiliarity of these metaphors (or the collected metaphors in general) among the native speakers of English. Though, informal language is very rich, variable and flexible, which is why it is very probable that some of its lexical units are known and used by some people, but are not familiar to others.

On the other hand there are formal expressions such as *a viper* and lexical units strongly inclining to poetic language, mostly proverbs or sayings, such as the following.

A barking dog never bites.

Fine feathers make fine birds.

one swallow doesn't make a summer.

Even though most of the proverbs and sayings originally came into existence within the folk language and are thus an important part of everyday communication, their occurrence is lately restricted mainly to literature, especially poetry or fiction, since from the point of view of younger generations they are slowly becoming old-fashioned and not worth learning and remembering. Knowledge of these metaphors then strongly depends on one's level of education, book-learning in particular, or on the language of the people around them. Unfortunately, the trend of the modern society is rather to avoid reading poetry or classic fiction, thus it is almost impossible for many people to encounter metaphors of the similar kind.

3.1.2.2 Social differentiation of English vocabulary

There is a difference in familiarity of certain metaphors also from the point of view of social differentiation, i.e. their usage might be restricted to a certain social environment, a group of people connected by work or interests. For instance, the metaphor *to frogmarch* is expected to be used actively especially among policemen and the metaphor *to turn turtle* among sailors. Similarly, as in the previous type of differentiation, the influence of one's education, range of general knowledge and the language of the people around them is also very important.

3.3.3 Results – a final comparison

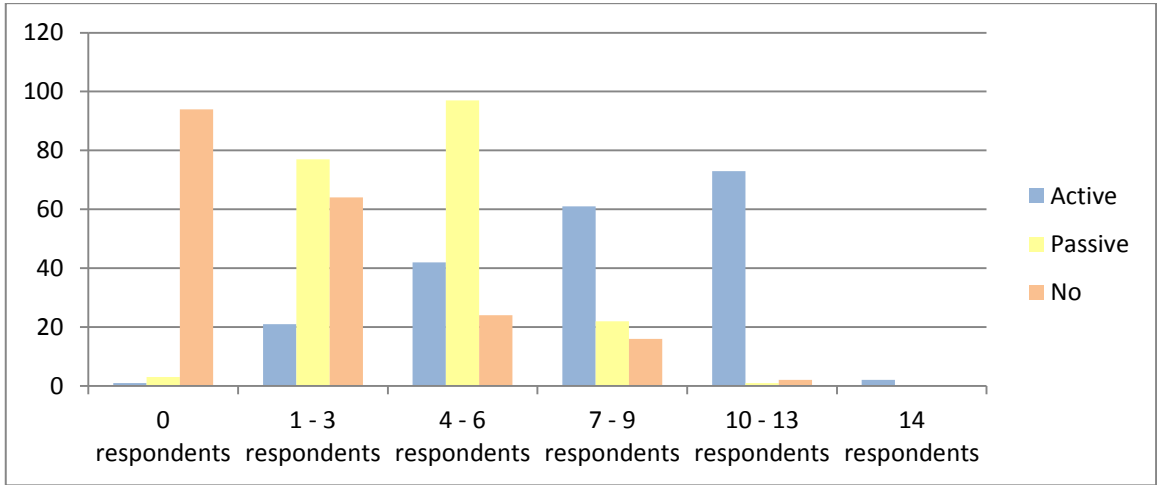
From Table 11 and Figure 9 below it is evident that with the increasing number of respondents also the number of metaphors marked as actively used (the only exception is the number of 14 respondents) increases and on the other hand the number of metaphors marked as unfamiliar regularly declines. The number of metaphors marked as passively used increases at first and then rapidly declines when the number of respondents reaches exactly its half. As was mentioned above, these outcomes show that the choice of the collected metaphors was rather successful and that the figurative language is undoubtedly an essential part of everyday communication of the native speakers of English.

Table 11 Results – a final comparison

Number of respondents	Active knowledge	Passive knowledge	No knowledge
0 respondents	1	3	94
1 – 3 respondents	21	77	64
4 – 6 respondents	42	97	24

7 – 9 respondents	61	22	16
10 – 13 respondents	73	1	2
14 respondents	2	0	0
Total number of metaphors			200

Figure 9 Results – a final comparison



3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE NO. 2 – CZECH SPEAKERS

The questionnaire no. 2 contains 36 items (animal metaphors) that are marked as actively used by most of the native speakers of English in the questionnaire no. 1. The aim of this questionnaire was to find out which of the listed metaphors are known also among the Czech speakers, advanced learners and/or teachers/lecturers of the English language. For this purpose, each of its items was presented along with three different contexts from which respondents were supposed to choose the only possible one. To minimize the risk of deducing the meaning from context, the respondents were asked not to guess and leave the question (item) unanswered (unmarked) in case they did not know the right answer. The final number of respondents of this questionnaire is 80. See the example of one of the items below. The whole questionnaire is attached as Appendix no. 3.

a fly on the wall

Nah, it's just a fly on the wall. You don't need to worry about it.

Stop being a fly on the wall and make yourself useful! This place isn't going to build itself.

I would so much like to be a fly on the wall when Mike tells him he'd crashed his car.

Note that the style used in this questionnaire imitates spoken, sometimes even colloquial language. The informal style corresponds with the communication situations in which the chosen metaphors occur most often.

3.4.1 The selection of metaphors

The selection of metaphors that constitute this questionnaire proceeds not only from the outcome of the questionnaire no. 1, but also from the part of this thesis presenting the comparison of the collected English metaphors and their Czech equivalents. Two main selection criteria were followed in order to narrow down the original number of 200 collected metaphors to the final number of 36. Firstly, only those metaphors that were marked as actively used by more than 10 (10 included) of 14 native speakers were singled out since they are considered to be useful to be known also among foreign learners of the English language. And secondly, only those metaphors that are semantically opaque for a Czech speaker, i.e. their literal translation from

English to Czech does not correspond with the Czech equivalents and their meaning, thus, cannot be deduced from the Czech translation, were chosen as applicable.

3.4.2 Assessment of the questionnaire no. 2

3.4.2.1 Age of respondents and their current occupation

Information about the age of respondents and their current occupation is not included among in the data that would influence the actual outcome of the questionnaire no. 2 and thus serves rather as a source of additional knowledge about the respondents.

The age of respondents ranges from 20 to 45. See Table 12 with a complete overview of respondents' years of age below; the number of occurrence of a particular age among the respondents is included in the round brackets.

Table 12 An overview of respondent's years of age, occurrence among the respondents included

20 (1x)	25 (13x)	32 (1x)	39 (1x)
21 (10x)	26 (4x)	33 (1x)	41 (1x)
22 (17x)	27 (3x)	34 (1x)	42 (2x)
23 (6x)	28 (2x)	35 (3x)	45 (1x)
24 (10x)	30 (1x)	36 (2x)	
Total number of respondents			80

I would assume that the older the respondents are, the bigger the possibility that they are acquainted with a particular metaphor is. However, this assumption cannot be generalized since there are undoubtedly many other aspects that influence whether a particular metaphor is familiar or not. The following factors may be considered to be principally important; all of them are based on the experience with the English language.

- the length of the study and usage of English
- the frequency of the usage of English
- the purposes of the usage of English
- whether the student is self-educating himself/herself in English or not
- whether the student is in touch with native speakers of English or not

There are certainly many other factors – some of them more general and common on one hand, some of them very individual on the other – that influence whether a student knows a particular metaphor or not. However, since the aim of this

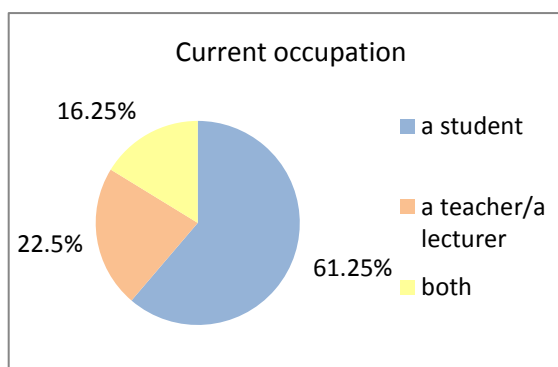
questionnaire is to find out which of the listed metaphors are known among the Czech speakers rather from the general point of view, any detailed examination of these factors would be irrelevant for the purposes of this thesis.

As for the current occupation of the respondents, it is necessary to mention that the target group was chosen in advance. Since the importance lies in an appropriate level of English, only those respondents who are considered to be devoted to the study of this language were chosen. As a follow-up to this condition, students of English, especially those who are currently studying the third, the fourth or the fifth year at the university, or teachers/lecturers of English were addressed. Thus, three groups of respondents were created; students, teachers/lecturers or both, i.e. students as well as teachers/lecturers. See Table 13 and corresponding Figure 10 below.

Table 13 Current occupation of the respondents

Current occupation	Number of respondents	%
a student	49	61.25
a teacher/a lecturer	18	22.50
both	13	16.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 10 Current occupation of the respondents



3.4.2.2 Assessment of respondents' familiarity with 'animal' metaphors

The aim of this chapter is to present the data gained in the main part of the questionnaire no. 2. Each of the carefully selected metaphors constituting this questionnaire is presented along with the information about how many of the Czech respondents are familiar with its meaning and how many are not. The respondents are considered to know a particular metaphor in the case that they have chosen the only context of the three suggested in which a given metaphor is used correctly as for its meaning. And on the other hand, they are considered to not know a particular metaphor

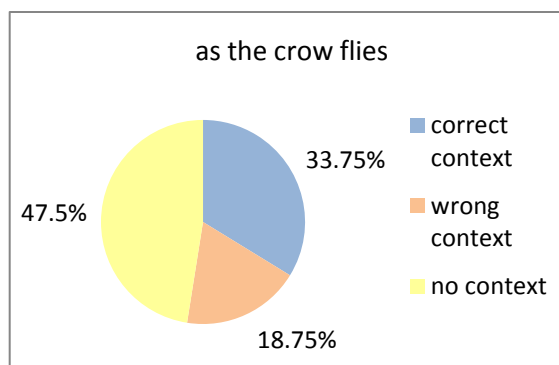
in the case that they have chosen one of the two wrong contexts suggested or in the case where they have left the item unmarked.

1. **AS THE CROW FLIES:** The metaphor *as the crow flies* is known among 27 (33.75%) of 80 respondents, 15 (18.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 38 (47.50%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 14 and corresponding Figure 11 below.

Table 14 As the crow flies

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	27	33.75
wrong	15	18.75
no	38	47.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 11 As the crow flies

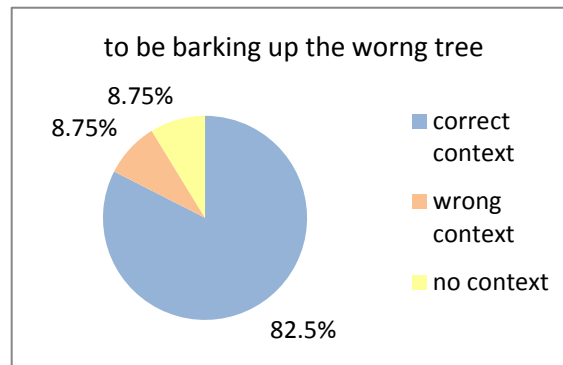


2. **TO BE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE:** The metaphor *to be barking up the wrong tree* is known among 66 (82.50%) of 80 respondents, 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 15 and corresponding Figure 12 below. I assume that the combination of the facts that it is very similar to its Czech equivalent in terms of formal structure and that one of the words constituting this structure is the same as for its literal meaning largely contributes to the widespread knowledge of this metaphor among the Czech speakers. Compare *to be barking up the wrong tree* and *plakat na špatném hrobě*.

Table 15 To be barking up the wrong tree

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	66	82.50
wrong	7	8.75
no	7	8.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 12 To be barking up the wrong tree

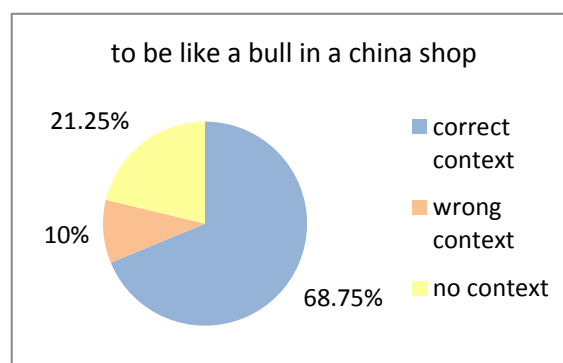


3. TO BE LIKE A BULL IN A CHINA SHOP: The metaphor *to be like a bull in a china shop* is known among 55 (68.75%) of 80 respondents, 8 (10%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 17 (21.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 26 and corresponding Figure 13 below. Even though this English metaphor does not fully correspond with its Czech literal translation, the comprehension of it is easier for the Czech speakers for the same reasons mentioned in the previous case, i.e. the formal structure of this metaphor and one of its Czech equivalents is very similar and one of the words constituting this structure is the same as for its literal meaning. Compare *to be like a bull in a china shop* and *být jako slon v porcelánu*. Moreover, the animals *a bull* and *an elephant* (slon) have a lot of common attributes such as clumsiness, proportion or dangerousness that presumably influence the way people visualize this concept in general.

Table 16 To be like a bull in a china shop

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	55	68.75
wrong	8	10.00
no	17	21.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 13 To be like a bull in a china shop

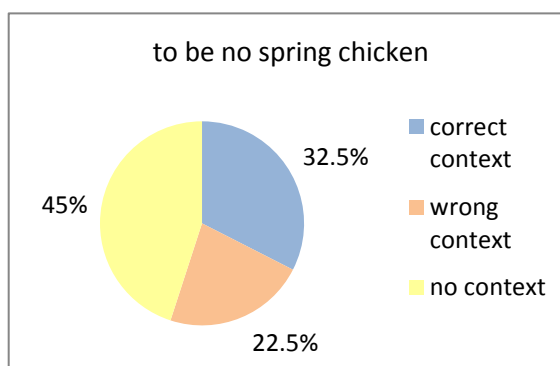


4. TO BE NO SPRING CHICKEN: The metaphor *to be no spring chicken* is known among 26 (32.5%) of 80 respondents, 18 (22.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 36 (45%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 17 and corresponding Figure 14 below. It is worth mentioning that 17 (21.25%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *c) Stop feeding me this nonsense as I can see right through you. I'm no spring chicken, you know.* For the Czech speakers, it may seem misleading since the meaning of one of the Czech equivalents of the metaphor *to be no spring chicken* is slightly wider than the meaning of the English version. While the English metaphor refers only to the age of a person, the Czech equivalent *nebyť žádné kuře* covers various connotations connected with this aspect such as experience or knowledge.

Table 17 To be no spring chicken

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	26	32.50
wrong	18	22.50
no	36	45.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 14 To be no spring chicken



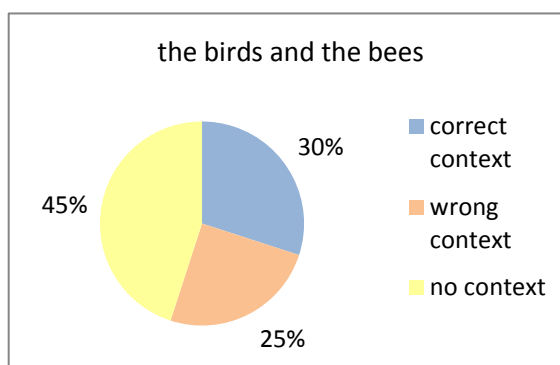
5. THE BIRDS AND THE BEES: The metaphor *the birds and the bees* is known among 24 (30%) of 80 respondents, 20 (25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 36 (45%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 18 and corresponding Figure 15 below. Surprisingly, 17 (21.25%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *c) That place was completely jammed. It was like the birds and the bees all over the place.* The possible explanation of this answer is the power of association. The image of the flock of birds and swarm of bees may imply the chaos typical of crowded places. Moreover, also the literal translation to the Czech

language may cause the confusion since the bees as insect are very close to the flies in the Czech simile *být někoho někde jako much*.

Table 18 The birds and the bees

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	24	30.00
wrong	20	25.00
no	36	45.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 15 The birds and the bees

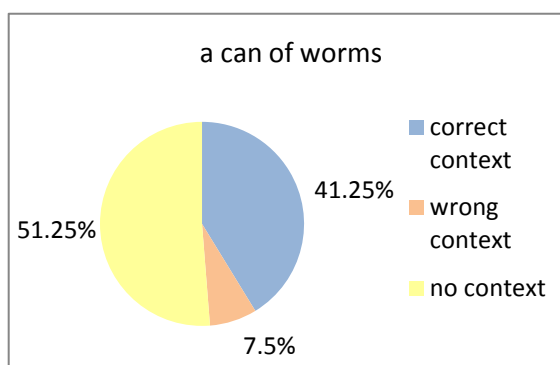


6. **A CAN OF WORMS:** The metaphor *a can of worms* is known among 33 (41.25%) of 80 respondents, 6 (7.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 41 (51.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 19 and corresponding Figure 16 below.

Table 19 A can of worms

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	33	41.25
wrong	6	7.50
no	41	51.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 16 A can of worms

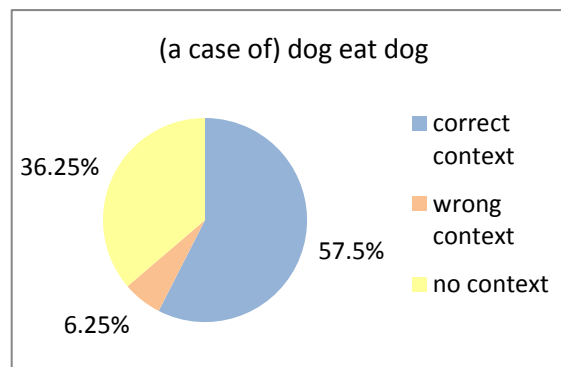


7. **(A CASE OF) DOG EAT DOG:** The metaphor (*a case of*) *dog eat dog* is known among 46 (57.5%) of 80 respondents, 5 (6.25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 29 (36.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 20 and corresponding Figure 17 below. It is one of the metaphors that seem to be quite familiar to the Czech speakers.

Table 20 (a case of) dog eat dog

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	46	57.50
wrong	5	6.25
no	29	36.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 17 (a case of) dog eat dog

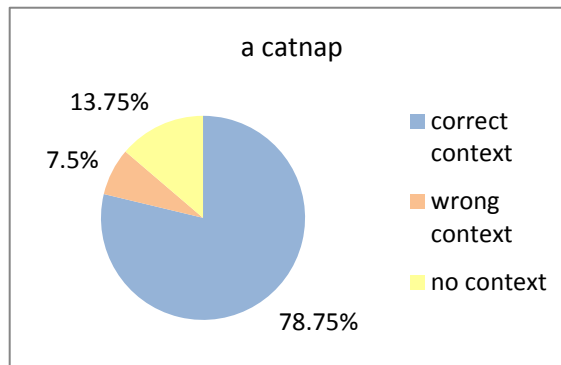


8. **A CATNAP:** The metaphor *a catnap* is known among 63 (78.75%) of 80 respondents, 6 (7.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 11 (13.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 21 and corresponding Figure 18 below. The comprehension of this metaphor is expected to be easier due to the literal meaning of the word *nap* which is supposed to be generally known among the Czech speakers.

Table 21 A catnap

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	63	78.75
wrong	6	7.50
no	11	13.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 18 A catnap

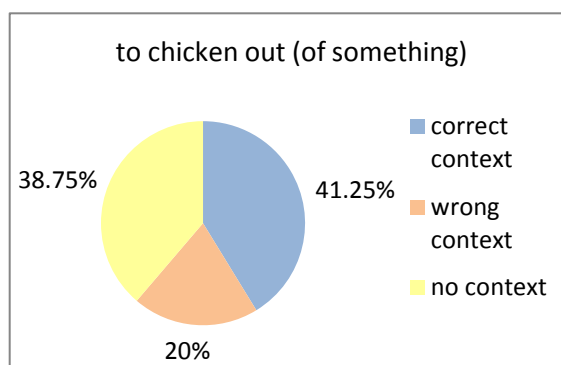


9. TO CHICKEN OUT (OF SOMETHING): The metaphor *to chicken out (of something)* is known among 33 (41.25%) of 80 respondents, 16 (20%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 31 (38.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See table and corresponding figure below. It is worth mentioning that 15 (18.75%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *a) The girls in my class always chicken out about everything. I can't listen to them anymore.* I assume that it is a result of association and most importantly of the influence of the Czech language on the comprehension of the English language. On the basis of that, the metaphor *chicken out* may be connected with the Czech metaphors such as *kvokat (klábosit)* or *být jako slepice* and thus perceived in the wrong way.

Table 22 To chicken out (of something)

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	33	41.25
wrong	16	20.00
no	31	38.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 19 To chicken out (of something)

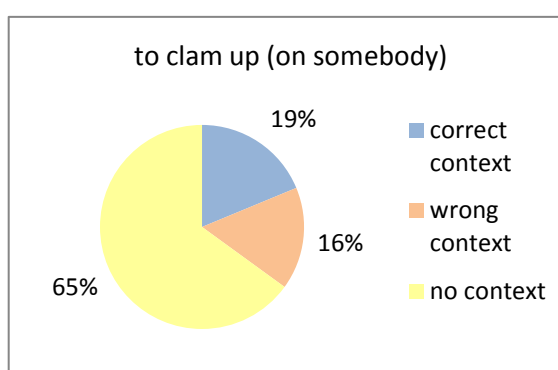


10. TO CLAM UP (ON SOMEBODY): The metaphor *to clam up (on somebody)* is known among 15 (18.75) of 80 respondents, 13 (16.25) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 52 (65%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 23 and corresponding Figure 20 below.

Table 23 To camp up (on somebody)

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	15	18.75
wrong	13	16.25
no	52	65.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 20 To clam up (on somebody)

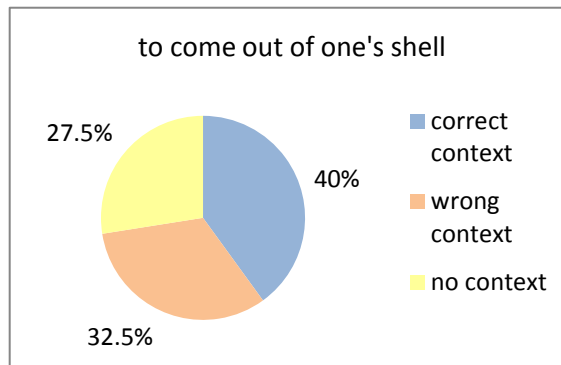


11. TO COME OUT OF ONE'S SHELL: The metaphor *to come out of one's shell* is known among 32 (40%) of 80 respondents, 26 (32.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 22 (27.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 24 and corresponding Figure 21 below. Interestingly, 21 (26.25%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *a) Dan finally came out of his shell and told us about his homosexuality*. These respondents most likely confused this metaphor with the metaphor *to come out of the closet* or simply *to come out*.

Table 24 To come out of one's shell

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	32	40.00
wrong	26	32.50
no	22	27.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 21 To come out of one's shell

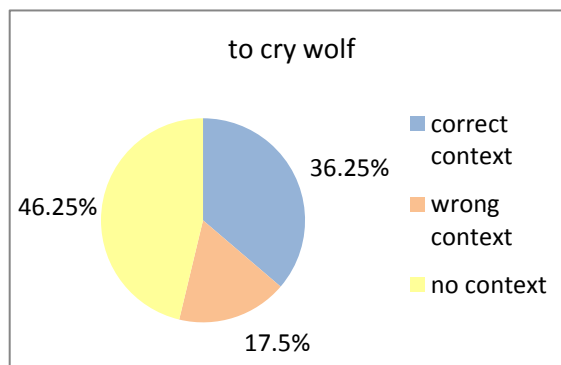


12. TO CRY WOLF: The metaphor *to cry wolf* is known among 29 (36.25%) of 80 respondents, 14 (17.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 37 (46.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 25 and corresponding Figure 22 below. Again, it is worth mentioning that 11 (13.75%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *a) She cried wolf, everybody within 30 metres could easily hear her*. I assume that it is a result of the power of association.

Table 25 To cry wolf

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	29	36.25
wrong	14	17.50
no	37	46.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 22 To cry wolf



13. DO BEARS SHIT IN THE WOODS?: The metaphor *Do bears shit in the woods?* is known among 28 (35%) of 80 respondents, 4 (5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 48 (60%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 26 and corresponding Figure 23 below.

Table 26 Do bears shit in the woods?

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	28	35.00
wrong	4	5.00
no	48	60.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 23 Do bears shit in the woods?

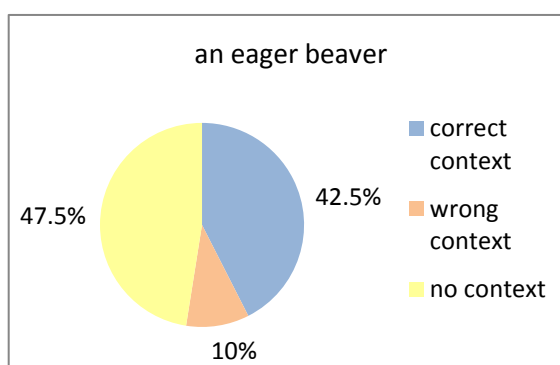


14. AN EAGER BEAVER: The metaphor *an eager beaver* is known among 34 (42.5%) of 80 respondents, 8 (10%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 38 (47.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 27 and corresponding Figure 24 below. Admittedly in the process of the comprehension of the meaning of the metaphor *an eager beaver*, the translation to the Czech language is very helpful. Moreover, the attributes of a beaver such as diligence and eagerness are undoubtedly shared among the English speakers as well as the Czech learners of the English language.

Table 27 An eager beaver

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	34	42.50
wrong	8	10.00
no	38	47.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 24 An eager beaver

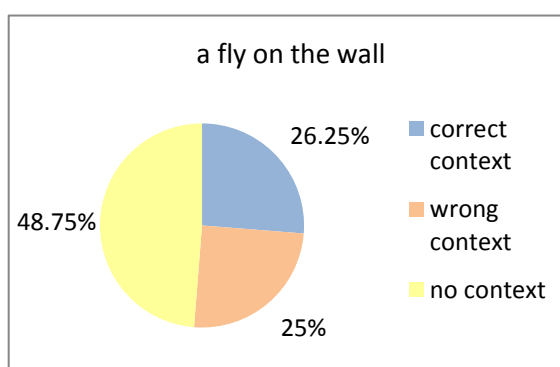


15. A FLY ON THE WALL: The metaphor *the fly on the wall* is known among 21 (26.25%) of 80 respondents, 20 (25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 39 (48.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 28 and corresponding Figure 25 below. Surprisingly, 12 (15%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *b) Stop being a fly on the wall and make yourself useful! This place isn't going to build itself.* It is possible that the image of motionless fly on the wall implies someone who does nothing but watch others work.

Table 28 A fly on the wall

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	21	26.25
wrong	20	25.00
no	39	48.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 25 A fly on the wall



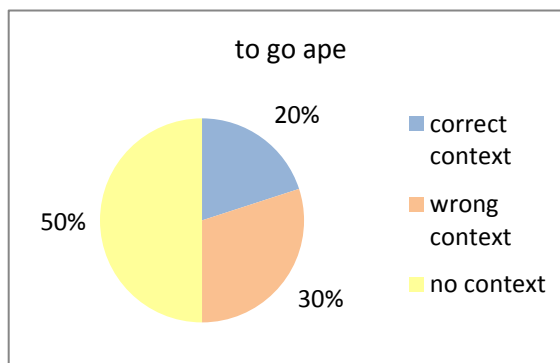
16. TO GO APE: The metaphor *to go ape* is known among 16 (20%) of 80 respondents, 24 (30%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 40 (50%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 29 and corresponding Figure 26 below. Surprisingly, 19 (23.75%) of 80 respondents, i.e. more than the number of respondents who marked the actual correct context, chose the following context as the correct one: *b) Every time I need you to be serious, you just go ape and start making fun of me.* The possible explanation of this answer is the influence of the Czech language. The English metaphor *to go ape* may be connected with the Czech metaphor *dělat si z někoho opičky*, which corresponds with the meaning suggested in the context mentioned.

Table 29 To go ape

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	16	20.00
wrong	24	30.00
no	40	50.00

Total	80	100.00
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Figure 26 To go ape

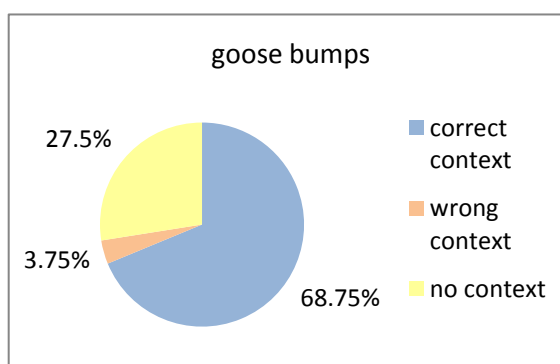


17. GOOSE BUMPS: The metaphor *goose bumps* is known among 55 (68.75%) of 80 respondents, 3 (3.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 22 (27.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 30 and corresponding Figure 27 below. The widespread knowledge of this metaphor among the Czech learners of English is most likely supported by its literal translation to the Czech language. A partial correspondence between the English and Czech counterparts is evident. Compare *goose bumps* and *husí kůže*.

Table 30 Goose bumps

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	55	68.75
wrong	3	3.75
no	22	27.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 27 Goose bumps



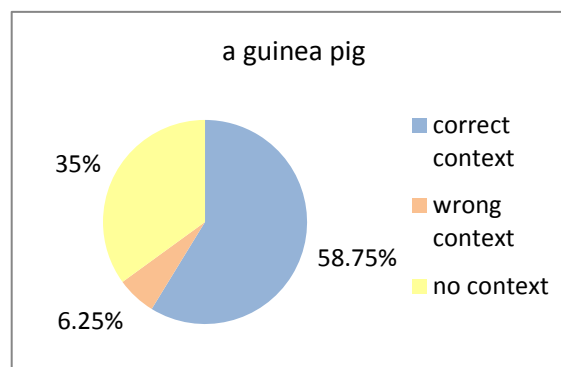
18. A GUINEA PIG: The metaphor *a guinea pig* is known among 47 (58.75) of 80 respondents, 5 (6.25) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 28 (35%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 31 and corresponding Figure 28 below.

Apparently, even though that the literal translation of this metaphor to the Czech language is completely different, its meaning seems to be widely known. I assume that it is the result of common knowledge shared among different nations of the fact that guinea pigs, rats, mice etc. are used for experiments.

Table 31 A guinea pig

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	47	58.75
wrong	5	6.25
no	28	35.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 28 A guinea pig

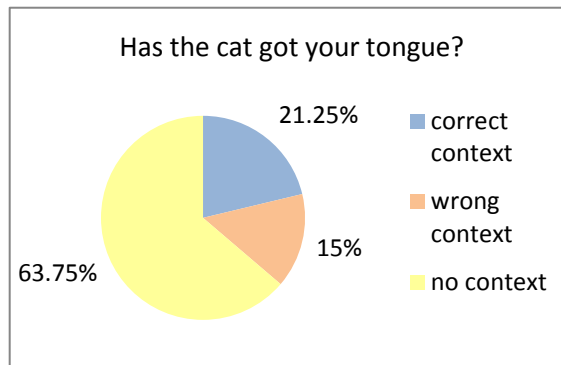


19. HAS THE CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?: The metaphor *Has the cat got your tongue?* is known among 17 (21.25%) of 80 respondents, 12 (15%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 51 (63.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 32 and corresponding Figure 29 below.

Table 32 Has the cat got your tongue?

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	17	21.25
wrong	12	15.00
no	51	63.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 29 Has the cat got your tongue?

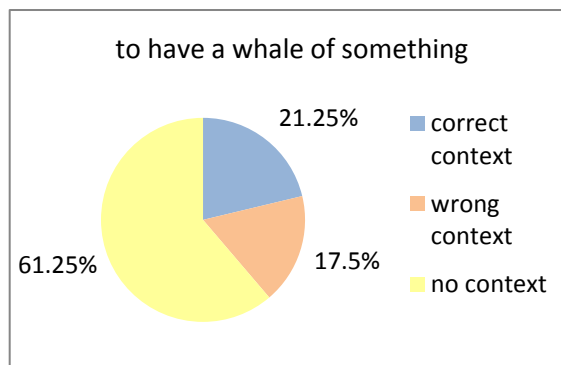


20. TO HAVE A WHALE OF SOMETHING: The metaphor *to have a whale of something* is known among 17 (21.25%) of 80 respondents, 14 (17.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 49 (61.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 33 and corresponding Figure 30 below.

Table 33 To have a whale of something

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	17	21.25
wrong	14	17.50
no	49	61.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 30 To have a whale of something



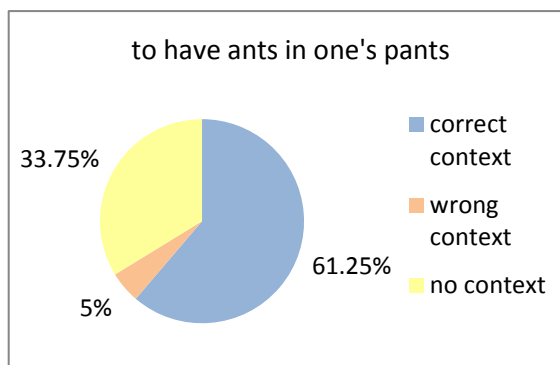
21. TO HAVE ANTS IN ONE’S PANTS: The metaphor *to have ants in one’s pants* is known among 49 (61.25%) of 80 respondents, 4 (5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 27 (33.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 34 and corresponding Figure 31 below. In my opinion, the image of one having ants in his/her pants contributes greatly to the comprehension of the meaning of this metaphor.

Table 34 To have ants in one’s pants

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	49	61.25

wrong	4	5.00
no	27	33.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 31 To have ants in one's pants

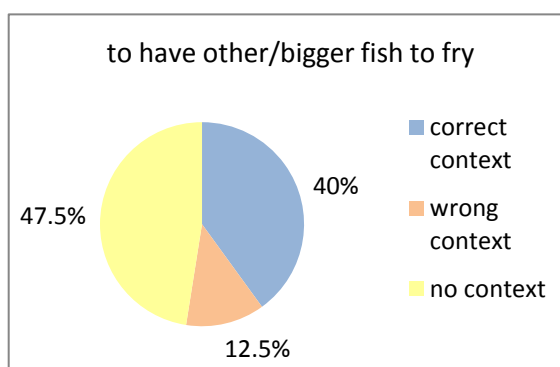


22. TO HAVE OTHER/BIGGER FISH TO FRY: The metaphor *to have other/bigger fish to fry* is known among 32 (40%) of 80 respondents, 10 (12.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 38 (47.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 35 and corresponding Figure 32 below.

Table 35 To have other/bigger fish to fry

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	32	40.00
wrong	10	12.50
no	38	47.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 32 To have other/bigger fish to fry

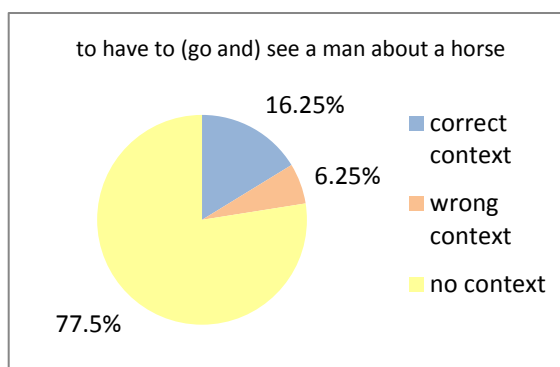


23. TO HAVE TO (GO AND) SEE A MAN ABOUT A HORSE: The metaphor *to have to (go and) see a man about a horse* is known among 13 (16.25%) of 80 respondents, 5 (6.25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 62 (77.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 36 and corresponding Figure 33 below.

Table 36 To have to (go and) see a many about a horse

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	13	16.25
wrong	5	6.25
no	62	77.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 33 To have to (go and) see a man about a horse

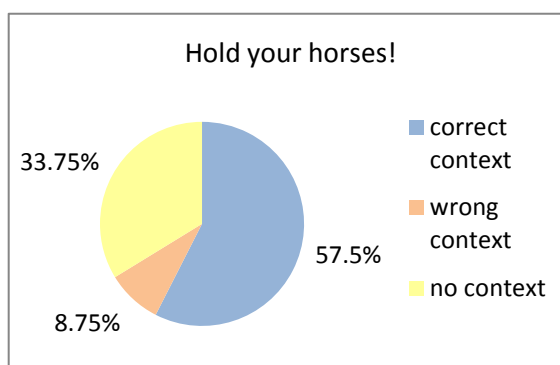


24. HOLD YOUR HORSES!: The metaphor *Hold your horses!* is known among 46 (57.5%) of 80 respondents, 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 27 (33.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 37 and corresponding Figure 34 below. It is evident that many Czech learners of English are acquainted with this metaphor even though that the Czech equivalent is completely different.

Table 37 Hold your horses!

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	46	57.50
wrong	7	8.75
no	27	33.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 34 Hold your horses!

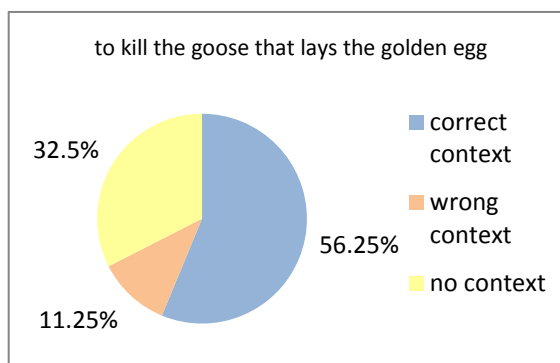


25. TO KILL THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGG: The metaphor *to kill the goose that lays the golden egg* is known among 45 (56.25%) of 80 respondents, 9 (11.25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 26 (32.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 38 and corresponding Figure 25 below. I realize that the Czech equivalent of this metaphor is very similar; it differs only in the animal used. Compare *to kill the goose that lays the golden egg* and *zabít slepici, která nese zlatá vejce*. Nevertheless, I have assumed that Czech speakers would not be familiar with the Czech metaphor, much less with the English one. Apparently, this assumption proved to be false based on the outcomes of this questionnaire.

Table 38 To kill the goose that lays the golden egg

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	45	56.25
wrong	9	11.25
no	26	32.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 35 To kill the goose that lays the golden egg



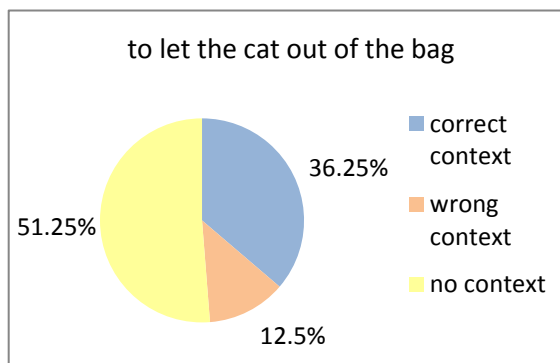
26. TO LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG: The metaphor *to let the cat out of the bag* is known among 29 (36.25%) of 80 respondents, 10 (12.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 41 (51.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 39 and corresponding Figure 36 below. The original guess was that this metaphor will be known among at least 50 of 80 respondents since it is one of the metaphors I have encountered not only during my studies, but also during my conversations with native speakers of English and during watching various sitcoms.

Table 39 To let the cat out of the bag

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	29	36.25
wrong	10	12.50
no	41	51.25

Total	80	100.00
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Figure 36 To let the cat out of the bag

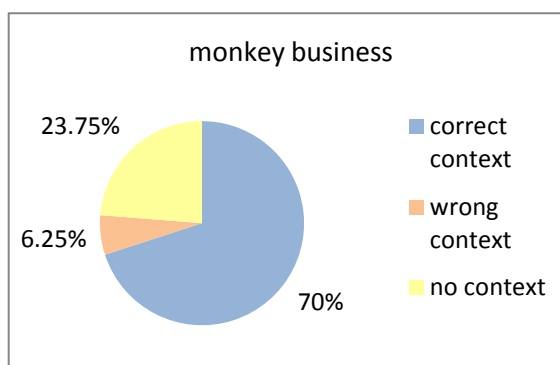


27. MONKEY BUSINESS: The metaphor *monkey business* is known among 56 (70%) of 80 respondents, 5 (6.25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 19 (23.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 40 and corresponding Figure 37 below. Similarly as the metaphor *Hold your horses!*, also this metaphor seems to be well-known among the Czech speakers even though its Czech equivalent is completely different. Compare *monkey business* and *machinace, hlouposti, koniny*.

Table 40 Monkey business

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	56	70.00
wrong	5	6.25
no	19	23.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 37 Monkey business

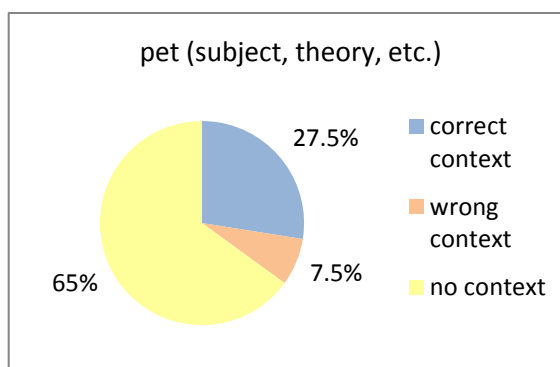


28. PET (SUBJECT, THEORY, ETC.): The metaphor *pet (subject, theory, etc.)* is known among 22 (27.5%) of 80 respondents, 6 (7.5%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 52 (65%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 41 and corresponding Figure 38 below.

Table 41 Pet (subject, theory, etc.)

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	22	27.50
wrong	6	7.50
no	52	65.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 38 Pet (subject, theory, etc.)

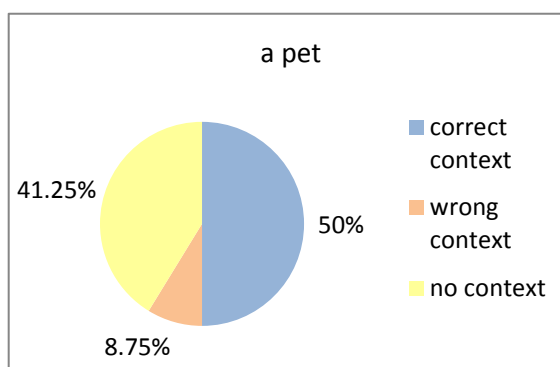


29. A PET: The metaphor *a pet* is known among 40 (50%) of 80 respondents, 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 33 (41.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 42 and corresponding Figure 39 below. I assume that the high number of respondents who are familiar with this metaphor is based on the attributes of any pet such as cuteness or fondness that are shared among the English speakers as well as the Czech learners of English.

Table 42 A pet

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	40	50.00
wrong	7	8.75
no	33	41.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 39 A pet

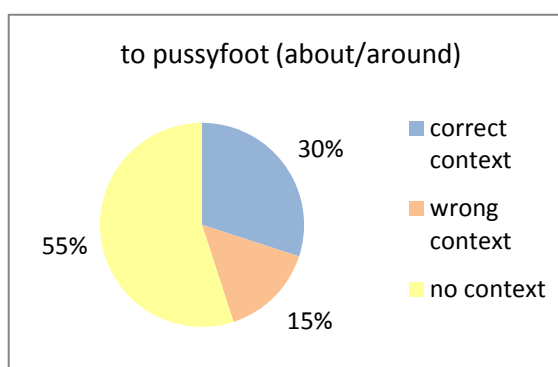


30. TO PUSSYFOOT (ABOUT/AROUND): The metaphor *to pussyfoot (about/around)* is known among 24 (30%) of 80 respondents, 12 (15%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 44 (55%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 43 and corresponding Figure 40 below. It is worth mentioning that 8 (10%) of 80 respondents chose the following context as the correct one: *a) If you don't pussyfoot around, you may wake a child.* Since the respondents were instructed to think of all the expressions as of metaphors, this answer cannot be considered correct. However, from the point of view of literal language, it would be acceptable.

Table 43 To pussyfoot (about/around)

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	24	30.00
wrong	12	15.00
no	44	55.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 40 To pussyfoot (about/around)

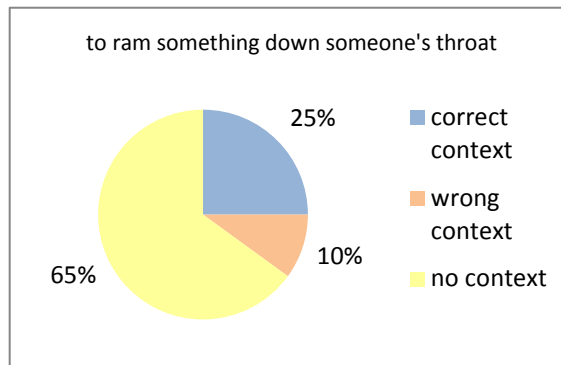


31. TO RAM SOMETHING DOWN SOMEONE'S THROAT: The metaphor *to ram something down someone's throat* is known among 20 (25%) of 80 respondents, 8 (10%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 52 (65%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 44 and corresponding Figure 41 below.

Table 44 To ram something down someone's throat

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	20	25.00
wrong	8	10.00
no	52	65.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 41 To ram something down someone's throat

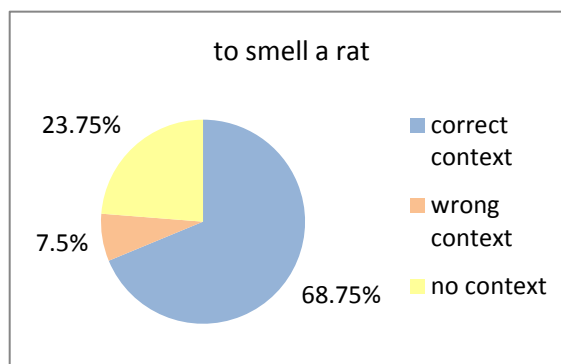


32. TO SMELL A RAT: The metaphor *to smell a rat* is known among 55 (68.75%) of 80 respondents, 6 (7.6%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 19 (23.75%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 45 and corresponding Figure 42 below. The opaqueness of this metaphor is not very high. The figurative meaning of the word *a rat* is supposed to be generally known among the Czech speakers since there is a corresponding word with a corresponding non-literal meaning in the Czech language – *krysa*.

Table 45 To smell a rat

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	55	68.75
wrong	6	7.50
no	19	23.75
Total	80	100.00

Figure 42 To smell a rat

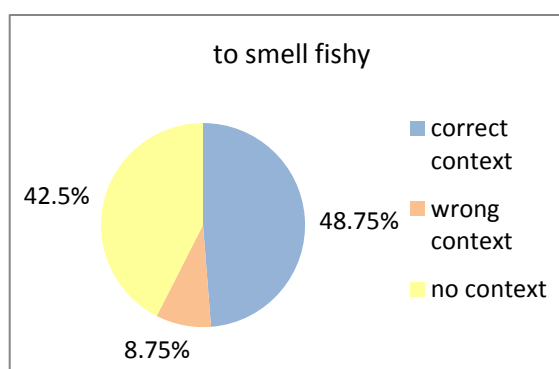


33. TO SMELL FISHY: The metaphor *to smell fishy* is known among 39 (48.75%) of 80 respondents, 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 34 (42.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 46 and corresponding Figure 43 below.

Table 46 To smell fishy

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	39	48.75
wrong	7	8.75
no	34	42.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 43 To smell fishy

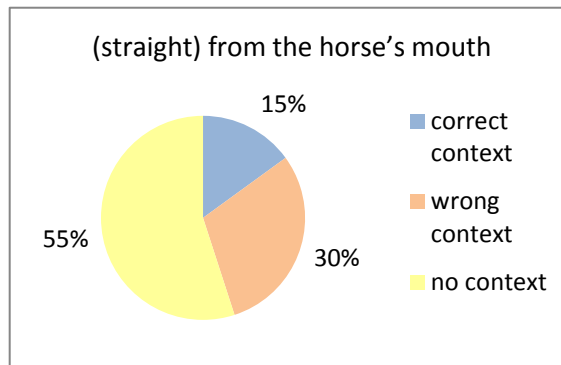


34. (STRAIGHT) FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH: The metaphor (*straight*) from the horse's mouth is known among 12 (15%) of 80 respondents, 24 (30%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 44 (55%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 47 and corresponding Figure 44 below. The outcomes showing the familiarity of this particular metaphor among the Czech speakers are very interesting, though not surprising. 24 (30%) of 80 respondents, i.e. a number twice as much higher than the number of respondents who marked the actual correct answer, chose the following context as the correct one: *b) Look at those clothes! They look as if you've taken straight from the horse's mouth.* The influence of the Czech language is particularly great in this case. I assume that most of the respondents confused the expression *look as if you've taken (straight) from the horse's mouth* with the Czech expression *vypadat jako bys to vytáhl krávé z huby*, which would perfectly fit in the mentioned context.

Table 47 (straight) from the horse's mouth

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	12	15.00
wrong	24	30.00
no	44	55.00
Total	80	100.00

Figure 44 (straight) from the horse’s mouth

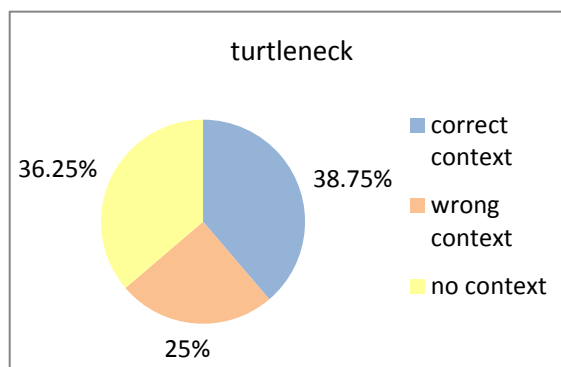


35. TURTLENECK: The metaphor *turtleneck* is known among 31 (38.75%) of 80 respondents, 20 (25%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 29 (36.25%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 48 and corresponding Figure 45 below. Surprisingly, 15 (18.75%) of 80 respondents marked the following context as the correct one: *c) My friend Gilly is such a turtleneck. She would never stand up to bullies.* I assume that it is the result of the associations connected with a cowering person who is afraid of something or somebody and the image of a turtle hiding in its shell.

Table 48 Turtleneck

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	31	38.75
wrong	20	25.00
no	29	36.25
Total	80	100.00

Figure 45 Turtleneck

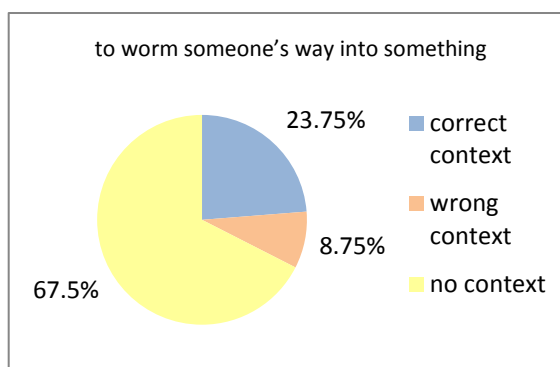


36. TO WORM SOMEONE’S WAY INTO SOMETHING: The *metaphor to worm someone’s way into something* is known among 19 (23.75%) of 80 respondents, 7 (8.75%) of 80 respondents marked one of the wrong contexts and 54 (67.5%) of 80 respondents left it unmarked. See Table 49 and corresponding Figure 46 below.

Table 49 To worm someone's way into something

Chosen context	Number of respondents	%
correct	19	23.75
wrong	7	8.75
no	54	67.50
Total	80	100.00

Figure 46 To worm someone's way into something



3.4.3 Results – a final comparison and commentary

From the results presented above, it is evident that the degree of familiarity with the selected metaphors among the Czech learners differs from case to case. In order to make the results better arranged, Table 50 shows only a number of respondents who recognized the particular metaphors.

Table 50

Metaphor	Number of respondents	%
to be barking up the wrong tree	66	82.50
a monkey business	56	70.00
to be like a bull in a china shop	55	68.75
goose bumps	55	68.75
to smell a rat	55	68.75
to have ants in one's pants	49	61.25
a guinea pig	47	58.75
(a case) of dog eat dog	46	57.50
Hold your horses!	46	57.50
to kill the goose that lays the golden egg	45	56.25
a catnap	43	53.75
a pet	40	50.00
to smell fishy	39	48.75
an eager beaver	34	42.50
a can of worms	33	41.25
to chicken out (of something)	33	41.25
to come out of one's shell	32	40.00

to have other/bigger fish to fry	32	40.00
turtle neck	31	38.75
to cry wolf	29	36.25
to let the cat out of the bag	29	36.25
Do bears shit in the woods?	28	35.00
as the crow flies	27	33.75
to be no spring chicken	26	32.50
the birds and the bees	24	30.00
to pussyfoot (about/around)	24	30.00
pet (subject, theory, etc.)	22	27.50
a fly on the wall	21	26.25
to ram something down someone's throat	20	25.00
to worm someone's way into something	19	23.75
Has the cat got your tongue?	17	21.25
to have a whale of something	17	21.25
to go ape	16	20.00
to clam up (on somebody)	15	18.75
to have to (go and) see a man about a horse	13	16.25
(straight) from the horse's mouth	12	15.00
Total number of respondents	80	100.00

The original intention was to create a reduced list of metaphors that would be useful to be known among the Czech speakers of English and for this purpose used as a studying material. The assessment of the questionnaire no. 2 served as a suitable tool in identifying the target metaphors. Since none of the listed metaphors is familiar to all of the respondents, no further reduction is needed. In other words, all of the listed metaphors are useful to be learned among the Czech speakers; only those less known should be taught and learned with more emphasis. For instance, there is no need to pay special attention to the metaphors such as *to be barking up the wrong tree*, *to be like a bull in a china shop*, *goose bumps*, *a monkey business*, *to smell a rat*, etc., since they seem to be already well-spread among the Czech speakers, i.e. there is apparently a number of opportunities where a Czech speaker can encounter these metaphors and learn them. On the other hand, there are metaphors such as *to clam up (on somebody)*, *to go ape*, *to have a whale of something*, *(straight) from the horse's mouth*, etc., whose meaning is rather unfamiliar to the Czech speakers and thus should be taught and learned with more emphasis.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that even though the respondents were asked not to guess in case they did not know a particular metaphor or they were not sure about its meaning, a significant number of wrong contexts were marked. It is important to mention that this fact does not necessarily need to mean that the respondents were

simply guessing. I assume that many of these respondents marked the wrong context under the impression that it is really the only one possible, they felt sure about it. Admittedly they were not aware of the meaning of the metaphor, however, they were able to comprehend its false meaning in the context they marked, most likely as a result of the combination of the power of the immediate association and the influence of the Czech language, which is, in my opinion, a very interesting phenomenon.

4 CONCLUSION

Studying metaphor showed that it is a very unique phenomenon that needs to be considered from various points of view in order to be understood in its complete significance. In the theoretical part of the thesis, the term metaphor was thus considered from the point of view of literary science, linguistics and Lakoff and Johnson's theory. Thus a possibility of comparison arises that subsequently leads to the revelation of not only the strong, but also the weak points of the approaches presented. However, it is necessary to mention that each of the theories of metaphor suggests very interesting insights that are proved to be valid. For this reason, theories of metaphor should be viewed as mutually complementing and enriching rather than disproving one another.

In the pursuit of depicting different nature of the collected metaphors, it seemed to be appropriate to present not only metaphor in the strict sense, but also other devices of figurative language that are metaphorical in nature such as simile, hyperbole, proverb, saying, etc. Since many of the collected metaphors are simultaneously counted as idioms, the presence of the chapter devoted to the comparison of metaphor and idiom in the theoretical part of this thesis is justifiable.

The opening chapter of the analytical part of the thesis presents the methodology of this part and the research material forming the corpus of 200 animal metaphors and the presentation of their meaning. The collection of appropriate metaphors was carried out with the aid of texts primarily meant for advanced students of English, different dictionaries and thesauruses. The compilation of the individual entries was based on the data gained in at least 6 different dictionaries. The result of the effort put into this task is a list of the 200 metaphors and the detailed description of their meaning, usage example and source of the meaning when available that is attached to this thesis as Appendix no. 1.

The analytical part was divided into three sections, each working with the list of collected metaphors. The first section aimed to compare the collected English animal metaphors and their Czech equivalents. The main attention was paid to whether there is any correspondence between the two counterparts in their reflection of animal aspect. As it showed, in 93 (46.5%) of 200 cases, Czech equivalents do not even contain an animal word in their structure. However, there are more of those that contain the same

animal (in 67 (33.5%) of 200 cases) than those that contain a different animal (in 31 (15.5%) of 200 cases). In 9 (4.5%) of 200 cases, Czech equivalents use both the same animal and a different animal depending on their particular variant. Only in the case of the metaphor *down the rabbit hole* I was not successful in finding its Czech metaphorical counterpart.

The aim of the second section was to present the outcome of the questionnaire designed to find out which of the collected metaphors are actively used among the 14 addressed native speakers of the English language. Since most of the metaphors proved to be known among the majority of respondents, the collection of metaphors can be seen as rather successful. On the other hand, there were metaphors such as *an outbreak monkey*, *to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in our bosom*, *a viper*, *wolfish*, *hot enough to burn the polar bear's butt*, etc. that were marked by most of the respondents as unknown. These are certainly not useful to be taught and learnt by learners of the English language. The outcome of this questionnaire in general may thus serve as a good reference for teaching or studying metaphors in English.

And finally, in the third section of the analytical part of this thesis, it is dealt with those metaphors that were both appraised as semantically opaque for Czech speakers and marked as actively used by more than 10 (10 included) of 14 native speakers in the questionnaire no. 1. The number of 36 metaphors corresponding with these criteria served as the ground for the questionnaire no. 2 designed for Czech learners of English. The aim of this questionnaire was to find out which of the metaphors are known also among the Czech respondents. Some of the metaphors proved to be recognized better than others; however all of them should be taken into consideration when teaching and studying English since they form a natural part of everyday communication of English native speakers.

RESUMÉ

V současné době patří metafora k velmi zajímavým oblastem lexikologického zkoumání. Ač byla dříve vnímána spíše jako pouze prostředek poetického zpestření jazyka, dnes na ni můžeme nahlížet z několika různých úhlů a také ve spojení s dalšími disciplínami, jako jsou například kognitivní věda, psychologie a teorie komunikace. Metafora je fenomén, jenž by neměl být odsouván do pozadí, neboť je důležitou součástí našeho každodenního života.

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá anglickými metaforami se zvířecí tematikou. Úvodní teoretická část se ve své podstatě věnuje trojímu vymezení metafory. Nejprve je na ni pohlíženo z hlediska literární teorie, tedy disciplíny, která přestala popírat existenci metafory a začala ji zkoumat jakožto výraz jazykové neobvyklosti. Tato kapitola popisuje takzvané *creative, poetic* či *novel metaphors*, které jsou hojně užívány zejména spisovateli či básníky při tvorbě literárních děl, své místo však mají i v přirozené komunikaci. Jedná se převážně o metafory, které svou formou často vystupují z běžného jazyka, jsou tak na první pohled snadno rozpoznatelné.

V následující kapitole je metafora nahlížena z hlediska lingvistického. *Poetic metaphors* jsou porovnány s *conventional metaphors*, jež se naopak vyznačují vysokým stupněm lexikalizace, a tak v běžném jazyce, jehož jsou nepostradatelnou součástí, nebývají ani vnímány jako něco zvláštního, metaforického. Je však patrné, že stupeň lexikalizace se u jednotlivých metafor liší, Kövescec (2010: 35) proto přichází s pojmem *the scale of conventionality*, které lze volně přeložit jako škálu všednodennosti. V této kapitole je také nastíněno vnímání metafory jakožto prostředku přeneseného jazyka, které je rozděleno do několika fází. Důležitost role mluvčího a posluchače spojuje tuto oblast zkoumání metafory s teorií komunikace. V rámci lingvistického pohledu na metaforu je v neposlední řadě zdůrazněna také skutečnost, že metafora je ve své podstatě jazykovým prostředkem založeným na podobnosti.

Jako poslední je prezentován pohled George Lakoffa a Marka Johnsona, kteří ve své proslulé studii *Metaphors We Live By* nabízejí naprosto unikátní přístup ke zkoumání metafory. Metaforu považují za přirozenou součást nejen našeho jazyka, ale také způsobu, jakým vnímáme svět kolem nás, za prostředek vytvářející velmi komplexní síť konceptů, s nimiž se běžně setkáváme.

Metafora jako taková může být vnímána dvěma různými způsoby. Buďto jako jeden ze specifických prostředků přeneseného jazyka nebo jako zastřešující pojem většiny z nich. Jelikož je korpus nasbíraných metafor v tomto směru poměrně rozmanitý, kapitola, jež se věnuje dalším prostředkům přeneseného jazyka, má v teoretické části práce jistě své opodstatnění. Hlavní pozornost je věnována především přirovnání a přísloví, jež jsou v korpusu nasbíraných metafor zastoupeny nejhojněji, za zmínku však stojí také hyperbola, eufemismus, dysfemismus, ironie, klišé a další.

Vzhledem ke skutečnosti, že mnoho z nasbíraných metafor je ve své podstatě nejen metaforických, ale také idiomatických, je poslední část teoretické sekce práce zasvěcena právě idiomům. Spíše než detailní charakteristika idiomů je vymezen jejich vztah k metafoře, která je ústředním tématem této diplomové práce. V korpusu nasbíraných metafor jsou zastoupeny především dvě skupiny idiomatických výrazů, binominály a frázová slovesa.

Praktická část práce je uvedena kapitolou, jež představuje metodologii této části a odkazuje na korpus 200 nasbíraných metafor. Sběr metafor byl proveden především na textech určených pro pokročilejší studenty anglického jazyka, neboť metafory obsažené v těchto učebních materiálech jsou považovány za autoritami označeny jako užitečné. Dalším zdrojem byly také slovníky a thesaury, kde se hlavním kritériem výběru stala jazyková zkušenost autorky a její intuice. Každá jednotlivá metafora je doplněna slovníkovým vstupem, jenž prezentuje význam metafory, příklad jejího užití ve větě či alespoň ve slovním spojení, případně také původ. Slovníkové vstupy jsou sestaveny na základě informací získaných v různých slovnících a thesaurech. Celkový seznam metafor a jejich slovníkových vstupů je připojen k práci jako příloha č. 1. Seznam jednotlivých metafor hraje důležitou roli v praktické části práce, která s těmito metaforami dále pracuje.

První část analytické sekce práce porovnává nasbírané anglické metafory s jejich českými ekvivalenty. Hlavní důraz je kladen na to, zdali se tyto jazykové protějšky shodují v užití zvířecího aspektu či nikoliv. Na základě tohoto kritéria mohou být nasbírané metafory rozděleny do čtyř následujících skupin: ve vztahu k anglické metafoře užívá český ekvivalent a) stejné zvíře, b) jiné zvíře, c) stejné i jiné zvíře v různých variantách daného významu a d) žádné zvíře. Pouze k metafoře *down the rabbit hole* se nepodařilo nalézt vhodný český protějšek.

Druhá část analytické sekce prezentuje dotazník určený pro rodilé mluvčí a jeho výsledky. Cílem tohoto dotazníku, jenž byl předložen 14 respondentům, rodilým mluvčím anglického jazyka, bylo zjistit, které z nasbíraných metafor respondenti znají a v jazyce užívají aktivně, které pasivně a se kterými se doposud nesetkali. V návaznosti na výsledky dotazníku jsou nastíněny možné faktory ovlivňující obeznámenost či neobeznámenost rodilých mluvčích s nasbíranými metaforami.

Metafory, jež byly označeny jako aktivně užívané více než 10 (včetně) ze 14 rodilých mluvčích a zároveň vyhodnoceny jako sémanticky neprůhledné pro české mluvčí, tj. forma českého protějšku neodpovídá anglické verzi metafory a význam dané metafory není snadno odvoditelný, posloužily jako základ dotazníku určeného pro české mluvčí, pokročilejší studenty či učitele/lektory anglického jazyka. Dotazník vyplnilo celkem 80 respondentů. Cílem tohoto dotazníku bylo zjistit, které z vybraných metafor jsou českým mluvčím známé a které nikoliv. Za tímto účelem byla každá metafora zapojena do třech různých kontextů, z nichž pouze jeden byl významově správný. Respondenti byli instruováni označit správný kontext v případě, že metaforu znají, a netipovat za předpokladu, že jim význam metafory není známý.

Na vzorku anglických metafor se zvířecí tematikou se tato diplomová práce pokouší zdůraznit, že metafory jsou skutečně přirozenou a nepostradatelnou součástí běžného jazyka. Jelikož však stupeň jejich obeznámenosti mezi českými studenty či učiteli/lektory anglického jazyka není příliš vysoký, bylo by jistě vhodné věnovat studiu metafor obecně více pozornosti.

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APPENDICES

Appendix no. 1 The corpus of collected metaphors

1. an albatross around/round one's neck

- **albatross round the neck** constant reminder of past error; enduring sense of guilt (TTEM: 827) | **albatross around/round your neck** • The company that he founded in 1983 is now an albatross around his neck, making losses of several hundreds of thousands a year. * An albatross is a large white bird. In the poem The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a man on a ship kills an albatross which is then hung round his neck to show that he has brought bad luck. (CID: 5-6)

2. an animal

- **animal** a person who behaves in a cruel or unpleasant way, or who is very dirty • The person who did this is an animal, a brute. (49)

3. to ape someone/something

- **ape sb/sth** (British English, disapproving) to do sth in the same way as sb else, esp. when it is not done very well • For years the British film industry merely aped Hollywood. (55-56)
- **ape sb/sth** (esp. North American English) to copy the way sb else behaves or talks, in order to make fun of them • We used to ape the teacher's southern accent. (55-56)

4. (as) cunning/sly as a fox

- **cunning** (disapproving) able to get what you want in a clever way, esp. by tricking or cheating sb (357) | **(as) cunning as a fox** sly and scheming, esp. in plotting for one's own advantage or in escaping the consequences of wrongdoing [the reason/the aim of the behaviour given] (ODCIE: 19) | **(as) sly/cunning as a fox** • My nephew is as sly as a fox. • You have to be cunning as a fox to outwit me. (DAI: 617)

5. (as) drunk as a skunk

- **(as) drunk as a skunk** (North American English, informal) very drunk (452) | • We'd get drunk as a skunk at lunch and sleep all afternoon. (CID: 112)

6. (as) fat as a pig

- **(as) fat as a pig** exceptionally fat; grotesquely fat • If I don't stop eating this cake, I'll be fat as a pig! • You really ought to go on a diet; you're as fat as a pig. (DAI: 204)

7. (as) free as a bird

- **(as) free as a bird** completely free to do what you want and without any worries • She'd been travelling alone round the Greek islands for a year – free as a bird. (CID:153)

8. (as) hungry as a bear

- **(as) hungry as a bear** (Cliché) very hungry • I'm as hungry as a bear. I could eat anything! (DAI: 314)

9. as the crow flies

- **as the crow flies** in a straight line • The villages are no more than a mile apart as the crow flies. (352)

10. an ass

- **ass** (*British English, informal*) a stupid person • *Don't be such an ass!* • *I made an ass of myself at the meeting – standing up and then forgetting the question.* (73)

11. at a snail's pace

- **at a snail's pace** very slowly (1407) | • *The roads were full of traffic and we were travelling at a snail's pace.* * A snail is a small animal with a shell that moves very slowly. (CID: 386)

12. to back the wrong horse

- **back the wrong horse** (British English) to support sb/sth that is not successful (91) | • It was only after we'd invested all the money we discovered we'd been backing the wrong horse. (CID: 14)

13. to bark something (at someone)

- **bark sth (at sb)** to give orders, ask questions, etc. in a loud, unfriendly way • He barked questions at her. (104)

14. someone's bark is worse than their bite

- **sb's bark is worse than their bite** (informal) used to say that sb is not really as angry or as aggressive as they sound (104) | • I wouldn't be scared of her if I were you. Her bark's a lot worse than her bite. (CID: 20)

15. A barking dog never bites.

- **A barking dog never bites.** (Proverb) sb who makes threats all the time seldom carries out the threats • Old Mrs. Smith keeps saying she'll call the police if we walk on her lawn, but don't worry. A barking dog never bites. • My boss threatens to fire me at least once a week, but a barking dog never bites. (DAI: 34)

16. to be another/a different kettle of fish

- **a different kettle of fish** (informal) a completely different situation or person from the one previously mentioned (405) | **be another/a different kettle of fish** • Andy was never very interested in school, but Anna, now she was a completely different kettle of fish. • I'd driven an automatic for years but learning to handle a car with gears was another kettle of fish altogether. (CID: 219)

17. to be as busy as a bee

- **as busy as a bee** very busy (194) | **be as busy as a bee/be a busy bee** (*old-fashioned*) to be very active • *She's as busy as a bee, always going to meetings and organizing parties.* (CID: 56)

18. to be as dead as a dodo

- **(as) dead as a/the dodo** (*British English, informal*) completely dead; no longer interesting or valid (373) | **be as dead as a dodo** • *Who cares about socialism any more? Socialism's as dead as a dodo.* • *Any hopes she had of becoming a professional gymnast are now as dead as a dodo.* * The dodo was a large bird which could not fly and which does not exist anymore. (CID: 96)

19. to be as gentle as a lamb

- **as gentle as a lamb** to be very calm and kind (CID: 160) | very gentle, careful not to hurt or harm [the element of possible harm included] (ODCIE: 21) | • *I thought she was gentle as a lamb until I heard her shouting at Richard.* (CID: 160)

20. to be as poor as church mice

- **be as poor as church mice** (*old-fashioned*) to be very poor • *When we first got married, we were as poor as church mice.* (CID: 322) | **as poor as a church mouse** [this form corresponds better with the Czech equivalent] (TTEM: 870)

21. to be as stubborn as a mule

- **be as stubborn as a mule** to be very determined not to change your decision or opinion about sth, even when it is wrong • *You won't get him to change his mind – he's as stubborn as a mule.* (CID: 406)

22. to be barking up the wrong tree

- **be barking up the wrong tree** (*informal*) to have the wrong idea about how to get or achieve sth (104) | to be wrong about the reason for sth or the way to achieve sth [another dimension of the meaning given – being wrong about the reason, i.e. about sth which already exist, not only about the future achievements] (CID: 21) | waste energy in the wrong direction; accuse or enquire mistakenly [the most general meaning applicable to the wider range of situations, corresponds with the Czech meaning the most] (TTEM: 208) | • *New evidence suggests that we have been barking up the wrong tree in our search for a cure.* (CID: 21) | • *You're barking up the wrong tree if you're expecting us to lend you any money.* (104) | * In racoon hunting the dogs are supposed to mark the tree in the dark where the racoon has taken refuge. (TTEM: 208) | * Alludes to a dog in pursuit of an animal, where the animal is in one tree and the dog is barking at another tree. (DAI: 34)

23. to be dropping like flies

- **die/fall/drop like flies** (*informal*) to die or fall down in very large numbers (576) | **be dropping like flies** if people are dropping like flies, large numbers of them are dying or becoming ill or injured within a short period of time [a time specification given] (CID: 112) | • *People were dropping like flies in the intense heat.* (576)

24. to be like a bear with a sore head

- **like a bear with a sore head** (*informal*) bad-tempered or in a bad-tempered way (113) | **be like a bear with a sore head** (*British & Australian English, informal, humorous*) to be in a bad mood

which causes you to treat other people badly and complain a lot [more precise meaning given] • *If his newspaper doesn't arrive by breakfast time he's like a bear with a sore head.* (CID: 23)

25. to be like a bull in a china shop

- **a bull in a china shop** a person who is careless, or who moves or acts in a rough or awkward way, in a place or situation where skill and care are needed (186) | **be like a bull in a china shop** • Rob's like a bull in a china shop, don't let him near those plants. • She's like a bull in a china shop when it comes to dealing with people's feelings. (= behaves in a way that offends people) (CID: 54)

26. to be like a cat on a hot tin roof

- **like a cat on hot bricks** (British English) very nervous (219) | **be like a cat on a hot tin roof** to be nervous and unable to keep still [more precise meaning given] (CID: 62) | • *She was like a cat on hot bricks before her driving test.* (219) | • *What's the matter with her? She's like a cat on hot tin roof this morning.* (CID: 62)

27. to be like a fish out of water

- **a fish out of water** a person who feels uncomfortable or awkward because he or she is in surroundings that are not familiar (561) | **be like a fish out of water** to feel awkward because you are not familiar with a situation or because you are very different from the people around you [another level of the meaning given] • *All the other children in the school had rich, middle-class parents, and she was beginning to feel like a fish out of water.* (CID: 144)

28. to be like a red rag to a bull

- **a red rag to a bull** (British & North American English **like waving a red flag in front of a bull**) sth that is likely to make sb very angry (1231) | **be like a red rag to a bull** • For Claire, the suggestion of a women-only committee was like a red rag to a bull. * Some people believe that bulls become very angry when they see the colour red. (CID: 340)

29. to be (like) water off a duck's back

- **(like) water off a duck's back** (informal) used to say that sth, esp. criticism, had no effect on sb/sth • I can't tell my son what to do; it's water off a duck's back with him. (1678)

30. to be neither fish nor fowl

- **neither fish nor fowl** neither one thing nor another (561) | **be neither fish nor fowl** if something is neither fish nor fowl, it is difficult to describe or understand because it is like one thing in some ways but like another thing in other ways [more precise meaning given] • The hovercraft has always suffered from the fact that it is neither fish nor fowl. (CID: 144)

31. to be no spring chicken

- **be no spring chicken** (humorous) to be no longer young (1442) | • He must be ten years older than Grace, and she's no spring chicken. (CID: 394)

32. to be packed like sardines

- **(packed/crammed etc.) like sardines** (informal) pressed tightly together in a way that is uncomfortable or unpleasant (1309) | **be packed like sardines** • There were twenty people packed like sardines into a van. (CID:302) | * From the way that many sardines are packed into a can. (DAI: 486)

33. to be raining cats and dogs

- **be raining cats and dogs** (*informal*) to be raining heavily (1209-1210) | **It's raining pitchforks (and hammer handles).** / **It's raining cats and dogs.** [a different variant given, corresponding with the Czech equivalent better] • *Charlie: Have you looked outside? How's the weather? Mary: It's raining cats and dogs.* (DAI: 357)

34. to be the bee's knees

- **the bee's knees** (informal) an excellent person or thing (118) | **be the bee's knees** (British & Australian English, informal) (CID: 26) | be the best person, thing, idea etc. usually restricted to a fairly trivial context, and/or used ironically [more precise meaning given]; often in construction sb thinks he is the bee's knees • I am not flattered with Charles's attentions. He clearly thinks he's the bee's knees around here, but I don't share his opinion. (ODCIE: 46) | • *Have you tried this double chocolate-chip ice cream? It's the bee's knees, it really is.* (CID: 26)

35. to be the cat's whiskers

- **be the cat's whiskers** (informal) to be the best thing, person, idea, etc. (19) | (British & Australian English) (CID: 63) | **be the cat's pyjamas/whiskers** be the bee's knees (ODCIE: 47) | • He thinks he's the cat's whiskers (= he has a high opinion of himself). (19)

36. to be up with the lark

- **be/get up with the lark** (*British English, old-fashioned*) to get out of bed very early in the morning (836) | (*British, American & Australian English*) • *You were up with the lark this morning!* * Larks are birds that start singing very early in the morning.(CID: 444)

37. to beaver away (at something)

- **beaver away (at sth)** (informal) to work very hard at sth (116) | to work hard at sth for a long time, esp. sth you are writing (often + at) [more precise meaning given] (CPVD: 11) | • He's been beavering away at the accounts all morning. (116)

38. a big fish

- **a big fish** (informal) an important or powerful person in a group or organization • Mrs Coughlin is one of the directors – a big fish. (CID: 32)

39. A bird in the hand (is worth two in the bush).

- **a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush** (saying) it is better to keep sth you already have than risk losing it by trying to get much more (135) | • If I were you I'd accept the money they're offering. After all, a bird in the hand... (CID: 33)

40. a bird's-eye view (of something)

- **a bird's-eye view (of sth)** a view of sth from a high position looking down (135) | • We had a bird's-eye view of the old town from the top of the city walls. (CID: 33)

41. a bird-brain

- **birdbrain** (esp. North American English) a stupid person (135) | **a bird-brain** (informal) • He's just a bird-brain – he can't get anything right. (CID: 33)

42. the birds and the bees

- **the birds and the bees** (humorous) the basic facts about sex, esp. as told to children (135) | (euphemistic) (DAI: 46) | • My parents never actually sat down and told me about the birds and the bees. (CID: 34)

43. Birds of a feather flock together.

- **birds of a feather (flock together)** (saying) people of the same sort (are found together) (135) | sth that you say which means people who have similar characters or similar interests will often choose to spend time together [more precise meaning given] • I saw the boy who stole my bag with that gang of trouble makers last night – well, birds of a feather flock together, they say. (CID: 34)

44. a bitch

- **bitch** (slang, disapproving) an offensive way of referring to a woman esp. an unpleasant one (136) | a spiteful, bad-tempered woman, one capable of acting with hostility [more precise meaning given] (TTEM: 563) | • You stupid little bitch! • She can be a real bitch. (136)

45. the black sheep (of the family)

- **black sheep** a person who is different from the rest of their family or another group, and who is considered bad or embarrassing (140) | **the black sheep (of the family)** • *My father was the black sheep – he ran away at 16 to become an actor and his parents never forgave him.* (CID: 36) | * Originating from the fact that black wool was cheaper than white. (TTEM: 262)

46. a bookworm

- **bookworm** a person who likes reading very much (158) | avid reader, studious person – who, like a bookworm, obtains all he needs from books [more precise meaning given] (TTEM: 825)

47. bull-headed

- **bullheaded** (North American English) unwilling to change your opinion about sth, in a way that other people think is annoying and unreasonable (187) | **bull-headed** • He's completely bull-headed. I ask him not to throw out that old table, but he did it anyway. (CID: 54)

48. a bullshit

- **bullshit** (taboo, slang) (also informal **bull**) nonsense (187)

49. (to buy) a pig in a poke

- **(buy) a pig in a poke** if you buy a pig in a poke, you buy sth without seeing it or knowing if it is good enough (1106) | with the result that it might not be what you want • Clothes from a catalogue

are a pig in a poke. You can't feel the quality of the fabric or know if the clothes will fit. (CID: 312-313)

50. to buzz someone in

- **buzz** (sth) (**for** sb/sth) to call sb to come by pressing a buzzer (196) | **buzz sb into** a place / **buzz sb in** (figurative) to push a button that opens a door latch electrically, allowing sb to use the door and enter [more precise meaning given] (DAI: 78) | • The doctor buzzed for the next patient to come in. (196) | • My secretary will buzz you in. • Please buzz in our guest. • Oh, hello. I will buzz you into the lobby. The take the elevator to apartment 310. * The process creates a buzz while the latch is open. (DAI: 78)

51. to buzz off

- **buzz off** (informal) used to tell sb rudely to go away • Just buzz off and let me get on with my work. (196) | (figurative) to leave quickly [the same meaning presented from a different point of view] • I've got to buzz off. Bye. • It's time for me to buzz off. (DAI: 78)

52. a buzzer

- **buzzer** an electrical device that produces a buzzing sound as a signal (196)

53. by a whisker

- **by a whisker** by a very small amount (1696) | • *Last time she raced against the Brazilian she won by a whisker.* • *He missed the goal by a whisker.* (CID: 457)

54. a can of worms

- **a can of worms** (*informal*) if you open up a can of worms, you start doing sth that will cause a lot of problems and be very difficult (205) | • *Quite what we do with all the waste generated by this industry is another can of worms.* • *Once you start making concessions to individual members of staff, you really **open up a can of worms**.* (= cause a lot of trouble for yourself) (CID: 59)

55. can talk the hind leg(s) off a donkey

- **talk the hind leg off a donkey** (*informal*) to talk too much, esp. about boring or unimportant things (1524) | **can talk the hind leg(s) off a donkey** (British English) • His father could talk the hind leg off a donkey. (CID: 413)

56. (a case of) dog eat dog

- **(a case of) dog eat dog** a situation in business, politics, etc. where there is a lot of competition and people are willing to harm each other in order to succeed • *I'm afraid in this line of work It's a case of dog eat dog.* • *We're operating in a dog-eat-dog world.* (431)

57. to cast pearls before swine

- **cast/throw etc. pearls before swine** to give or offer valuable things to people who do not understand their value (1081) | • Giving him advice is just casting pearls before swine. He doesn't listen. (CID: 308) * From a biblical quotation. (DAI: 90)

58. a catnap

- **catnap** a short sleep (222)

59. a cattle market

- **a cattle market** (British, American & Australian English, informal) a place where people go to see sexually attractive women or to find sexual partners • *Beauty contests are just cattle markets.* • *That new nightclub called The Venue is awful – it's a real meat market.* (CID: 261)

60. catty

- **catty** (informal) (of a woman) saying unkind things about other people • a catty comment (222)

61. a chameleon

- **chameleon** (often disapproving) a person who changes their behaviour or opinions according to the situation (231) | * A chameleon can change its colour to match its background. (TTEM: 120)

62. to cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom

- **cherish/nourish a serpent/snake/viper in your bosom** have a dangerous and ungrateful traitor in your confidence * A man was fabled to have found a snake half-dead with cold. He put it next to his skin to warm it, when it revived it bit him. (TTEM: 796)

63. a chicken and egg situation

- **a chicken-and-egg situation, problem**, etc. a situation in which it is difficult to tell which one of two things was the cause of the other (242) | **a chicken and egg situation** • It's a chicken and egg situation – I don't know whether I was bad at the sciences because I wasn't interested in them or not interested in them and therefore not good at them. (CID: 68)

64. chicken feed

- **chicken feed** (informal) an amount of money that is not large enough to be important (242) | a very small amount of money, esp. money that is paid for doing a job [more precise meaning given] • He pays his labourers chicken feed. (CID: 68)

65. to chicken out (of something/of doing something)

- **chicken out (of sth/of doing sth)** (informal) to decide not to do sth because you are afraid (242) | to manage to get out of something, usually because of fear or cowardice. [a slightly different meaning given] • Come on! Don't chicken out now! • Freddy chickened out of the plan at the last minute. (DAI: 98)

66. the chickens come home to roost

- **the chickens come home to roost** used to say that if sb says or does sth bad or wrong, it will affect them badly in the future (718) | • *There was too much greed in the past, and now the chickens are coming home to roost with crime and corruption soaring.* (CID: 68)

67. to clam up (on someone)

- **clam up (on sb)** (informal) to refuse to speak, esp. when sb asks you about sth (255) | usually because you are shy or afraid (CPVD: 50) | • *The minute they got him in for questioning, he clammed up.* • *You'll clam up if you know what's good for you.* * Closing one's mouth in the way that a clam closes up. (DAI: 101)

68. a cold fish

- **a cold fish** a person who seems unfriendly and without strong emotions (276) | • He is not very demonstrative, but his mother was a cold fish so he probably gets it from her. (CID: 77)

69. to come out of one's shell

- **come out of your shell** to become less shy and more confident when talking to other people (1360) | • *Tom used to be very withdrawn but he's really come out of his shell since Susan took an interest in him.* (CID: 370) | * As do snails and tortoises when no longer alarmed. (TTEM: 460)

70. a cow

- **cow** (*slang, disapproving*) an offensive word for a woman • *You stupid cow!* (339)

71. to cry wolf

- **cry wolf** to call for help when you do not need it, with the result that when you do need it people do not believe you (354) | • *Pay no attention. She's just crying wolf again.* • *Don't cry wolf too often. No one will come.* (DAI: 135) | * **wolf! wolf!** / **cry wolf** From the fable of the bored shepherd boy who shouted 'Wolf' merely for the excitement and company of villagers coming to help, and who afterwards was not believed when he shouted for a real wolf. (TTEM: 794)

72. a cuckoo in the nest

- **a cuckoo in the nest** sb who is part of a group of people but different from them and not liked by them (CID: 89) | sb who shares in or takes over privileges, tasks that belong to others [the reason why one is not liked by others given] (ODCIE: 124) | • *For Peter, his new father was a cuckoo in the nest.* (CID: 89)

73. a culture vulture

- **culture vulture** (*humorous*) a person who is very interested in serious art, music, literature. etc. (357) | (*informal, derogatory*) a 'hanger-on' of the arts; a person who attends lectures and concerts, visits art galleries, reads the 'best' books, etc. as a matter of duty rather than pleasure, and partly or mostly to increase his own prestige [more precise and probably a slightly different meaning given] (ODCIE:125) | • *She's a bit of a culture vulture. She'll only visit places that have at least art gallery.* (CID: 89)

74. Curiosity killed the cat.

- **curiosity killed the cat** (*saying*) used to tell sb not to ask questions or try to find out about things that do not concern them (358) | • *'Why are you going away so suddenly?' 'Curiosity killed the cat.'* (CID: 89)

75. Do bears shit in the woods?

- **Do bears shit in the woods?** (*humorous, taboo*) used to say that the answer to a question you have just been asked is obviously 'yes' • *Would the children like to go to Disneyland? Do bears shit in the woods?* (CID: 23)

76. dog-tired

- **dog-tired** (informal) very tired (432) | **be dog tired** be very tired, esp. after work or physical exertion and as a temporary condition [more specific meaning given] (ODCIE: 48) | • He usually got home at around seven o'clock, dog-tired after a long day in the office. (CID: 105)

77. **Don't count your chickens (before they're hatched).**

- **don't count your chickens (before they are hatched)** (saying) you should not be confident that sth will be successful, because sth may still go wrong (332) | • You might be able to get a loan from the bank, but don't count your chickens. (CID: 84)

78. **Don't put the cart before the horse.**

- **put the cart before the horse** to put or do things in the wrong order (216) | **Don't put the cart before the horse.** (Proverb) do not do things in the wrong order (this can imply that the person you are addressing is impatient) [the negative form and more precise meaning given] • Tune the guitar first, then play it. Don't put the cart before the horse. (DAI: 165)

79. **a donkey work**

- **donkey work** (informal) the hard boring part of a job or task (434) | (British, American & Australian English) (CID: 266) | **do the donkey work** do the drudgery, esp. hard work and/or uninteresting part of the work as contrasted with the parts that require skill and reflect credit on the doer [more precise meaning given] (ODCIE: 146) | • Why do I have to do all the donkey work while you get to do the interesting stuff? * In the past, donkeys were used to carry heavy loads. (CID: 466)

80. **donkey's year**

- **donkey's year** (British English, informal) a very long time • We've known each other for donkey's year. (434) | * From the belief that donkeys are long-lived. (TTEM: 242)

81. **down the rabbit hole**

- **down the rabbit hole** to go down the rabbit hole is to enter a period of chaos or confusion; can also be said when taking a hallucinogenic as some suspect Carroll's novel was really about a drug trip • *School's starting up again, time to "go down the rabbit hole" once more.* * An allusion to Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland.¹⁶

82. **an eager beaver**

- **eager beaver** (informal) an enthusiastic person who works very hard (460) | sb who is, or who makes himself, particularly enthusiastic and busy about sth, often in minor matters and, without any particular need [more precise meaning given]; formerly US army slang for a particularly zealous recruit who is anxious to please [more narrowed meaning given, suggests a future process of the generalization] (ODICE: 161) | • Who's the eager beaver who came in at the weekend to finish this work off? * A beaver is a small animal which people traditionally believe to be hard-working. (CID: 115)

¹⁶ <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=go+down+the+rabbit+hole>

83. an early bird

- **an early bird** (humorous) a person who gets up, arrives, etc. very early (461) | • Ellen's the early bird in this house, not me. (CID: 115)

84. The early bird catches the worm.

- **The early bird catches the worm.** if you wake up and get to work early, you will succeed; sometimes used to remark that someone is awake and working surprisingly early (DIA: 181)
- **the early bird catches the worm** (saying) the person who takes the opportunity to do sth before other people will have an advantage over them [a different meaning given] (461) | • If you see a job that interests you, apply as soon as possible. The early bird catches the worm. (CID: 115-116)

85. to feed/throw someone to the lions

- **feed/throw sb to the lions** to cause sb to be in a situation where they are criticized strongly or treated badly and not try to protect them • *No one prepared me for the audience's hostility – I really felt I'd been fed to the lions.* (CID: 245)

86. to ferret someone/something out

- **ferret sb/sth out** (*informal*) to discover information or to find sb/sth by searching thoroughly (546) | **ferret sth out of sb/sth /ferret sth out** (*figurative*) to get, remove, or retrieve sth from sb or sth, usually with cunning and persistence [more precise and a slightly different meaning given] • *I tried very hard, but I couldn't ferret the information out of the clerk.* • *I had to ferret out the answers one by one.* (DAI: 207)

87. to fight like cat(s) and dog(s)

- **fight like cat(s) and dog(s)** (*British, Australian & American English*) to argue violently all the time • *We get on very well as adults but as kids we fought like cat and dog.* (CID: 63)

88. Fine feathers make fine birds.

- **Fine feathers make fine birds.** (proverb) if you dress elegantly, people will think you are elegant (DAI: 212) | an eye-catching outward appearance is necessary if one wants to attract attention, make a good impression, etc.; (ironic) an impressive or showy appearance is no indication of merit or ability (ODICE: 186) | • Bill: I don't see why I should have to wear a necktie for a job interview. Jane: Fine feathers make fine birds. (DAI: 212) | * It is not only fine feathers that make fine birds. FABLE: The peacock and the jay (AESOP 620-560 BC) (ODCIE: 186)

89. to fish for compliments

- **fish for sth** to try to get sth, or to find out sth, although you are pretending not to (561) | (never passive) (CPVD: 108) | **fish for compliments** to try to make sb praise you, often by criticizing yourself to them • (usually in continuous tenses) Emma, you know you don't look fat in that dress. Are you fishing for compliments? (CID: 144)

90. to fish in troubled waters

- **fish in troubled waters** (*figurative*) to involve oneself in a difficult, confused, or dangerous situation, esp. with a view to gaining an advantage • Frank is fishing in troubled waters by buying

more shares of that company. They are supposed to be in financial difficulties. • The company could make more money by selling armaments abroad, but they would be fishing in troubled waters.(DAI: 214)

91. a flea market

- **flea market** an outdoor market that sells second-hand goods at low prices (569)

92. to flog a dead horse

- **flog a dead horse** (British English, informal) to waste your effort by trying to do sth that is no longer possible (572) | to insist on talking about something that no one is interested in, or that has already been thoroughly discussed. [more concrete meaning given] (DAI: 220) | (British, American, Australian) • (usually in continuous tenses) You're flogging a dead horse trying to persuade Simon to come to Spain with us – he hates going abroad. (CID: 97) | • The history teacher lectured us every day about the importance of studying history, until we begged him to stop flogging a dead horse. (DAI: 220)

93. a fly on the wall

- **a fly on the wall** a person who watches others without being noticed (576) | if you say you would like to be a fly on the wall in a certain situation, you mean that you would like to be there secretly to see and hear what happens [a different point of view given] • I'd give anything to be a fly on the wall when she tells him. (CID: 148)

94. to frogmarch

- **frogmarch sb** + adverb/preposition (*British English*) to force sb to go somewhere by holding their arms tightly so they have to walk along with you • *He was grabbed by two men and frogmarched out of the hall.* (602)

95. to get one's goat

- **get sb's goat** (informal) to annoy sb very much (624) | **get your goat** • *It really gets my goat when people push past without saying 'Excuse me'.* (CID: 164)

96. Give a dog a bad name.

- **give a dog a bad name** (*saying*) when a person already has a bad reputation, it is difficult to change it because others will continue to blame or suspect him/her (431) | **give a dog a bad/ill name (and hang him)** (ODCIE: 225) | (*old-fashioned*) • *People were quick to blame local youths for the fire. Give a dog a bad name.* (CID:104)

97. to give someone a buzz

- **give sb a buzz** (informal) to telephone sb • I'll give you a buzz on Monday, OK? (196)

98. to go ape

- **go ape** (esp. North American English, slang) to become extremely angry or excited (55) | (informal) • Vicky'll go ape when she sees this mess. (CID: 9)

99. to go to the dogs

- **go to the dogs** (informal) to get into a very bad state (431) | if a country or an organization is going to the dogs, it is becoming less successful than it was in the past [more precise meaning given] • (usually in continuous tenses) They sat in the bar the night before election, moaning that the country was going to the dogs. (CID: 10) | • This firm's gone to the dogs since the new management took over. (431)

100. goose bumps

- **goose bumps** (*esp. North American English*) a condition in which there are raised spots on your skin because you feel cold, frightened or excited (647) | • *When I hear that old song, I get goose bumps.* (DAI: 269)

101. a guinea pig

- **guinea pig** a person used in medical or other experiments (667) | **use someone as a guinea-pig** (TTEM: 840) | • Students in fifty schools are to act as guinea pigs for these new teaching methods. (667) | * As medical researches try out new drugs etc. on guinea-pigs and other animals. (TTEM: 840)

102. Has the cat got your tongue?

- **the cat's got sb's tongue** (*informal*) said to or about sb, esp. a shy child, who does not answer when spoken to, or is silent when he should say sth (ODCIE: 94) | **Has the cat got your tongue?** • *Well, has the cat got your tongue? I'm waiting for an explanation.* (CID: 63)

103. to hatch something (up)

- **hatch sth (up)** to create a plan or an idea, esp. in secret • Have you been hatching up a deal with her? (687)

104. to have a bee in one's bonnet

- **have a bee in your bonnet (about sth)** (*informal*) to think or talk about sth all the time and to think that it is very important (118) | esp. sth that other people do not think is important • (often + **about**) *She's got a real bee in her bonnet about people keeping their dogs under control.* (CID: 26) | * Bees are thought to be connected with the soul and are therefore admitted to the Muslim Paradise. They were also thought to be the messengers for the gods and that is why bee-keeper tells his bees the family news. Fancies, conceits, dreams and obsessions were often called 'bees'. (TTEM: 451)

105. to have a frog in one's throat

- **have, etc. a frog in your throat** to lose your voice or be unable to speak clearly for a short time (602) | (informal) • Excuse me, I've got a bit of frog in my throat. (CID: 154)

106. to have a memory like an elephant

- **have a memory like an elephant** to be very good at remembering things • 'I remember where I first saw her – it was at Tim Fisher's party about ten years ago.' 'Yes, you're right – you've got a memory like and elephant!' * Elephants are believed to have good memories. (CID: 265)

107. to have a whale of something

- **a whale of a ...** (*American English*) sth very good or large (TTEM: 153) | **have a whale of a time** (*informal*) to enjoy yourself very much; to have a very good time [very specific meaning given] (1692) | *Whale* is a way of saying *big* • *We had a whale of time at Sally's birthday party.* (DAI: 287)

108. to have ants in one's pants

- **have ants in your pants** (*informal*) to be very excited or impatient about sth and unable to stay still (52) | (*humorous*) • *She's got ants in her pants because she's going to a party tonight.* (CID: 9) | • *I always get ants in my pants before a test.* * On the image of someone suffering a great discomfort as if having actual ants in the pants. (DAI: 16)

109. to have bigger/other fish to fry

- **have bigger/other fish to fry** to have more important or more interesting things to do (561) | • I couldn't waste my time trying to reach an agreement with them, I had other fish to fry. (CID: 144)

110. to have butterflies (in one's stomach)

- **have butterflies (in your stomach)** (*informal*) to have a nervous feeling in your stomach before doing sth (195) | • *She had butterflies in her stomach as she walked out onto the stage.* (CID: 57)

111. to have to (go and) see a man about a horse

- **have to (go and) see a man about a horse** (*catchphrase*) absent oneself on unspecified business; go to urinate (*euphemistic*) • *'Do you want to hear me practise my new piano piece, Dad?'* *'Can't,'* said his father rising. *'I have to go and see a man about a horse. Ask your mother to listen to you.'* (ODCIE: 273)

112. a hen night/party

- **a hen night/party** (*British & Australian English*) a party for women only, esp. one that is organized for a woman who is soon going to get married • *Barbara's having her hen night a week before the wedding.* (CID: 194)

113. Hold your horses!

- **hold your horses** (*informal*) used to tell sb that they should wait a moment and not be so excited that they take action without thinking about it first (726) | • *Just hold your horses, Bell. Let's think about this for a moment.* (CID: 199) | * Probably among cowboys. (TTEM: 338)

114. to horse about/around

- **horse about/around** (*informal*) to play in a way that is noisy and not very careful so that you could hurt sb or damage sth (726) | • *He was horsing around in the kitchen and broke one of my favourite mugs.* (CPVD: 161)

115. Horses for courses.

- **horses for courses** (*British English*) the act of matching people with suitable jobs or tasks (726) | (*Australian English*) sth that you say which means that it is important to choose suitable people for particular activities because everyone has different skills [more precise meaning given] • *Ah well,*

horses for courses. Just because a plumber can mend your washing machine, it doesn't follow that he can mend your car as well. (CID: 204) | * This expression refers to the fact that horses race better on a track that suits them.(726)

116. hot enough to burn the polar bear's butt

- **hot enough to burn the polar bear's butt** (rural) very hot (used to describe weather) • Every day in August was hot enough to burn a polar bear's butt. • Even in October, it was hot enough to burn a polar bear's butt. (DAI: 311)

117. to hound someone

- **hound sb** to keep following sb and not to leave them alone, esp. in order to get sth from them or ask them questions • *They were hounded day and night by the press.* (729)

118. I could eat a horse.

- **I could eat a horse** (informal) used to say that you are very hungry (463) | • I've had nothing but a sandwich today – I could eat a horse. (CID: 118)

119. If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

- **if you offer peanuts, you'll get monkeys** (TTEM: 114) | **If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.** sth that you say which means that only stupid people will work for you if you do not pay very much • 'This company is full of incompetents!' 'Well, if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.' (CID: 307)

120. It's a dog's life.

- **a dog's life** an unhappy life, full of problems or unfair treatment (431) | **It's a dog's life.** • *I've got to go to the supermarket, then cook a meal, then pick Dave up from the station – it's a dog's life!* (CID: 104)

121. a kangaroo court

- **kangaroo court** (disapproving) an illegal court that punished people unfairly (815) | • A kangaroo court was set up by the strikers to deal with people who had refused to stop working. (CID: 216)

122. to keep the wolf from the door

- **keep the wolf from the door** (*informal*) to have enough money to avoid going hungry; to stop sb feeling hungry (1710) | to maintain oneself at a minimal level; to keep from starving, freezing, etc. [more general meaning given] (DAI: 373) | • *Forty percent of the country's population receive part-time wages that barely keep the wolf from the door.* (CID: 218) * A wolf is the type of predator that waits for its victim to become so weak as to be unable to resist. A wolf at the door is, therefore, a constant menace. (TTEM: 654)

123. to kill the goose that lays the golden egg

- **kill the goose that lays the golden egg/eggs** (*saying*) to destroy sth that would make you rich, successful, etc. (820) | • *If you sell your shares now, you could be killing the goose that lays the golden egg.* (CID: 221)

124. to kill two birds with one stone

- **kill two birds with one stone** to achieve two things at the same time with one action (820) | • I killed two birds with one stone and saw some old friends while was in Leeds visiting my parents. (CID: 221)

125. A leopard can't/doesn't change its spots.

- **a leopard cannot change its spots** (*saying*) people cannot change their character, esp. if they have a bad character (851) | **A leopard can't/doesn't change its spots.** • *I doubt very much that marriage will change Chris for the better. A leopard doesn't change its spots.* (CID: 236)

126. Let sleeping dogs lie.

- **let sleeping dogs lie** (*saying*) to avoid mentioning a subject or sth that happened in the past, in order to avoid any problems or arguments (1396) | • Jill: Should I ask the boss if he's upset at my coming in late in the mornings? Jane: If he hasn't said anything about it, just let sleeping dogs lie. • I thought I would ask Jill if she wanted me to pay her back right away, but then I decided to let sleeping dogs lie. (DAI:398) | * It is nought good a sleeping hound to wake. [G. Chaucer: *T&C III.764 – 1374*] (TTEM: 569)

127. to let the cat out of the bag

- **let the cat out of the bag** to tell a secret carelessly or by mistake • *I wanted it to be a surprise, but my sister let the cat out of the bag.* (219) | * From a trick of offering a cat in a bag as a piglet for sale. (TTEM: 514)

128. like a bat out of hell

- **like a bat out of hell** (informal) very fast (108) | • He ran out of the building like a bat out of hell. (CID: 21)

129. like sheep

- **like sheep** (disapproving) if people behave like sheep, they all do what the others are doing, without thinking for themselves (1360) | * Because each sheep acts with the flock. (TTEM: 261)

130. the lion's share

- **the lion's share (of sth)** (*British English*) the largest or best part of sth when it is divided (867) | • *The lion's share of the museum's budget goes on special exhibitions.* (CID: 244) | * From the Aesop's fable where the lion claimed the largest share of the spoil, and none of his fellow hunters dared to dispute it. (TTEM: 792)

131. A little bird told me (so).

- **a little bird told me** (informal) used to say that sb told sth but you do not want to say who it was (870) | sometimes used playfully, when you think that the person you are addressing knows or can guess who was the source of your information (DAI: 407) | **A little bird told me (so).** • 'So who told you she'd got the job?' 'Oh, let's just say a little bird told me so.' (CID: 245)

132. a lone wolf

- **a lone wolf** a person who prefers to be alone (876) | • The typical role for Bogart was the Casablanca character, a lone wolf, cynical but heroic. (CID: 248)

133. to look like a drowned rat

- **look like a drowned rat** to be very wet, esp. because you have been in heavy rain • I had to cycle home in a rain and came in looking like a drowned rat. (CID: 250)

134. a male chauvinist pig

- **male chauvinist pig** a man who does not think women are equal to men (1106)

135. a monkey business

- **monkey business** (informal) dishonest or silly behaviour (956) | **monkey-business/monkey-tricks** (TTEM: 114) | • So what kind of monkey business have you kids been up to while I was out? • The tax inspectors discovered that there had been some monkey business with the account. (CID: 273)

136. a monkey suit

- **monkey suit** (jocular) a tuxedo • Do I have to wear a monkey suit to dinner? • All the men except me wore monkey suits at dinner in the cruise * Possibly in reference to the fancy suit worn by an organ-grinder's monkey. (DIA: 440)

137. a night owl

- **night owl** (informal) a person who enjoys staying up late at night (996) | sb who often goes to bed late because they prefer to do things at night [more precise meaning given] • A night owl from his youth, he is rarely in bed before 4 o'clock. (CID: 284)

138. none of one's beeswax

- **none of your beeswax** (*American & Australian English, informal*) an impolite way of saying that you do not want sb to know about your private life (CID: 26) | (*jocular*) none of sb's business [more general meaning given] (DAI: 453) | • 'So where the heck have you been?' 'None of your beeswax!' (CID: 26)

139. to not look a gift horse in the mouth

- **look a gift horse in the mouth** (usually with negatives) (*informal*) to refuse or criticize sth that is given to you for nothing (630) | • Okay, it's not the job of your dreams but it pays good money. I'd be inclined not to look a gift horse in the mouth if I were you. (CID: 249) | * John Stanbridge, *Vulgaria* sig C4 (c. 1520) (TTEM: 228)

140. not room to swing a cat

- **no room to swing a cat** (*informal*) when sb says there's no room to swing a cat, they mean that a room is very small and that there is not enough space (1286) | **not room to swing a cat** • There isn't room to swing a cat in the third room, it's so tiny. • Get a sofa in the living room? You'll be lucky – there isn't room to swing a cat in there. (CID: 349)

141. one swallow doesn't make a summer

- **one swallow doesn't make a summer** (*saying*) you must not take too seriously a small sign that sth is happening or will happen in the future, because the situation could change (1507) | often

used as warning against premature optimism (ODCIE: 439) | • *Amanda: I got a good grade in this quiz! My troubles in school are over. Nancy: One swallow does not a summer make.* (DAI: 475)

142. a one-horse town

- **one-horse town** (informal) a small town with not many interesting things to do or places to go to (1026) | (American & Australian English) • Grafton's a real one-horse town with only one grocery store and nothing to do in the evening. (CID: 296) | * From the notion that a place that only supported one horse must be very poor. (TTEM: 338)

143. an outbreak monkey

- **outbreak monkey** person who goes to school or work even though he or she is sick, this person spreads germs and eventually makes everyone else in the class or office sick • *Did you know Janice is here even though she has a fever of 103? Don't get too close to the outbreak monkey!* • *Stay home when you're sick. No one likes an outbreak monkey.*¹⁷

144. a paper tiger

- **paper tiger** a person, a country or a situation that seems or claims to be powerful or dangerous but is not really (1063) | • *Will the United Nations be able to make any difference, or is it just a paper tiger?* (CID: 304)

145. to parrot someone/something

- **parrot** sb/sth (disapproving) to repeat what sb else has said without thinking what it means (1068)

146. parrot-fashion

- **parrot-fashion** (*British English, disapproving*) if sb learns or repeats sth parrot-fashion, they do it without thinking about it or understanding what it means (1068) | (British & Australian English) • *When I went to Sunday school, we had to recite passages from the Bible parrot-fashion* * A parrot is a bird that can repeat words and noises it has just heard (CID: 305)

147. a party animal

- **a party animal** (informal) sb who likes going to parties a lot and goes to as many as possible • She was a real party animal at college. I don't remember her ever staying in in the evening. (CID: 305)

148. pet

- **pet** (only before noun) that you are very interested in (1095) | is used metaphorically to talk about a theory, idea, or subject which sb strongly believes in and supports • She was heartily fed up with her husband's pet project. (EG: 39-40)

149. a pet

- **pet** (usually disapproving) a person who is given special attention by sb, esp. in a way that seems unfair to other people • She's the **teacher's pet**. (1095)

¹⁷ <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=outbreak+monkey>

150. a pig

- **pig** (*informal, disapproving*) an unpleasant or offensive person; a person who is dirty or greedy • *Arrogant pig!* • *Don't be such a pig!* • *She made a pig of herself with the ice cream (= ate too much).* (1106)

151. to pigeonhole someone (as something)

- **pigeonhole** sb (**as** sth) to decide that sb belongs to a particular group or type without thinking deeply enough about it and considering what other qualities they might have • *He has been pigeonholed as a children's writer.* (1106)

152. Pigs might fly.

- **pigs might fly** (*British English*) (*North American English when pigs fly*) (*ironic, saying*) used to show that you do not believe sth will ever happen (1106) | **pigs might fly – but they aren't very likely birds** (TTEM: 276) | • *'With a bit of luck, we'll be finished by the end of the year.'* • *'Yes, and pigs might fly!'* (1106)

153. to play cat and mouse

- **play cat and mouse** to try to defeat sb by tricking them into making a mistake so that you have an advantage over them • (often + **with**) The 32-year-old actress spent a large proportion of the week playing cat and mouse with the press. (CID: 317)

154. to pull a rabbit out of the hat

- **pull sth/a rabbit out of the hat** (*informal*) to suddenly produce sth as a solution to a problem (1186) | to surprise everyone by suddenly doing sth that shows a lot of skill, often in order to solve a problem [more precise meaning given] • He's one of those players who, just when you think the game's over, can pull a rabbit out of the hat. * Pulling a rabbit out of the hat is something that is often done by a person who performs magic tricks. (CID: 328)

155. puppy love

- **puppy love** feelings of love that a young person has for sb else and that adults do not think is very serious (1190) | • *At the time I was sure I would marry him when I grew up but of course it was just puppy love.* (CID: 329-330)

156. to pussyfoot (about/around)

- **pussyfoot (about/around)** (*informal, usually disapproving*) to be careful or anxious about expressing your opinion in case you upset sb (1193) | • *Stop pussyfooting around! Get on with it!* • *I wish that they would not pussyfoot around when there are tough decisions to be made.* * Alludes to a cat walking carefully. (DAI: 528)

157. to put/set the cat among the pigeons

- **put/set the cat among the pigeons** (*British English*) to say or do sth that is likely to cause trouble (220) | (*Australian English*) and makes a lot of people angry or worried • *Tell them all they've got to work on Saturday. That should set the cat among the pigeons.* (CID: 63)

158. to rabbit on (about someone/something)

- **rabbit on (about sb/sth)** (*British English, informal, disapproving*) to talk continuously about things that are not important or interesting (1204) | • *He's always rabbiting on about his stamp collection.* (CPVD: 256)

159. to ram something down someone's throat

- **ram sth down sb's throat** (*informal*) to try to force sb to listen to and accept your opinions in a way that they find annoying (1557) | • *And although he's got very strong views on such subjects, he doesn't try to ram them down your throat.* • *He's a committed Christian but he doesn't ram it down your throat.* (CID: 337)

160. to ram (something) into something

- **ram into sth/ram sth into sth** to hit against sth or to make sth hit against sth with force • He rammed his truck into the back of the one in front. (1211)

161. to run around like a headless chicken

- **run around like a headless chicken** to be very busy and active trying to do sth, but not very organized, with the result that you do not succeed (692) | (*British English*) • (usually in continuous tenses) I've got so much work to do – I've been running around like a headless chicken all week. (CID: 68)

162. a sacrificial lamb

- **sacrificial** used as a sacrifice • *a sacrificial lamb* (1302)

163. a scarecrow

- **scarecrow** man so ragged and unkempt as to present a frightful, grotesque appearance (TTEM: 336) | * Scarecrow is a figure made to look like a person, that is dressed in old clothes and put in a field to frighten birds away. (1317)

164. to separate the sheep from the goats

- **sort out/separate the sheep from the goats** to distinguish people who are good at sth, intelligent, etc. from those who are not (1360) | • *I'll look through the application forms and separate the sheep from the goats.* (CID: 370)

165. a shaggy-dog story

- **shaggy-dog story** a very long joke with a silly or disappointing ending (1355) | • Don't let John tell a shaggy-dog story. It'll go on for hours. • Mary didn't get the point of Fred's shaggy-dog story. (DAI: 600)

166. to shed/weep crocodile tears

- **crocodile tears** if sb shed crocodile tears, they pretend to be sad about sth, but they are not really sad at all (349) | **shed/weep crocodile tears** • *Political leaders shed crocodile tears while allowing the war to continue.* * Some stories say that crocodiles cry while they are eating what they have attacked. (CID: 86) | * Crocodiles were reputed to weep noisily in order to lure people to the rescue of what they imagined was a child. (TTEM: 796)

167. to smell a rat

- **smell a rat** (*informal*) to suspect that sth is wrong about a situation (1406) | esp. that sb is being dishonest • *She smelled a rat when she phoned him at the office where he was supposed to be working late and he wasn't there.* (CID: 385)

168. to smell fishy

- **fishy** (*informal*) that makes you suspicious because it seems dishonest (561) | **smell fishy** • *Webber's account of what he was doing that evening smells a bit fishy to me.* (CID: 385) | • *There's something fishy going on here.* (561)

169. a snail mail

- **snail mail** (*informal, humorous*) used esp. by people who use email to describe the system of sending letters by ordinary mail (1407) | • What's your preferred means of communication? Fax, email or snail mail? (CID: 386)

170. to squirrel something away

- **squirrel sth away** to hide or store sth so that it could be used later • She had money squirreled away in various bank accounts. (1446) | * To hide something or store something in the way that a squirrel stores nuts for use in the winter. (DAI: 638)

171. (straight) from the horse's mouth

- **(straight) from the horse's mouth** (*informal*) (of information) given by sb who is directly involved and therefore likely to be accurate (726) | • 'Are you sure she's leaving?' 'Definitely, I heard it straight from the horse's mouth.' (CID: 204) | * As if the horse itself should give a tip to a punter. (TTEM: 947)

172. the straw that breaks the camel's back

- **the last/final straw / the straw that breaks the camel's back** the last in a series of bad events, etc. that makes it impossible for you to accept a situation any longer (1475) | • *Losing my job was bad enough but having the relationship end like that was the straw that broke the camel's back.* (CID: 404)

173. to swan

- **swan + adv./prep.** (*British English, informal, disapproving*) to go around enjoying yourself in a way that annoys other people or makes them jealous • They've gone swanning off to Paris for the weekend. (1508)

174. the swansong

- **swansong** the last piece of work produced by an artist, a musician, etc. or the last performance by an actor, athlete, etc. (1508) | before death or retirement. • *His portrayal of Lear was the actor's swan song.* • *We didn't know that her performance last night was the singer's swan song.* (DAI: 663)

175. a swine

- **swine** (*informal*) an unpleasant person • *He's an arrogant little swine!* (1511)

176. to take the bull by the horns

- **take the bull by the horns** to face a difficult or dangerous situation directly and with courage (186) | Why don't you take the bull by the horns and tell him to leave? (CID: 54)

177. to talk turkey

- **talk turkey** (*esp. North American English, informal*) to talk about sth seriously (1524) | to discuss a problem in a serious way with a real intention to solve it [more precise meaning given] • *If the two sides in the dispute are to meet, they must be prepared to talk turkey.* (CID: 414) | * An anecdote that just may have given rise to the expression runs: An Indian and a paleface after their day's hunting were sharing out the bag, three crows and two turkeys. 'A crow for you, a turkey for me, a crow for you, a turkey for me...', but the Indian objected 'You talk turkey for you, crow for me.' (TTEM: 295)

178. there are plenty more fish in the sea

- **there are plenty more fish in the sea** there are many other people or things that are as good as the one sb has failed to get (561) | **there are more/other fish in the sea** said, usually, to sb who has lost a lover [a very specific meaning given, corresponding greatly with the Czech equivalent and its meaning] (TTEM: 152) | • *Don't cry over Pierre – there are plenty more fish in the sea.* (CID: 144)

179. There's more than one way to skin a cat.

- **there's more than one way to skin a cat** (saying, humorous) there are many different ways to achieve sth (1682) | **there are more ways of killing a cat than by choking it with butter/cream** (TTEM: 582) | **there are more/easier ways of killing a cat than by choking it with cream** *esp.* if you want to get rid of, or exploit, sb you should do so directly and ruthlessly instead of covering your action with flattery, pretending it is for their own good, or by other such devious means [a very concrete situation/meaning presented] (ODCIE: 546) | • It may be illegal for them to organise a strike, but they can still show the management how they feel. There's more than one way to skin a cat, you know. (CID: 296)

180. to raise like phoenix from the ashes

- **to rise like a phoenix from the ashes** to be powerful or successful again * Phoenix (in stories) is a magic bird that lives for several hundred years before burning itself and the being born again from its ashes. (1098)

181. to turn turtle

- **turn turtle** (of a boat) to turn over completely while sailing (1608) | • *We lost all our diving gear when the boat turned turtle just off the shore.* (CID: 440) | * From the practise of old sailors on the shores of equatorial Africa when they turned turtles upside down by their flippers to immobilise them. (TTEM: 142)

182. a turtle neck (sweater)

- **turtle neck / turtle neck sweater** a sweater with a high part fitting closely around the neck (1608)

183. an ugly duckling

- **ugly duckling** a person or thing that at first does not seem attractive or likely to succeed but that later becomes successful or much admired (1613) | a child, chick, puppy, etc. born less attractive than his brothers and sisters who later surpasses them [more narrowed meaning given, suggests a future process of the generalization] (ODCIE: 570) | • *The most successful company was last year's ugly duckling.* (CID: 443) | * From the title of a story by Hans Christian Andersen, in which a young swan thinks it is an ugly young duck until it grows up into a beautiful adult swan. (1613)

184. until the cows come home

- **till the cows come home** (informal) for a very long time; for ever (339) | • We could talk about this problem until the cows come home, but it wouldn't solve anything. (CID: 85) | * Referring to the end of the day, when the cows come home to be fed and milked. (DAI: 728)

185. vermin

- **vermin** (disapproving) people who are very unpleasant or dangerous to society (1654)

186. a viper

- **viper** (formal) a person who harms other people (1659)

187. to watch someone like a hawk

- **watch sb like a hawk** to watch sb very carefully, esp. because you expect them to do something wrong • I was being watched like a hawk by the shop assistant. (CID:450-451) | * Hawk is a bird that kills other creatures for food. (690)

188. When/While the cat's away (the mice will play).

- **when the cat's away the mice will play** (*saying*) people enjoy themselves more and behave with greater freedom when the person in charge of them is not there (220) | **When/While the cat's away (the mice will play).** • *Do you think it's wise to leave the children alone for so long? You know, while the cat's away...* (CID: 63)

189. a white elephant

- **white elephant** a thing that is useless and no longer needed, although it may have cost a lot of money • The new office block has become an expensive white elephant. * From the story that in Siam (now Thailand) the king would give a white elephant as a present to somebody that he did not like. That person would have to spend all their money on looking after the rare animal. (1697)

190. wild horses would not drag, make, etc. someone (do something)

- **wild horses would not drag, make, etc. sb (do sth)** used to say that nothing would prevent sb from doing sth or make them do sth they do not want to do (1701) | • **Wild horses couldn't drag me to a party.** (CID:460) | **wild horses would not drag it from me!** the promise of someone to keep a secret even under the torture of being quartered apart by four horses [more narrowed meaning given, suggests a future process of the generalization] (TTEM: 524)

191. a wolf in sheep's clothing

- **a wolf in sheep's clothing** a person who seems to be friendly or harmless but is really an enemy (1710) | • My next boss, on the surface very warm and charming, proved to be something of a wolf in sheep's clothing. (CID: 463) | * From the Aesop's fable of the wolf dressed thus in order to catch the young lambs. (TTEM: 794)

192. a wolf whistle

- **wolf whistle** a whistle with a short rising note and a long falling note, used by sb, usually a man, to show that they find sb else attractive, esp. sb passing in the street • She was fed up with the builder's wolf whistles each morning. (1710)

193. wolfish

- **wolfish** (figurative) showing sexual interest in sb • a wolfish grin (1710)

194. to work like a beaver/mule/horse

- **work like a beaver/mule/horse** to work very hard • *She has an important deadline coming up, so she's been working like a beaver.* • *I'm too old to work like a horse. I'd prefer to relax more.* (DIA: 765)

195. the world is one's oyster

- **the world is your oyster** there is no limit to the opportunities open to you (1717) | • *You're young and healthy and you've got no commitments, so the world is your oyster.* (CID: 467-468) | *The world's mine oyster. Shakespeare: *The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act II, scene II* (TTEM: 200)

196. to worm someone's way into something

- **worm your way/yourself into sth** (disapproving) to make sb like you or trust you, in order to gain some advantage for yourself • He managed to worm his way into her life (1717) | * Like a grub into an apple. (TTEM: 459)

197. wouldn't hurt/harm a fly

- **not harm/hurt a fly** to be kind and gentle and unwilling to cause unhappiness (576) | **wouldn't hurt/harm a fly** • Damian just isn't the violent type. He wouldn't hurt a fly. (CID: 148)

198. wouldn't say boo to a goose

- **not say boo to a goose** (British English) to be very shy or gentle (1314) | **can't say boo to a goose** (rural) (DAI: 85) | **wouldn't say boo to a goose** (informal) • She wouldn't say boo to a goose, so I don't think she's cut out for a career in the police. (CID: 360) | • He's so nervous he wouldn't say boo to a goose. (1314)

199. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

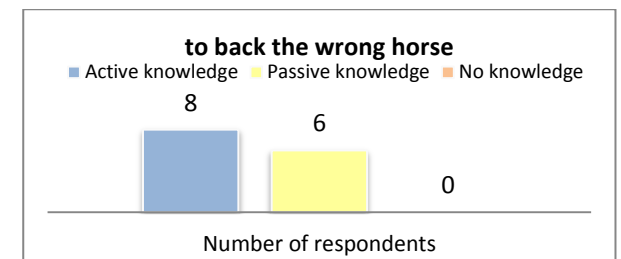
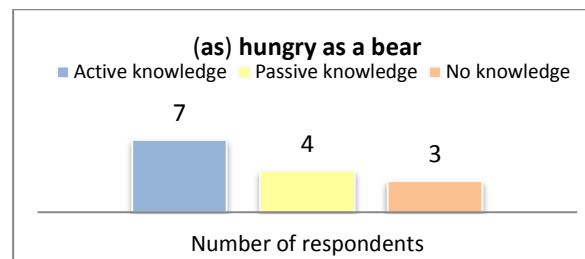
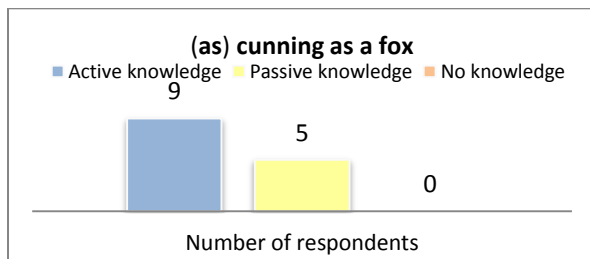
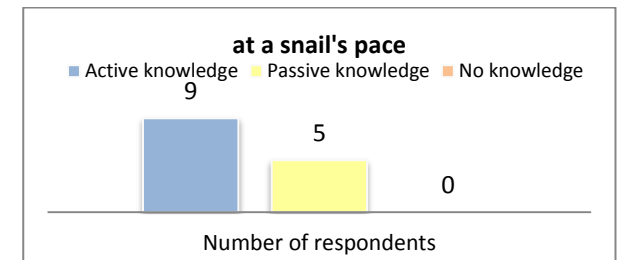
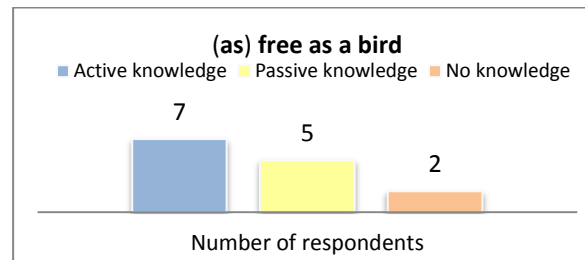
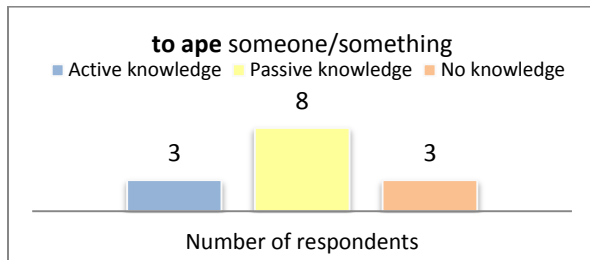
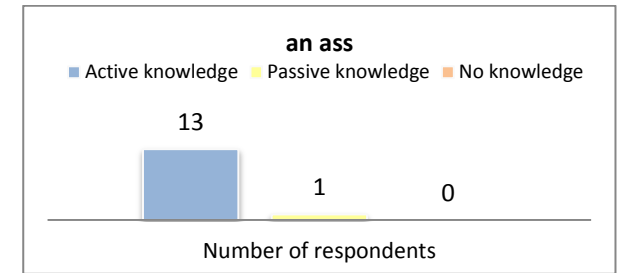
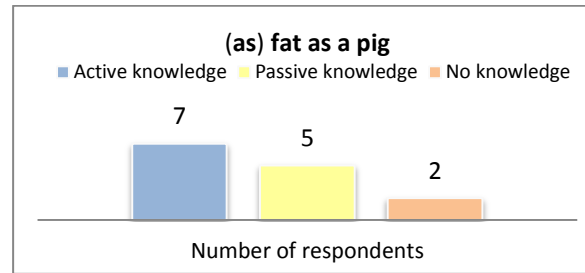
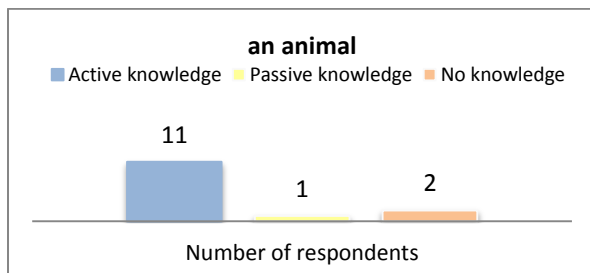
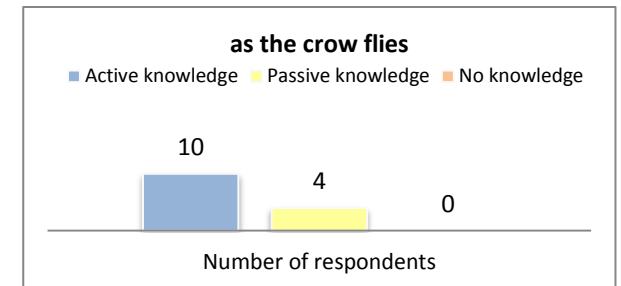
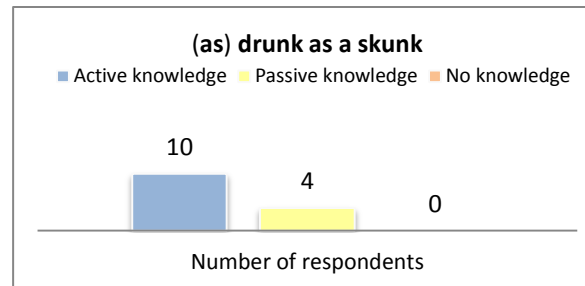
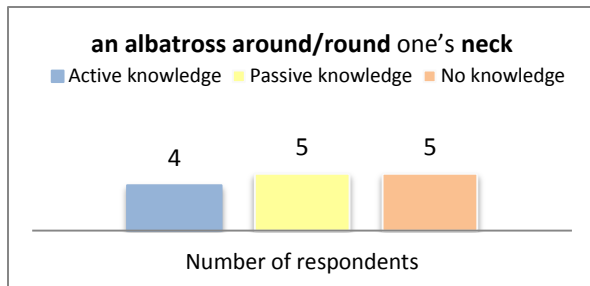
- **(you can't) teach an old dog new tricks** (*saying*) (you cannot) successfully make people change their ideas, methods of work, etc., when they have had them for a long time (1531) | usually not polite to say about the person you are talking to; you can say it about yourself or about a third person [the specification of the usage given] (DAI: 776-777) | • *You're never going to teach your*

father at the age of 79 to use a computer. You can't teach an old dog new tricks, you know. (CID: 415)

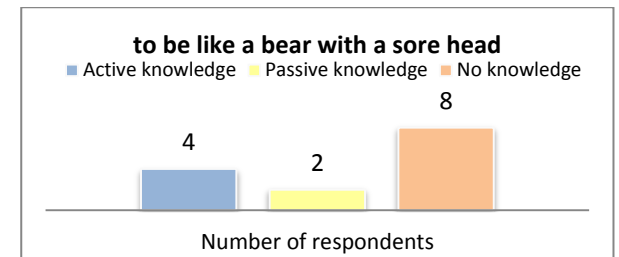
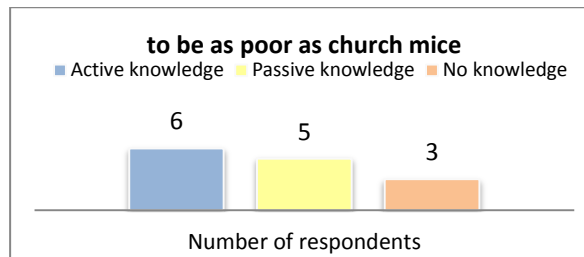
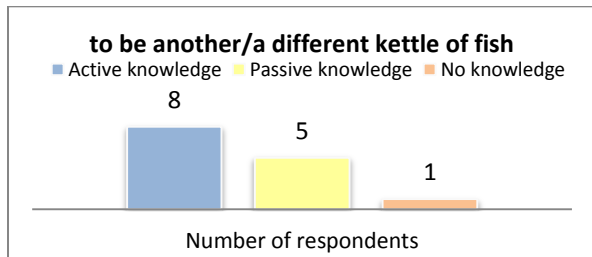
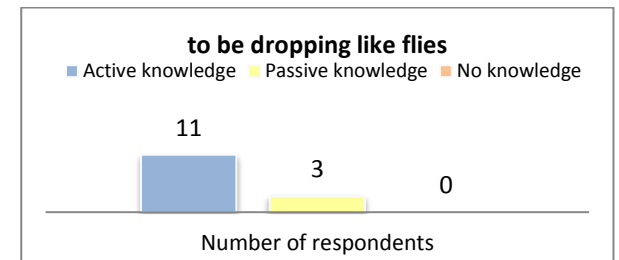
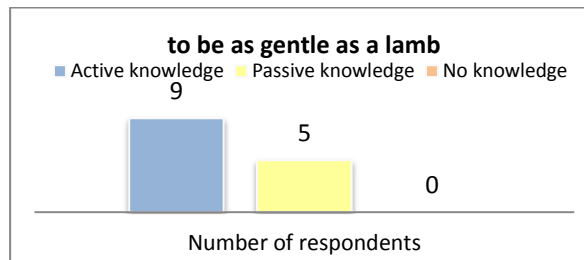
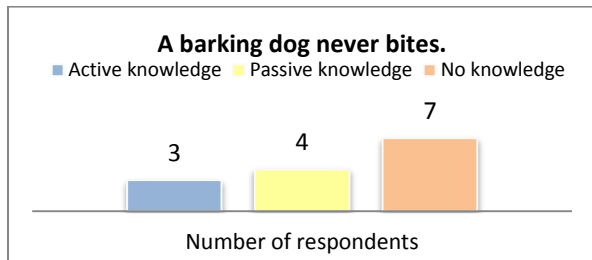
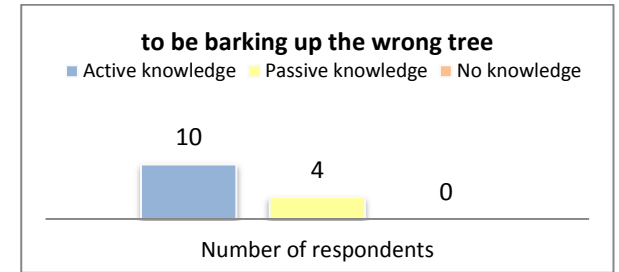
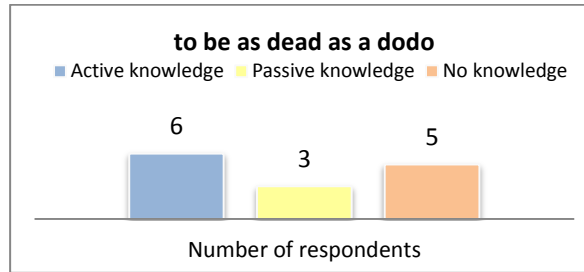
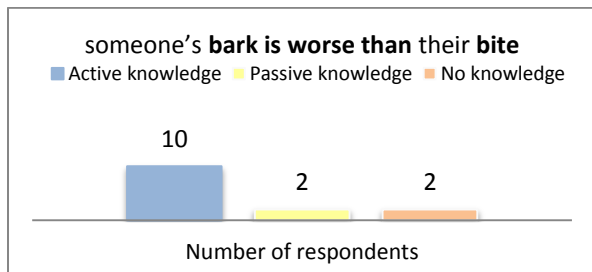
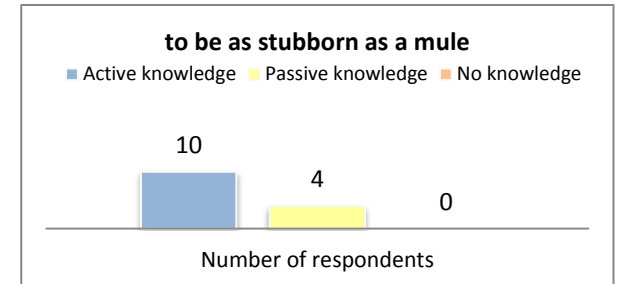
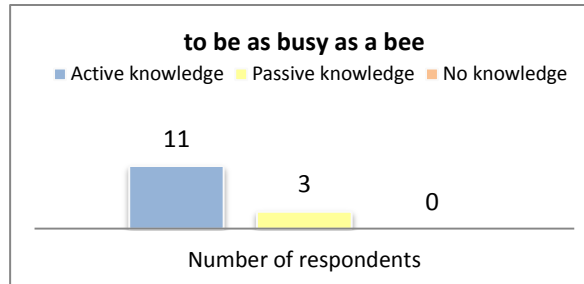
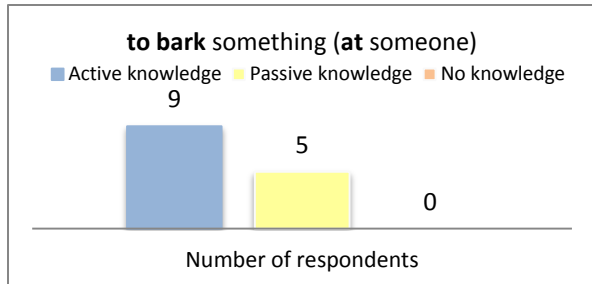
200. a zebra crossing

- **zebra crossing** (*British English*) an area with broad marked with broad black and white lines where vehicles must stop for people to walk across (1731)

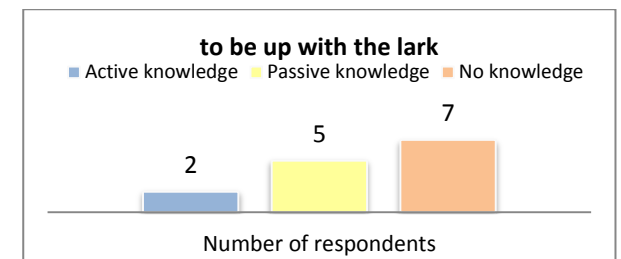
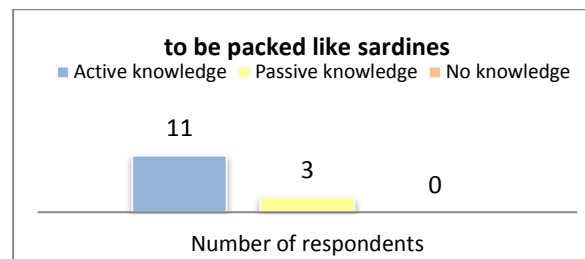
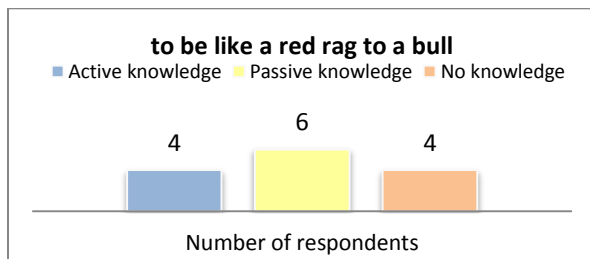
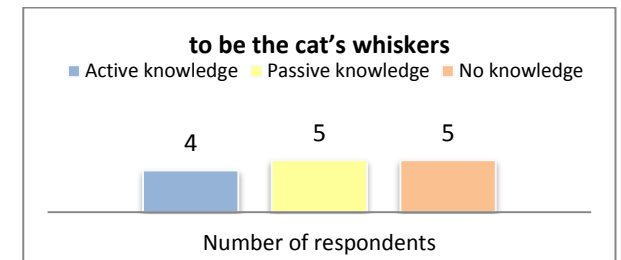
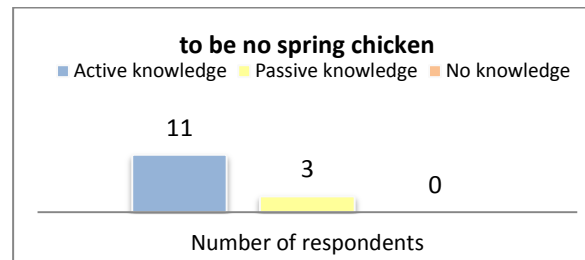
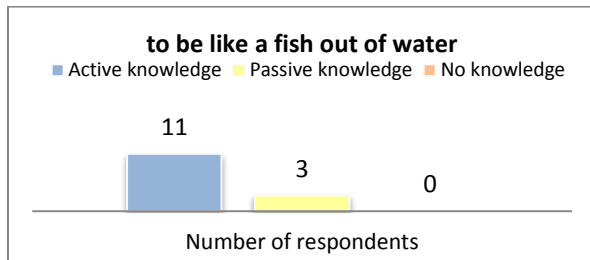
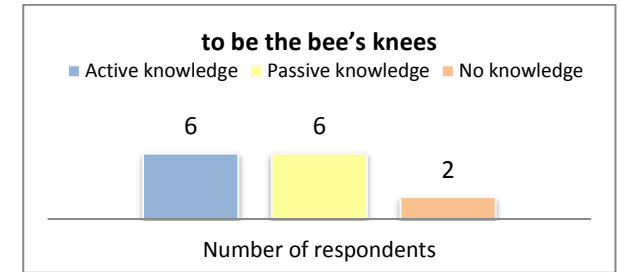
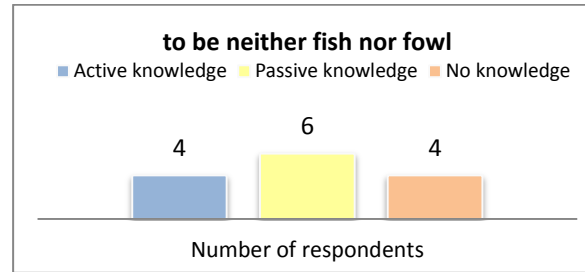
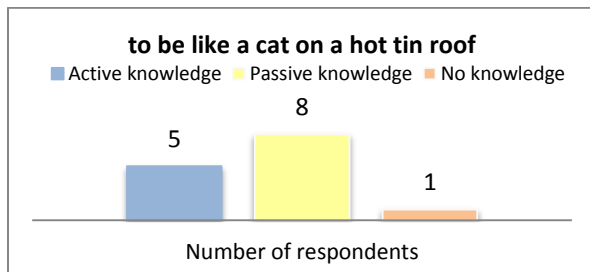
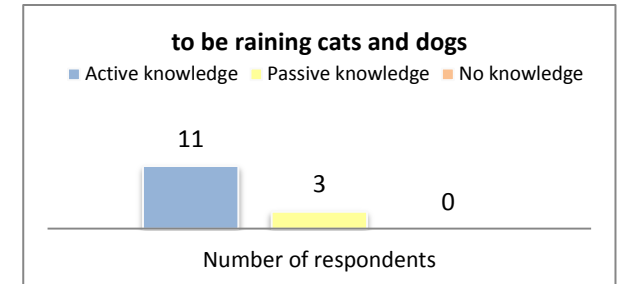
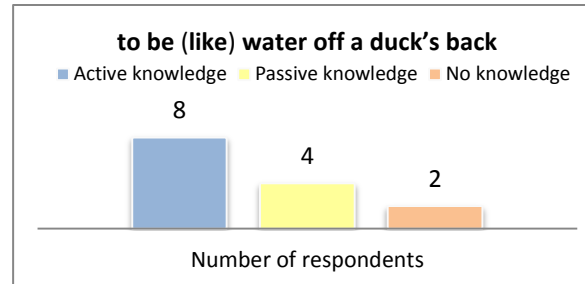
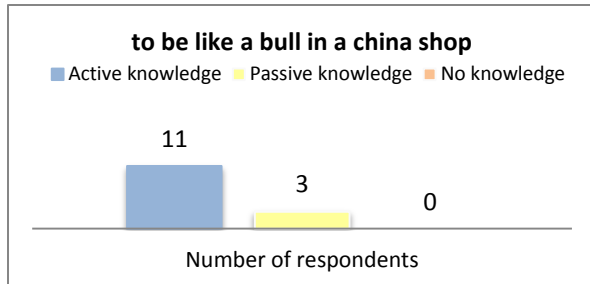
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



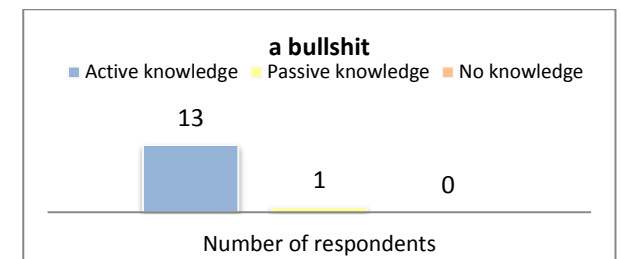
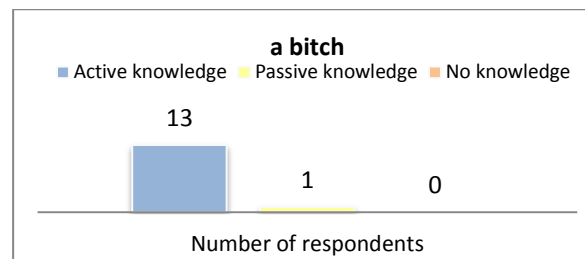
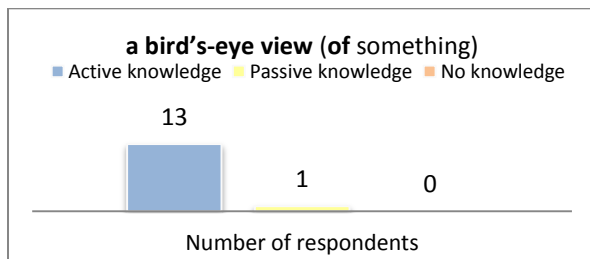
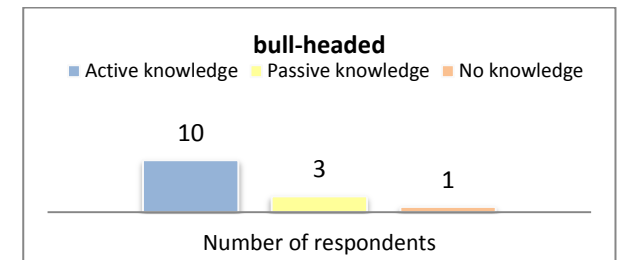
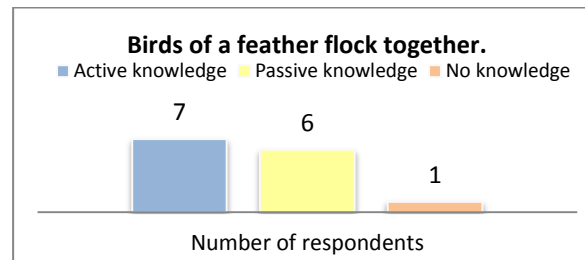
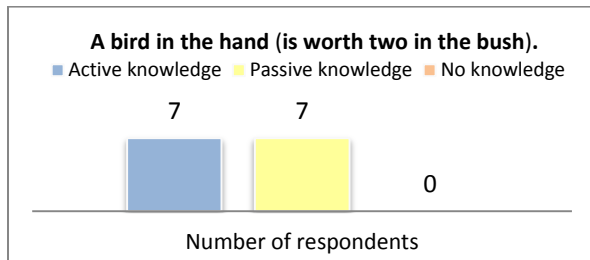
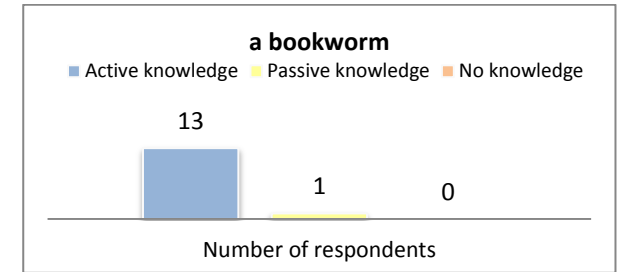
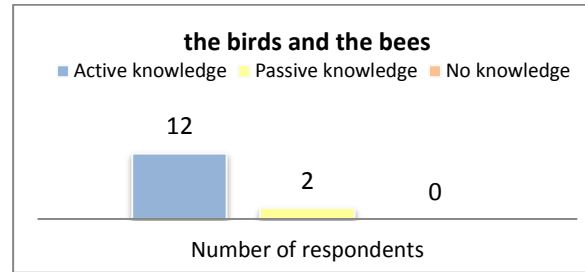
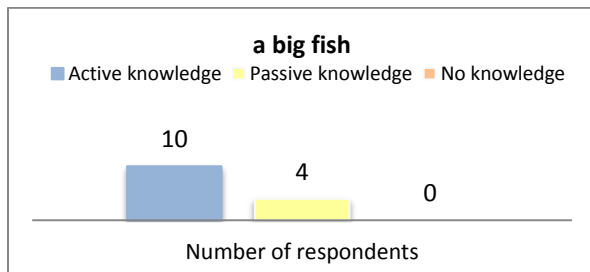
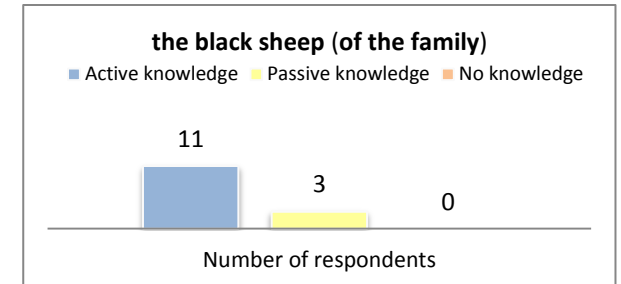
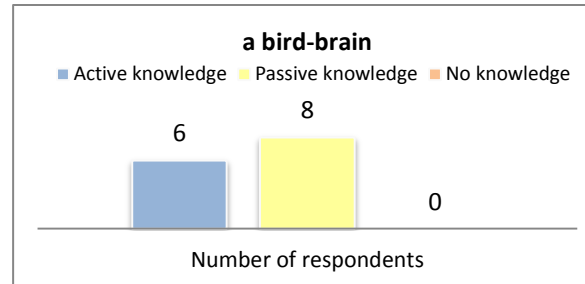
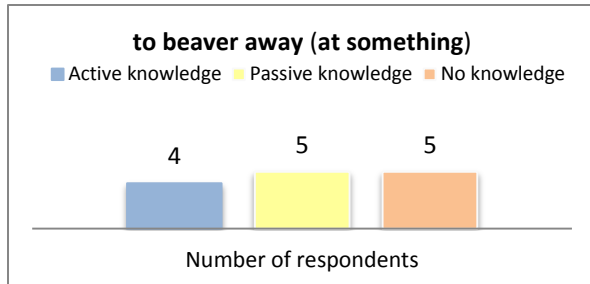
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



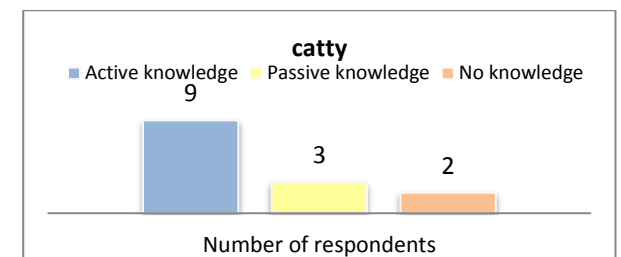
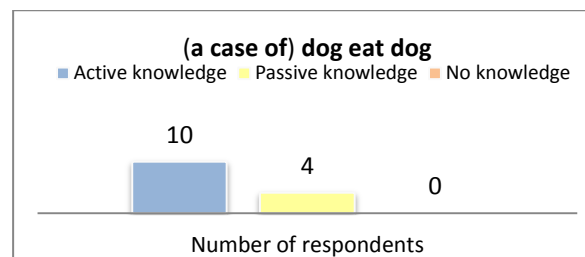
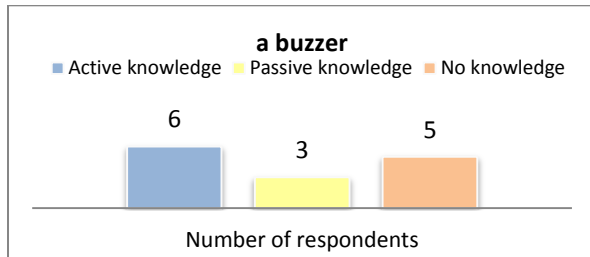
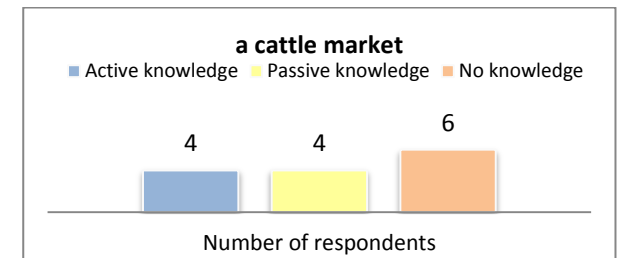
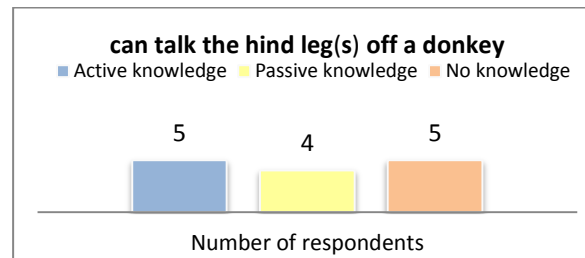
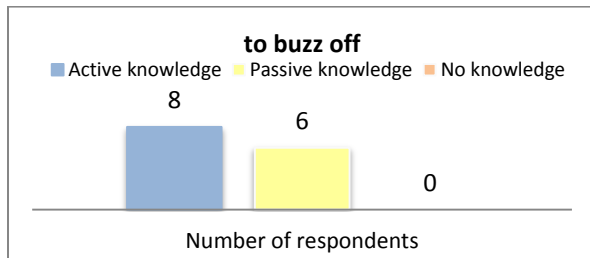
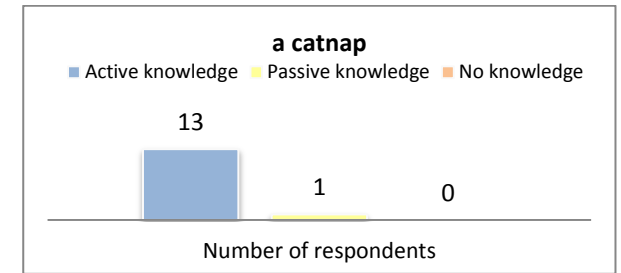
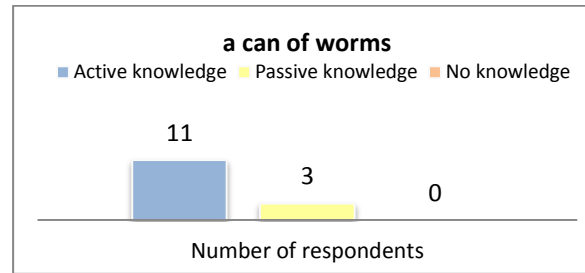
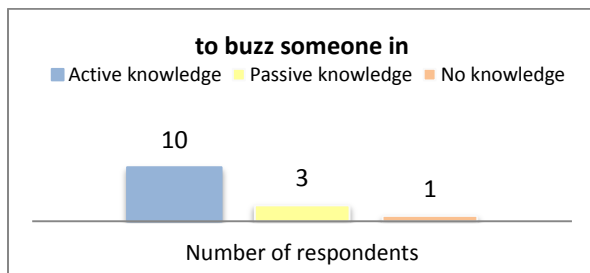
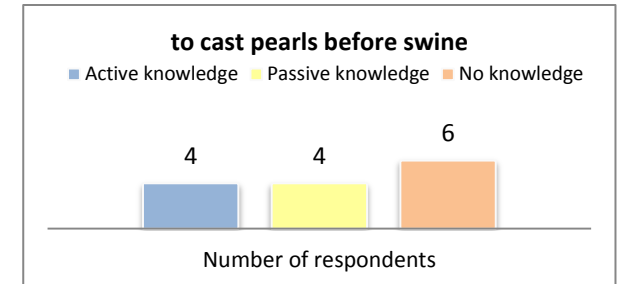
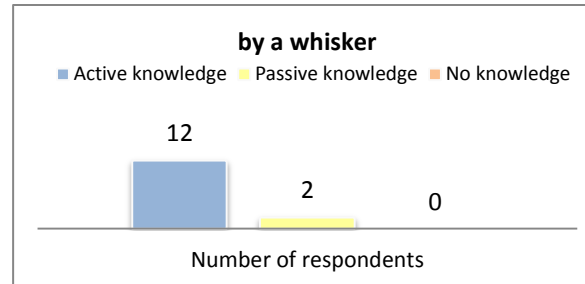
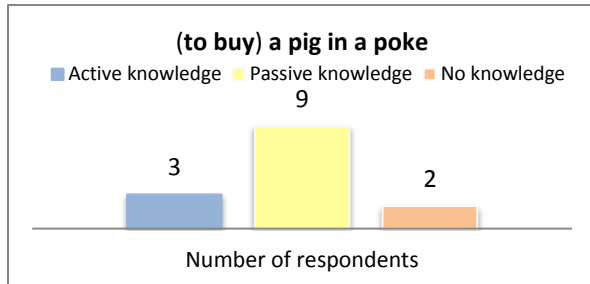
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



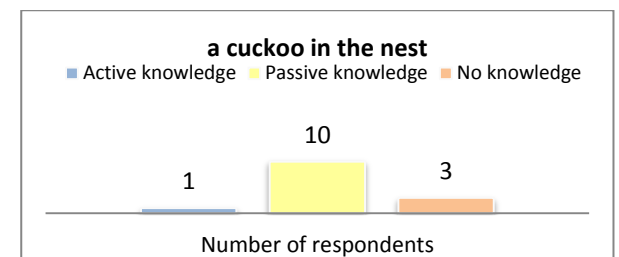
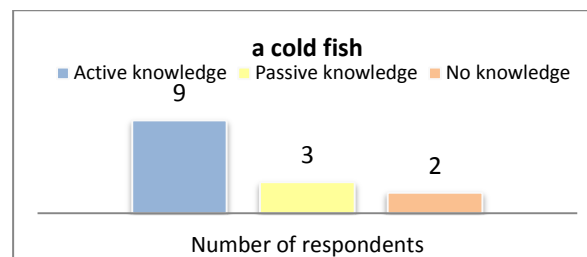
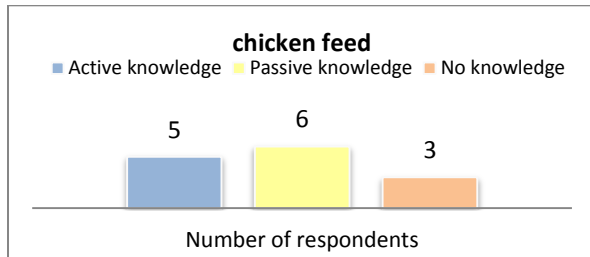
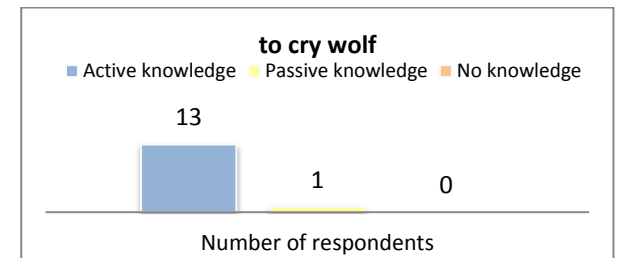
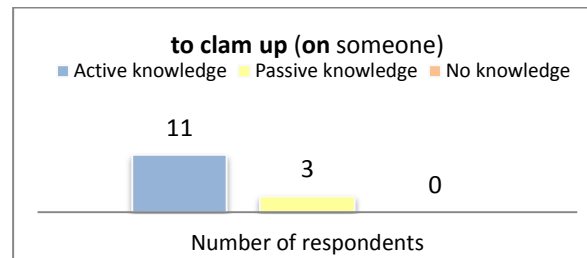
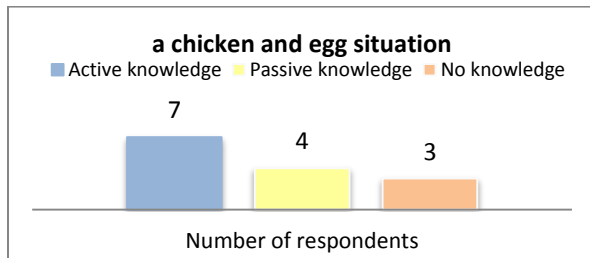
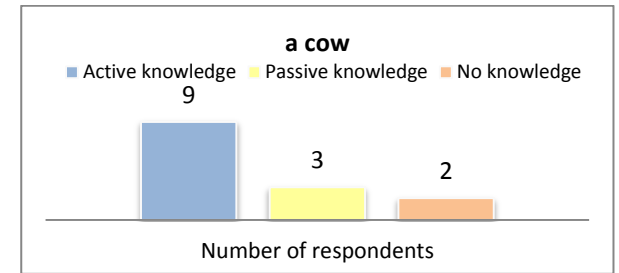
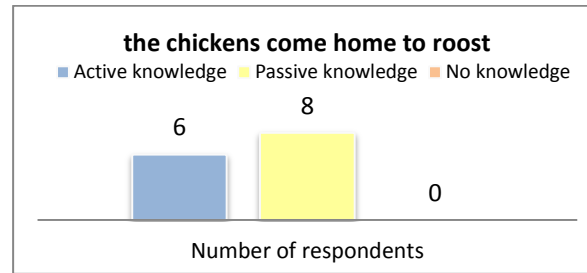
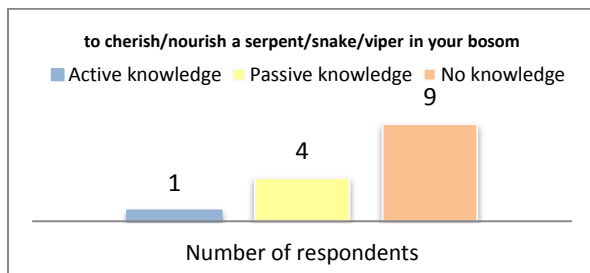
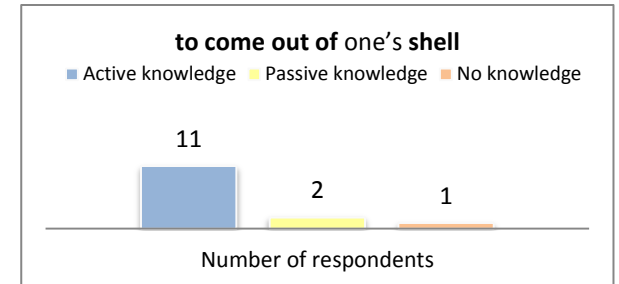
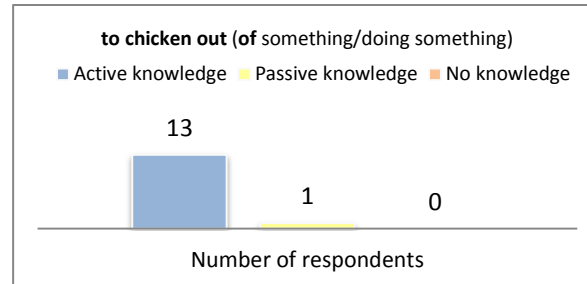
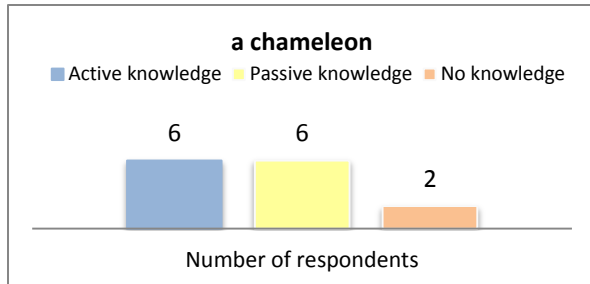
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



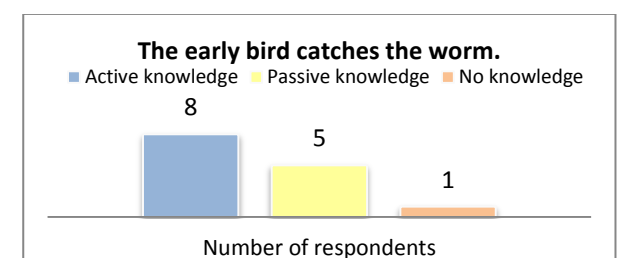
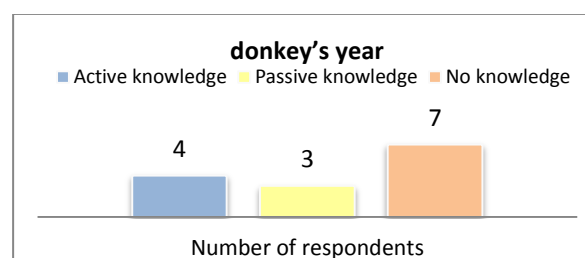
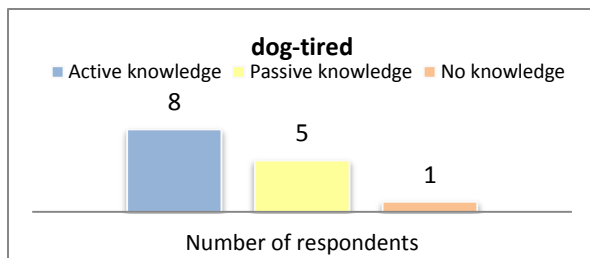
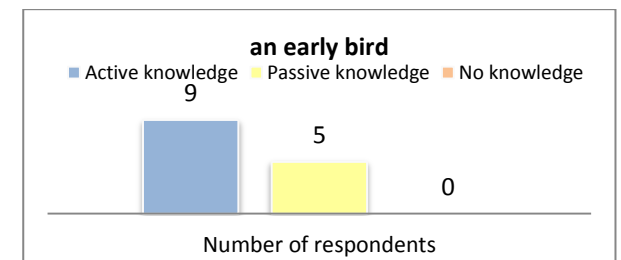
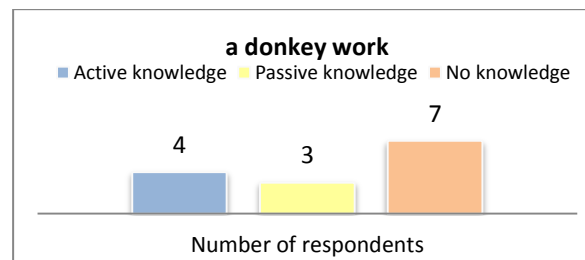
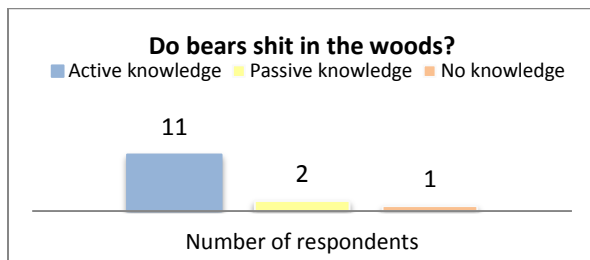
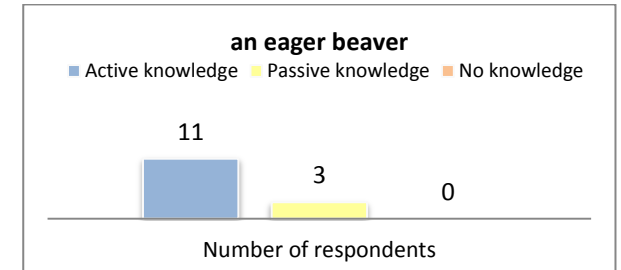
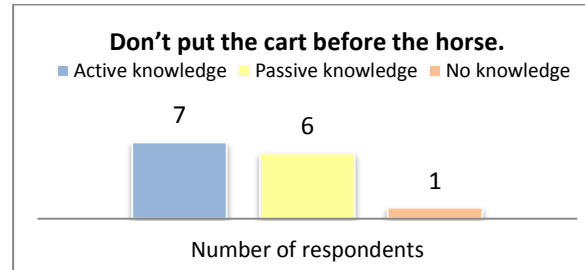
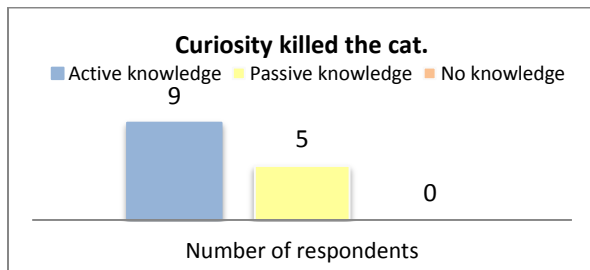
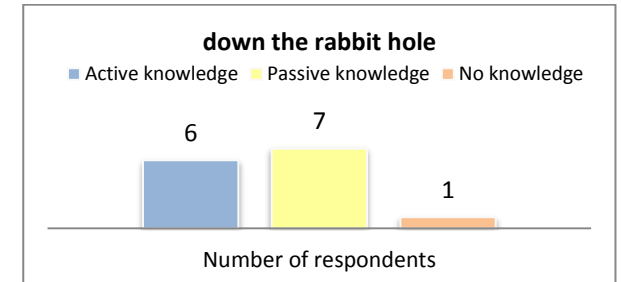
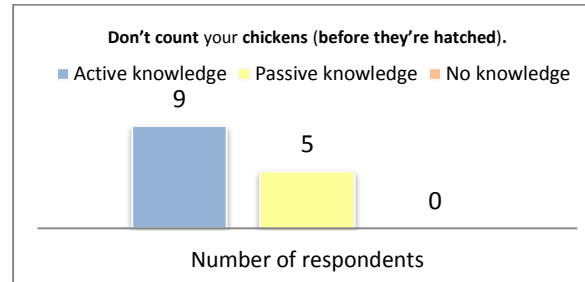
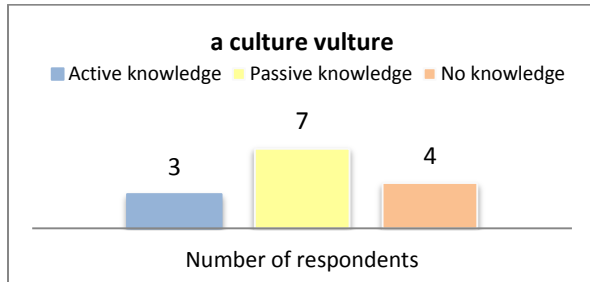
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



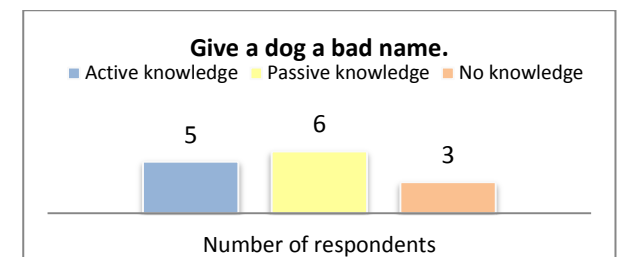
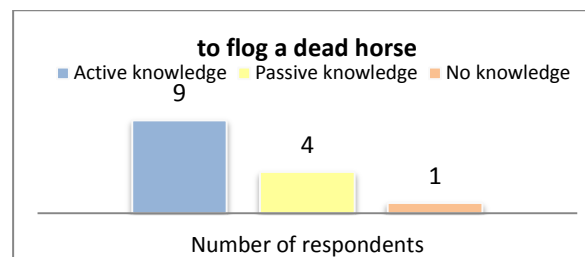
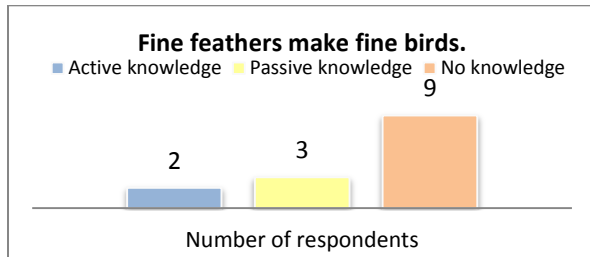
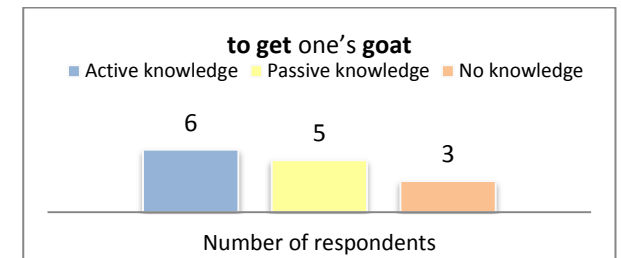
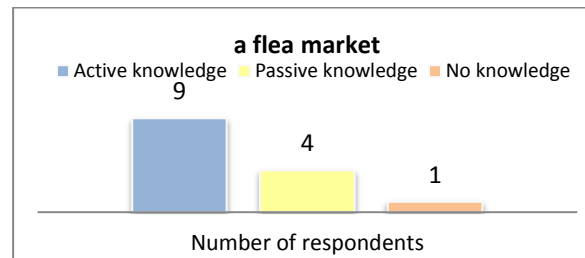
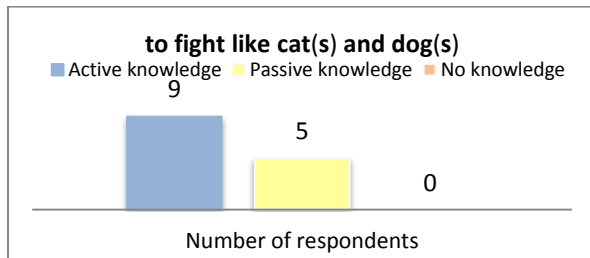
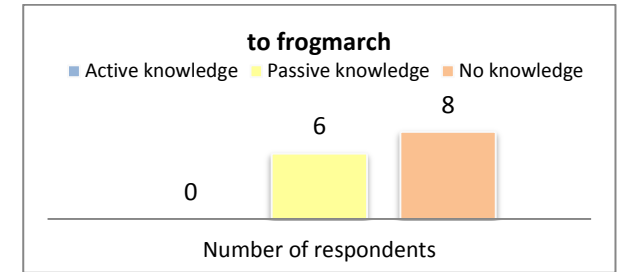
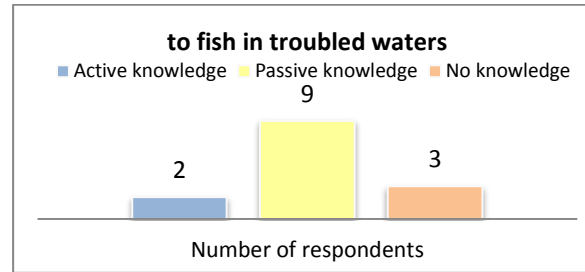
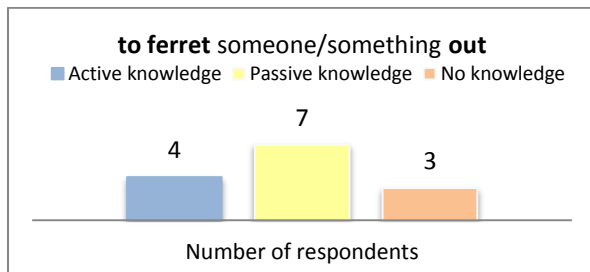
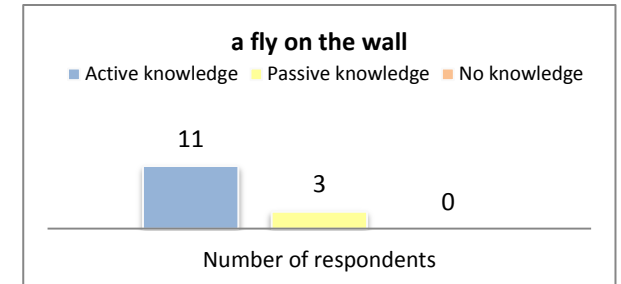
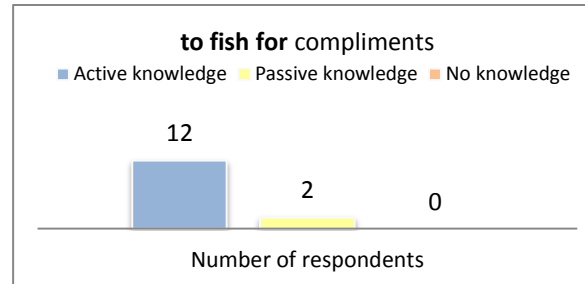
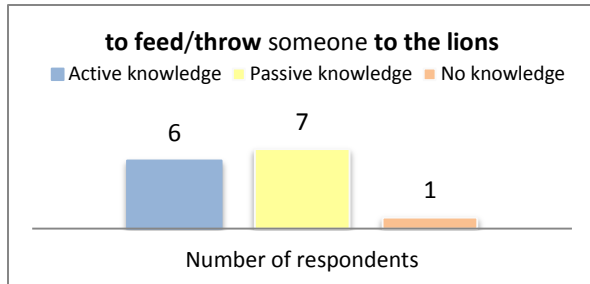
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



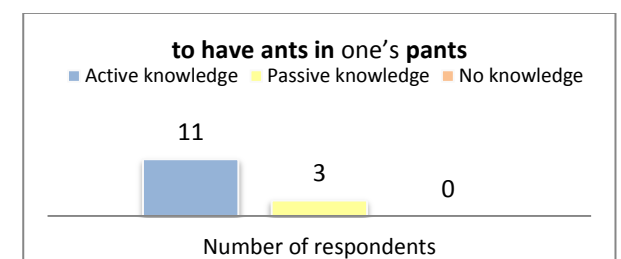
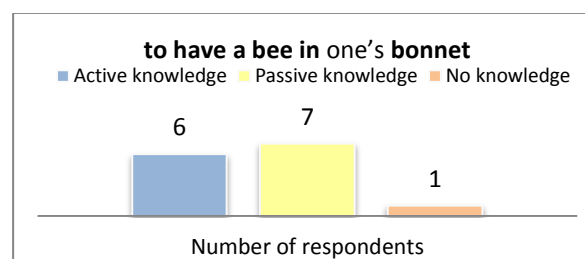
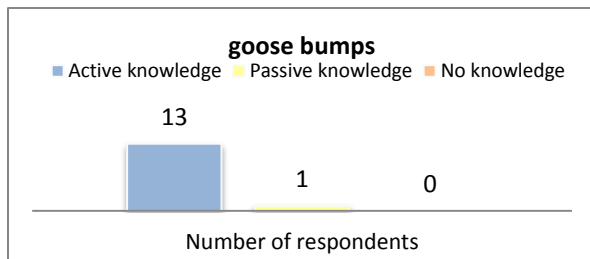
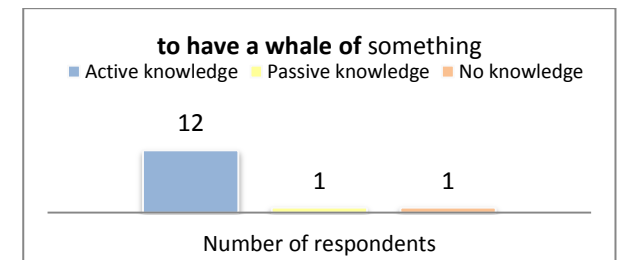
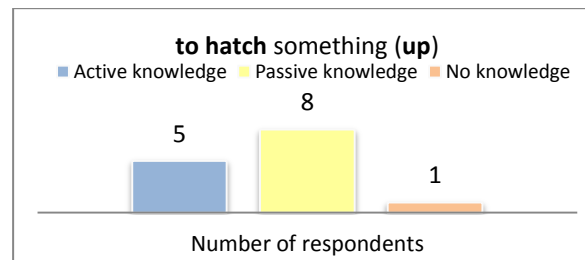
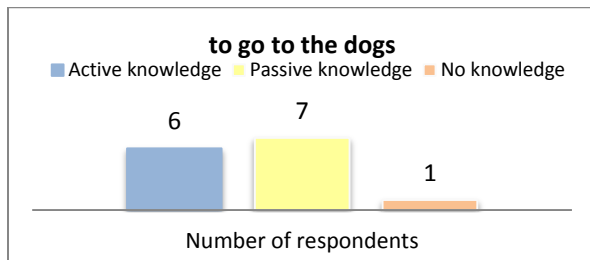
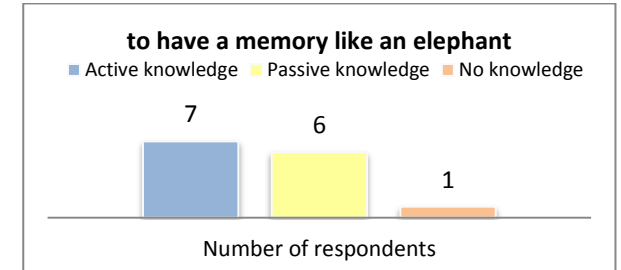
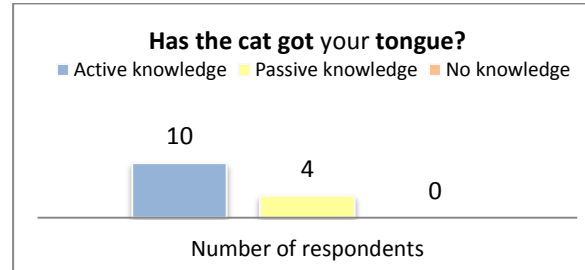
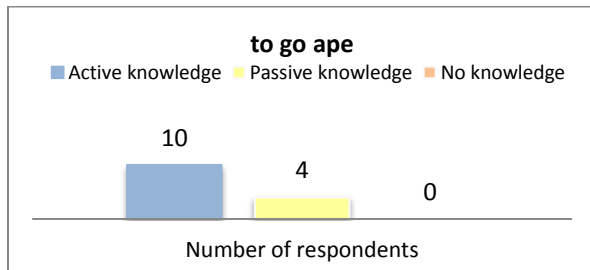
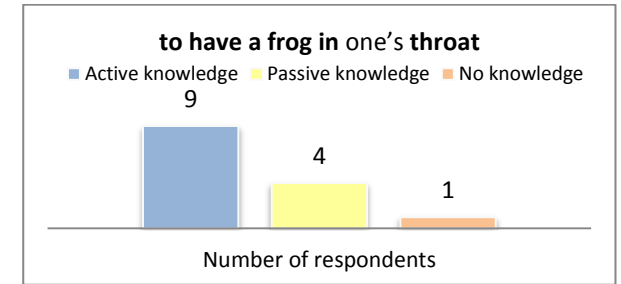
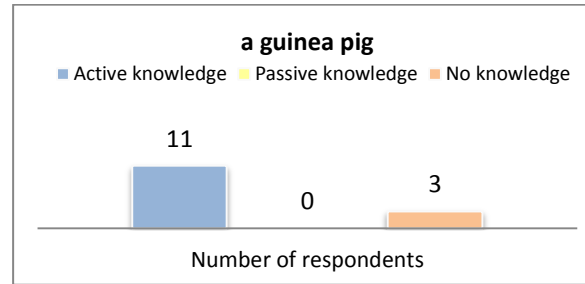
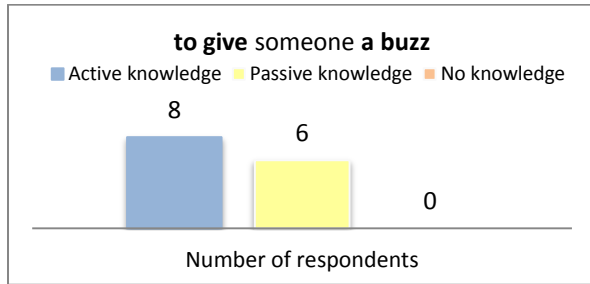
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



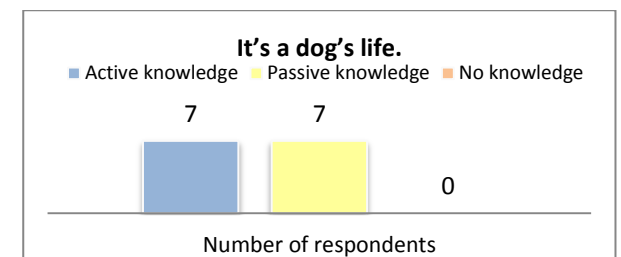
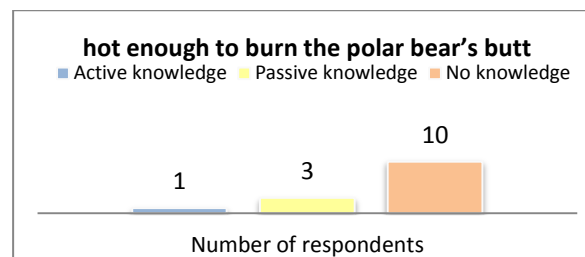
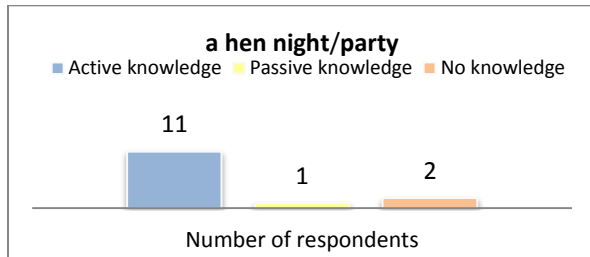
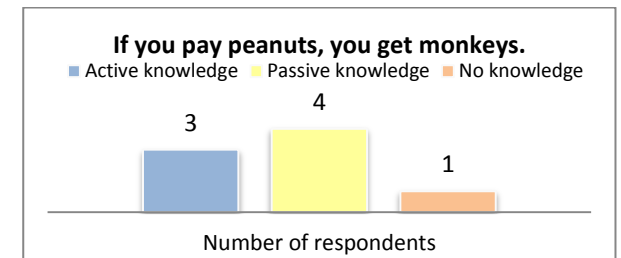
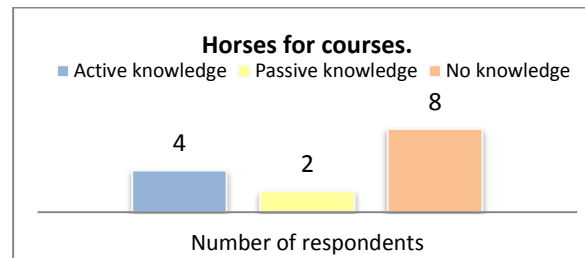
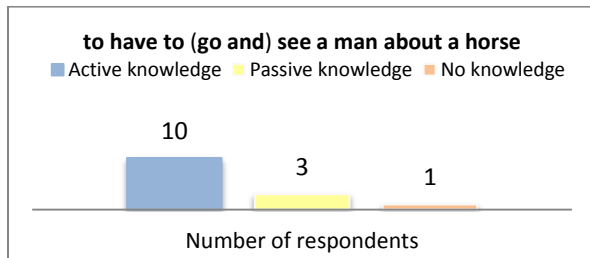
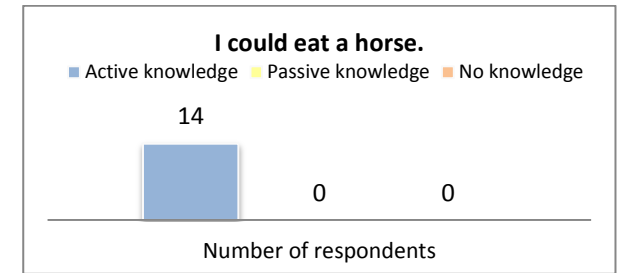
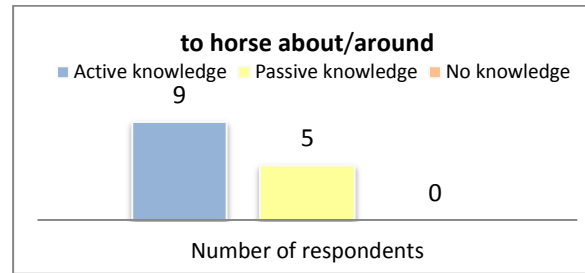
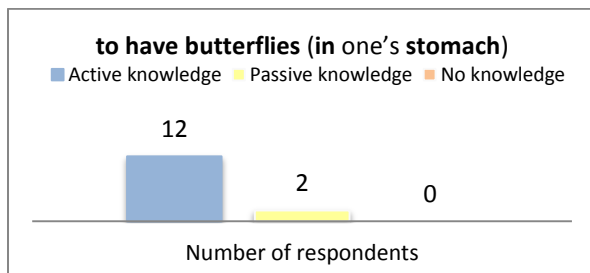
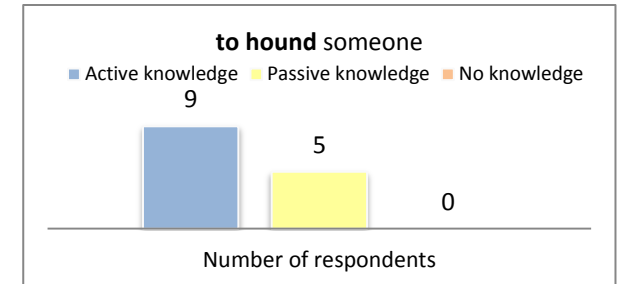
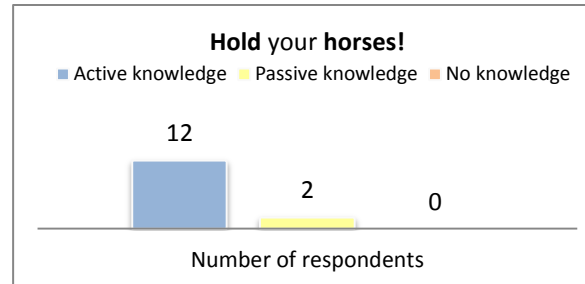
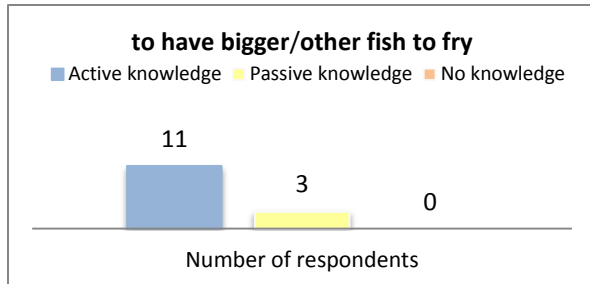
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



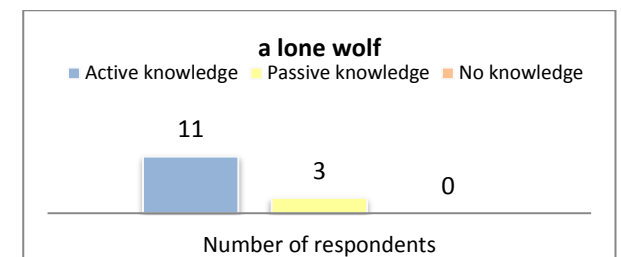
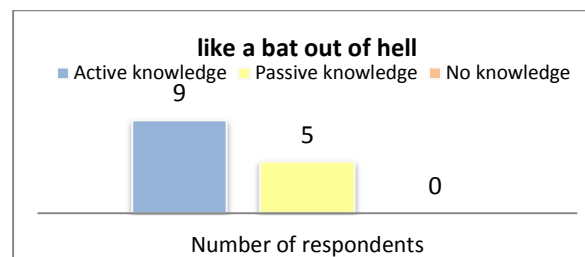
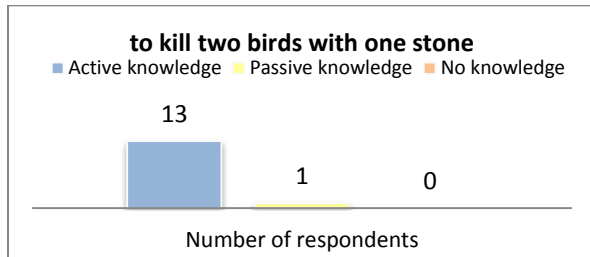
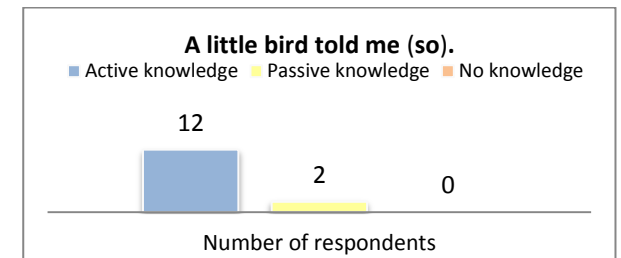
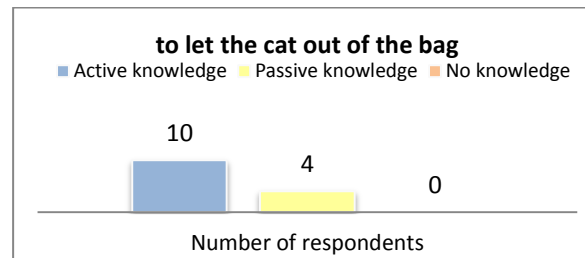
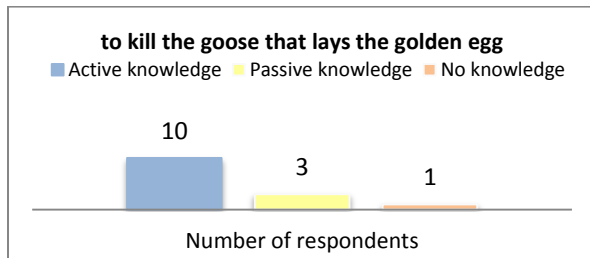
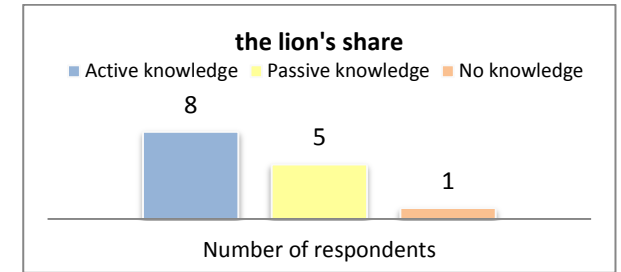
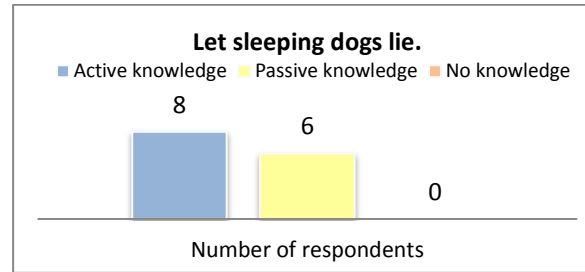
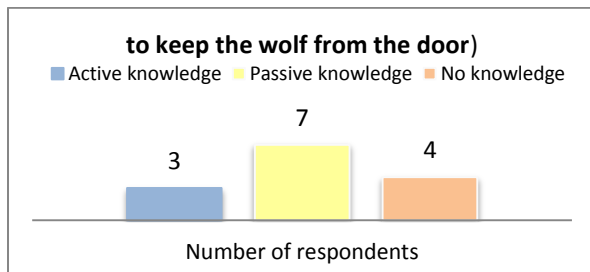
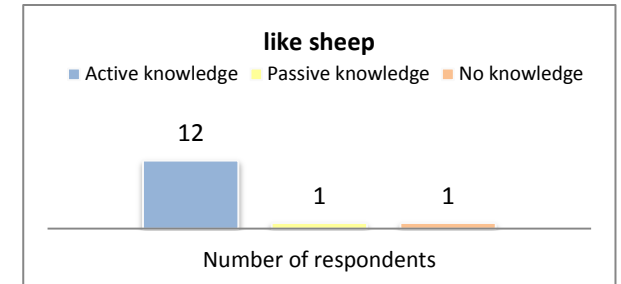
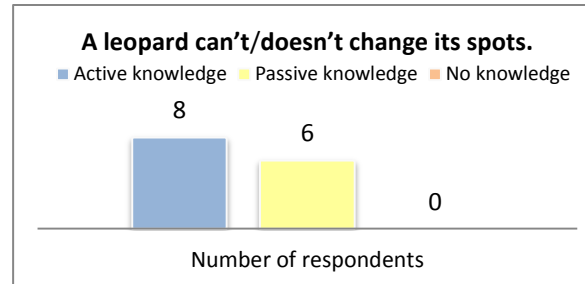
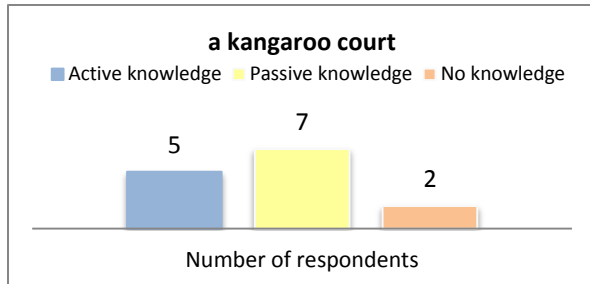
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



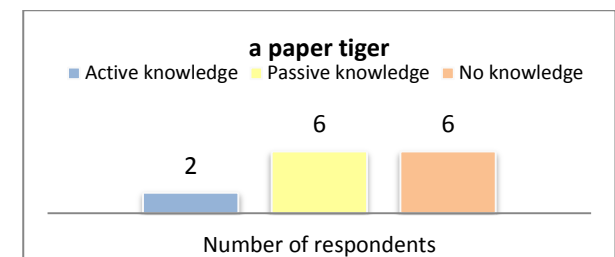
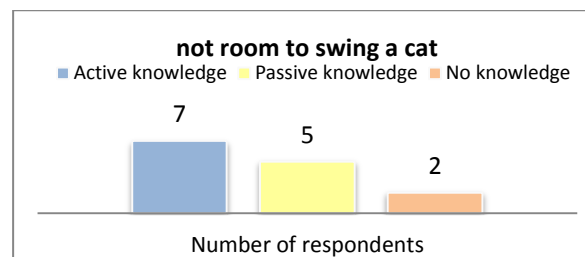
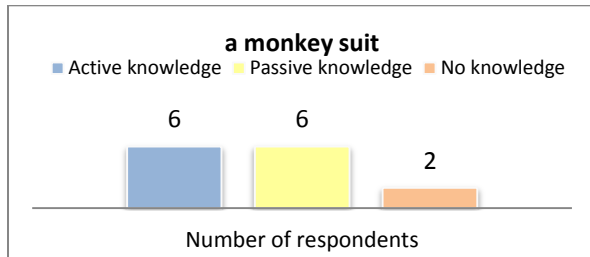
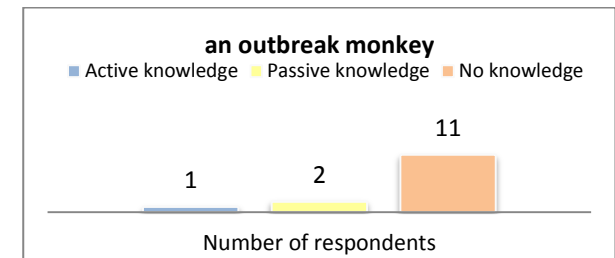
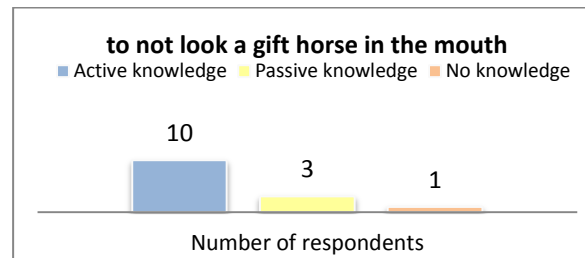
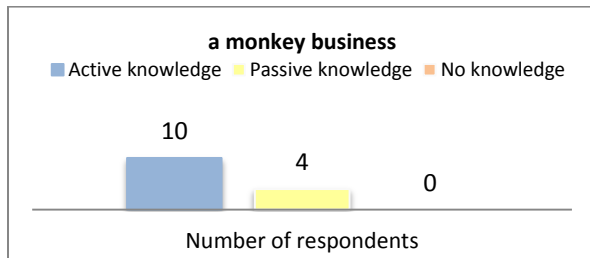
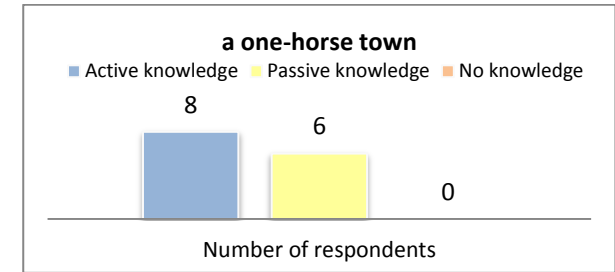
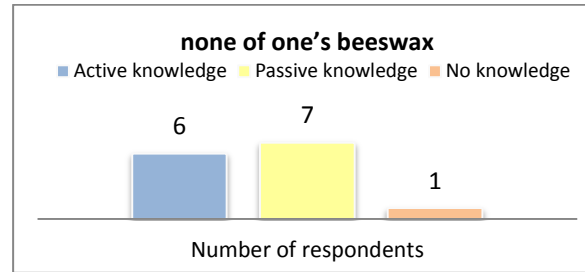
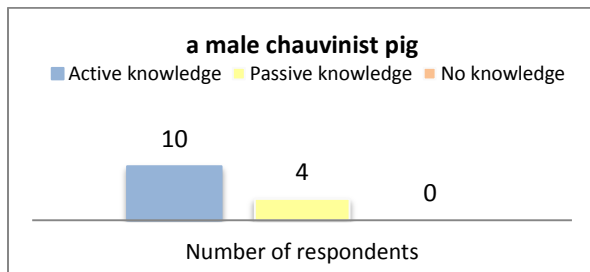
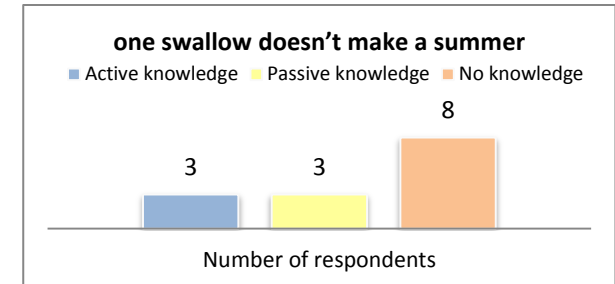
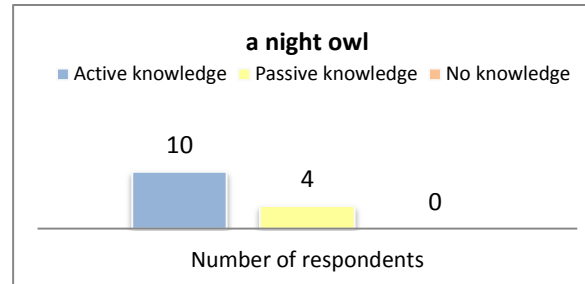
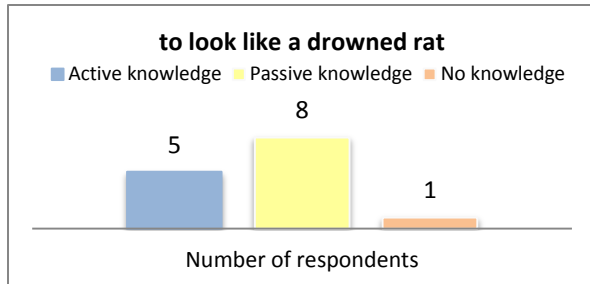
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



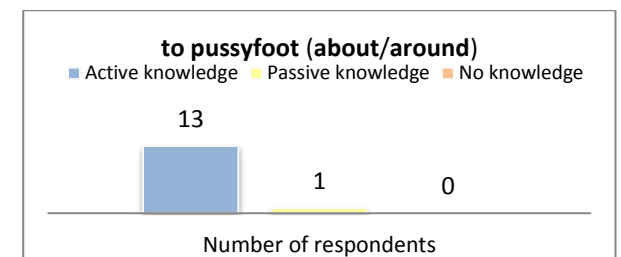
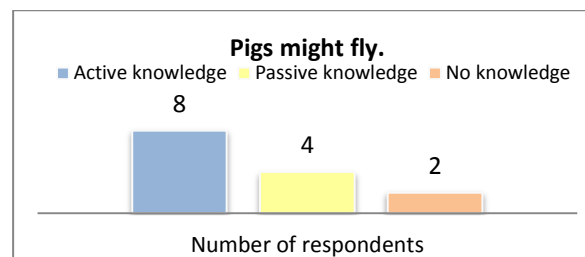
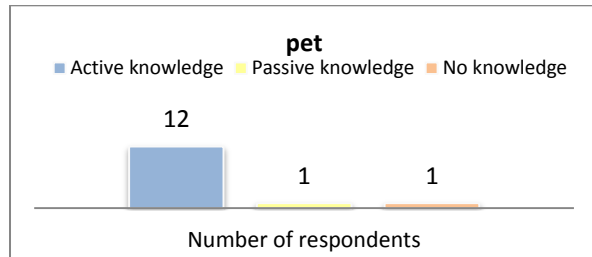
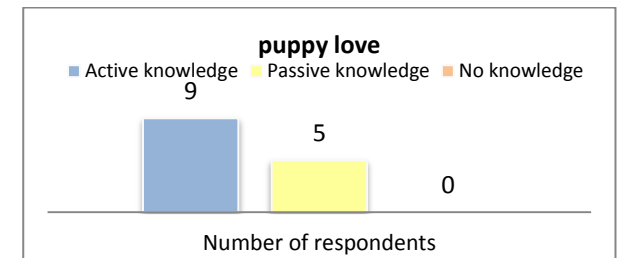
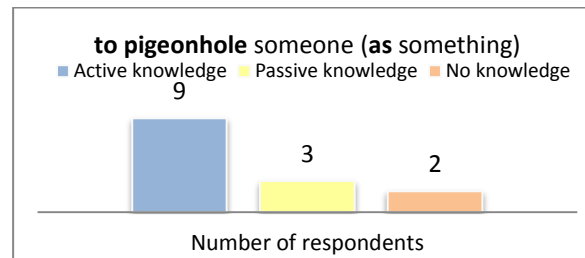
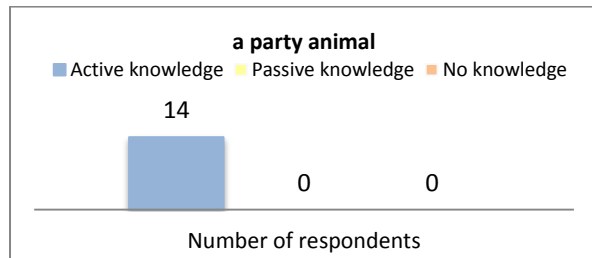
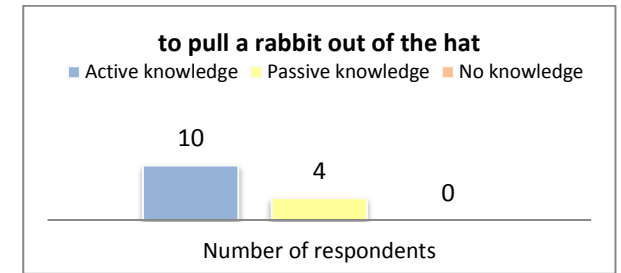
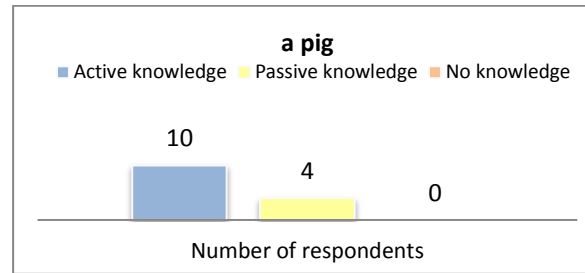
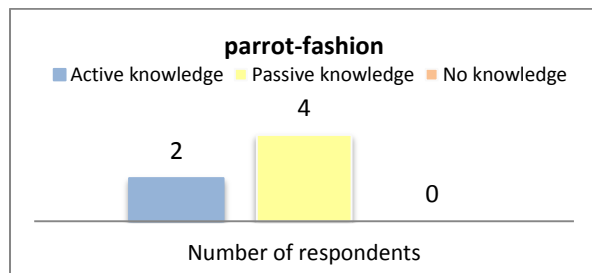
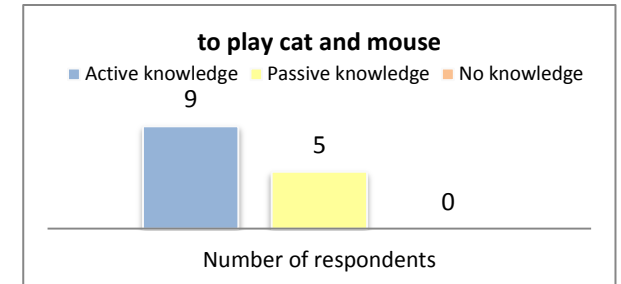
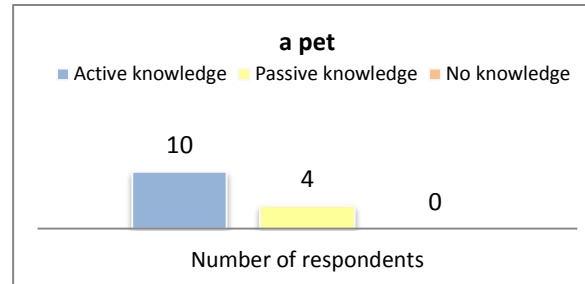
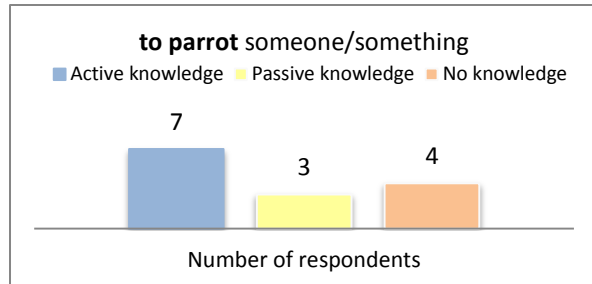
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



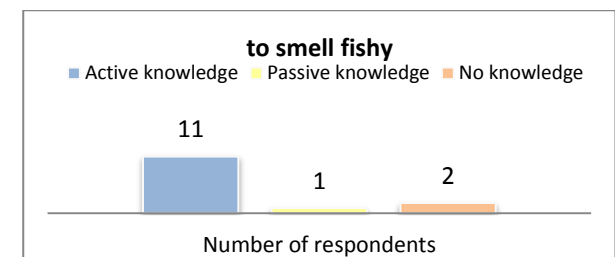
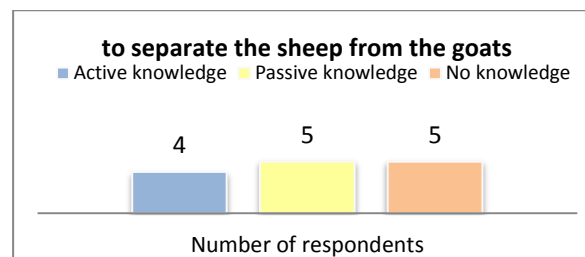
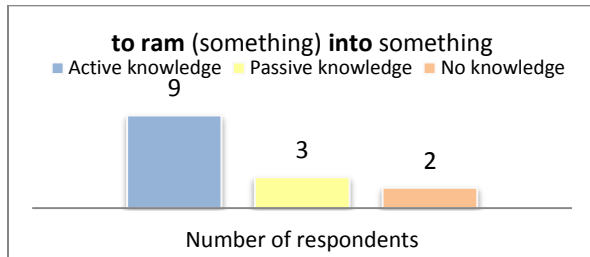
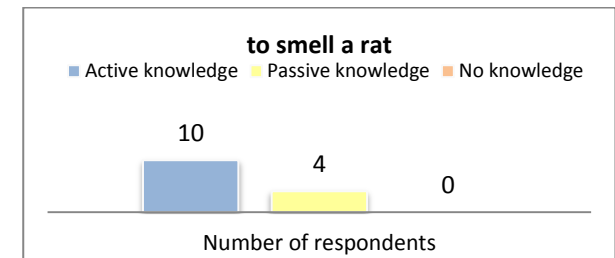
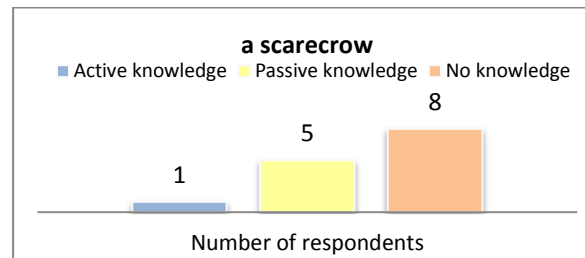
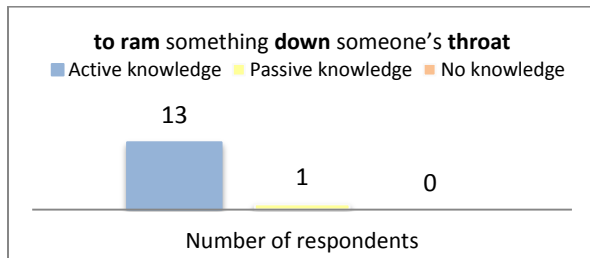
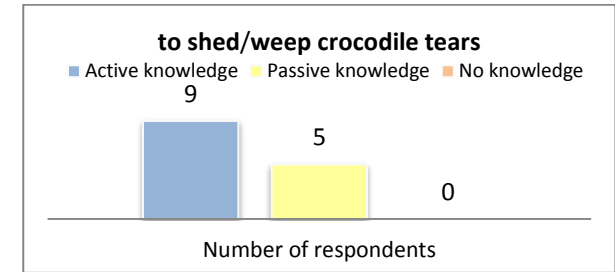
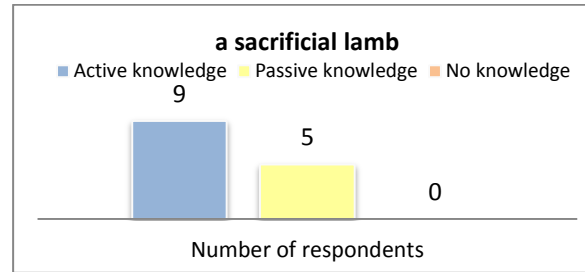
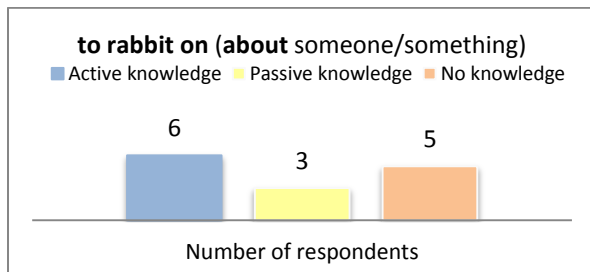
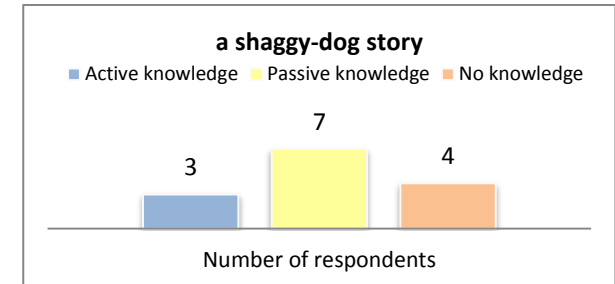
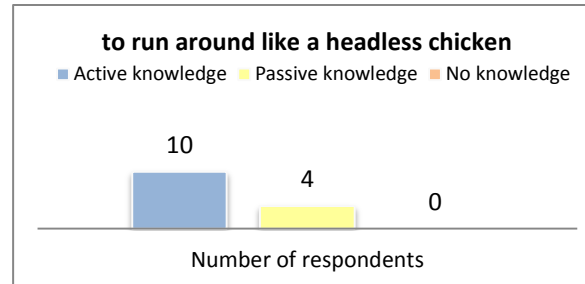
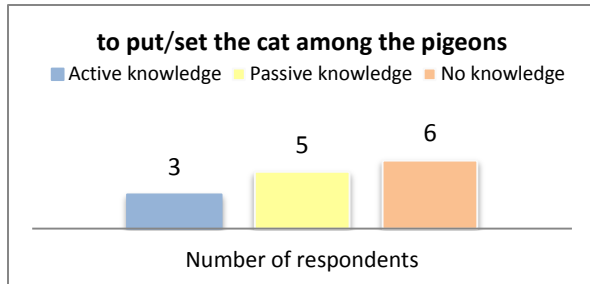
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



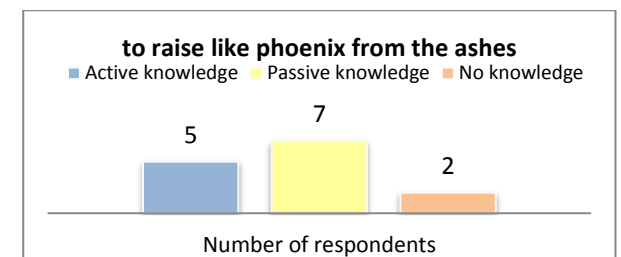
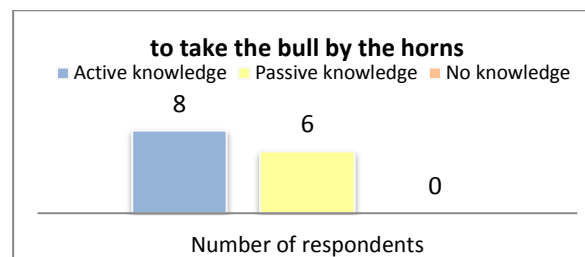
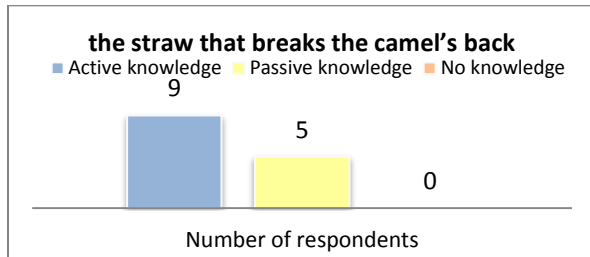
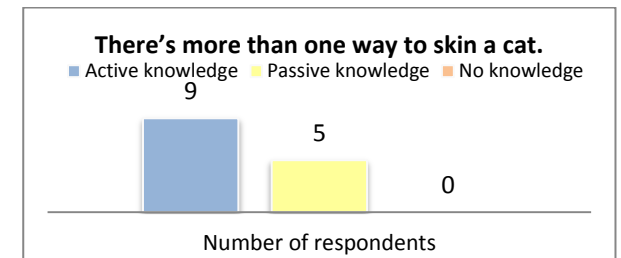
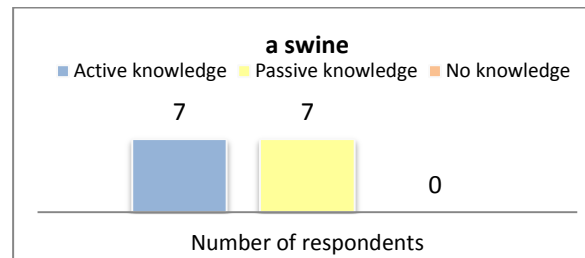
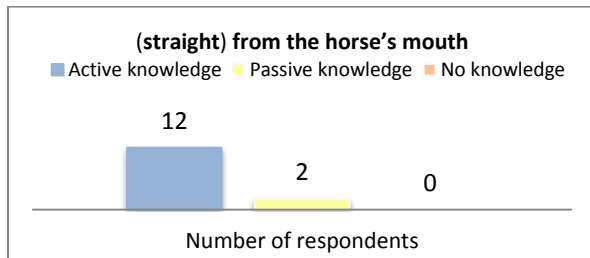
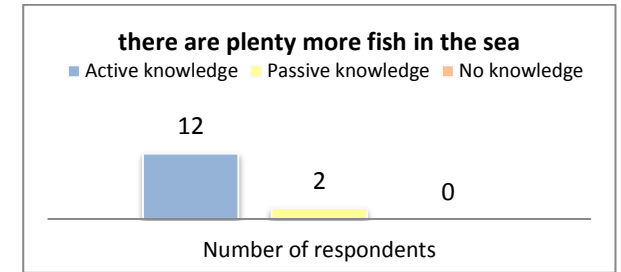
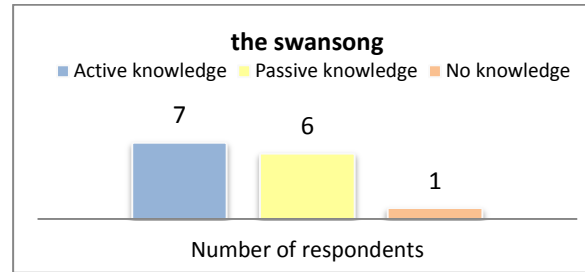
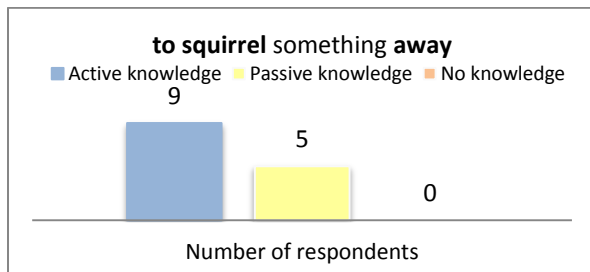
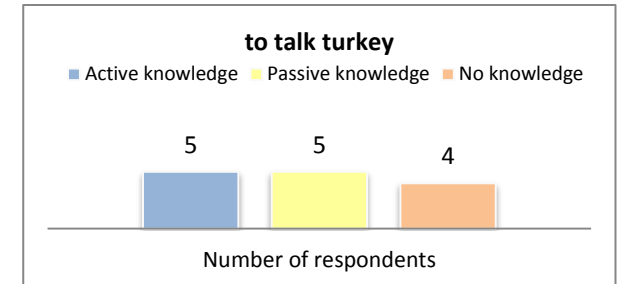
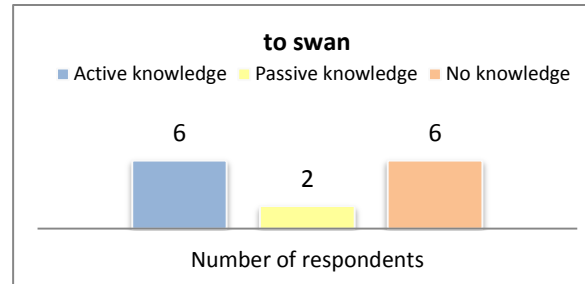
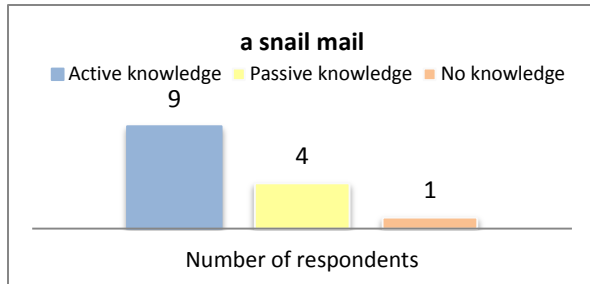
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



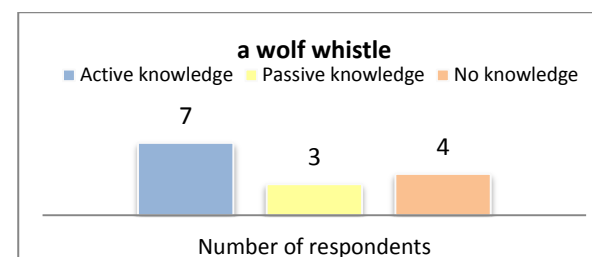
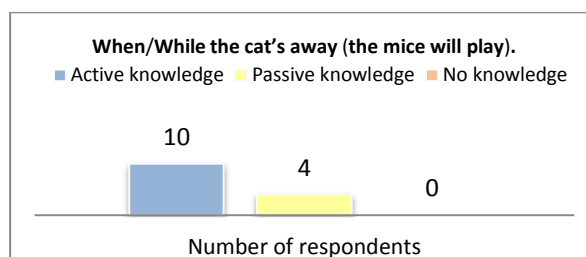
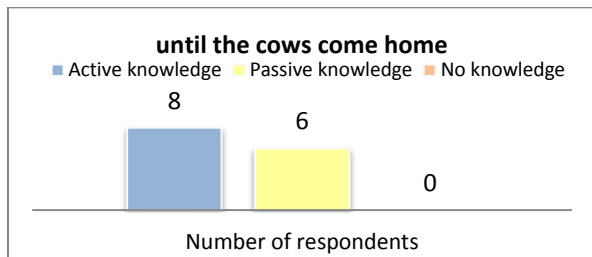
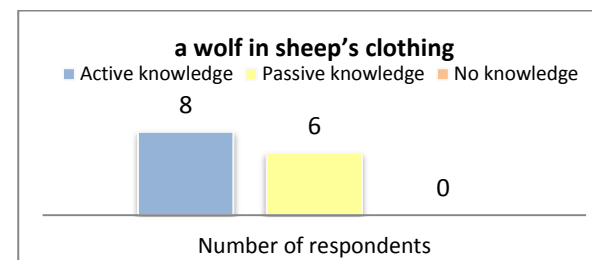
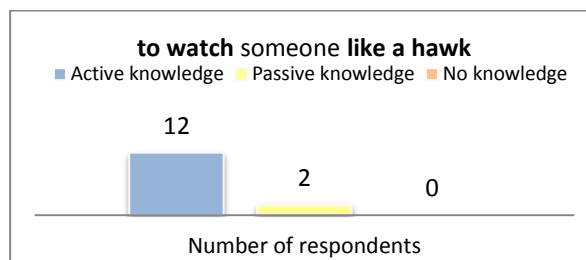
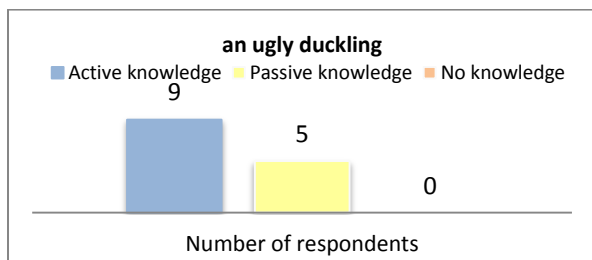
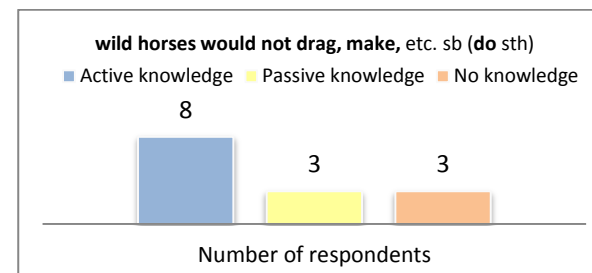
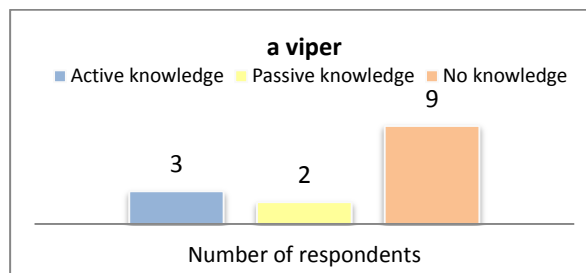
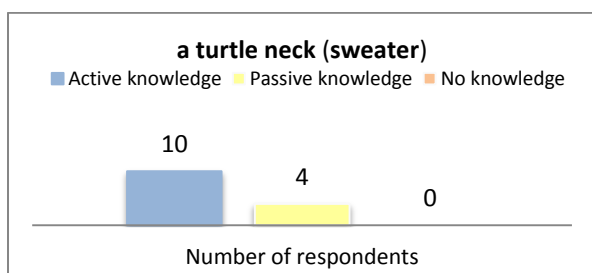
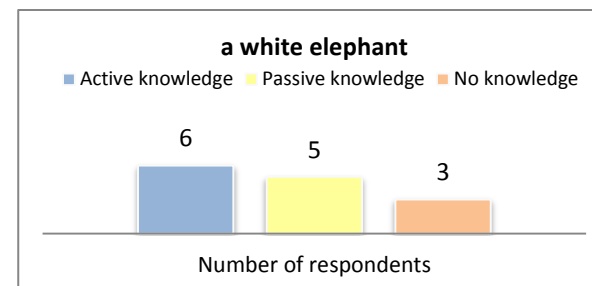
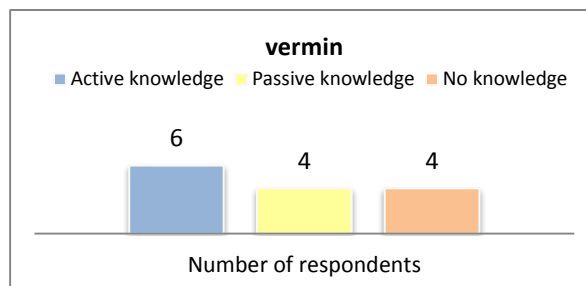
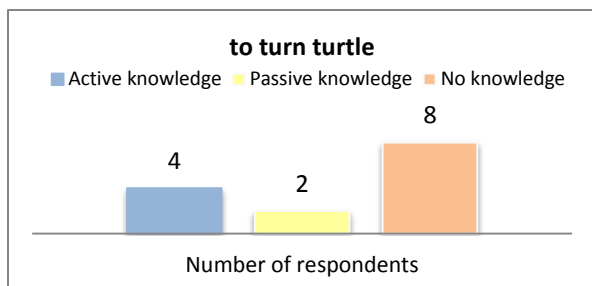
Appendix no. 2 The individual results of the questionnaire no. 1



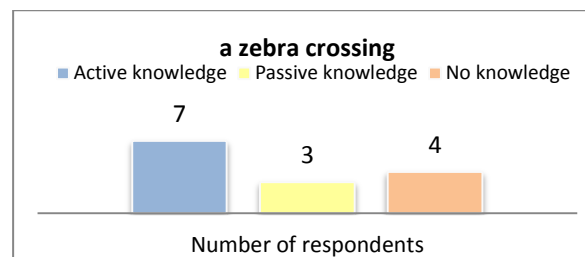
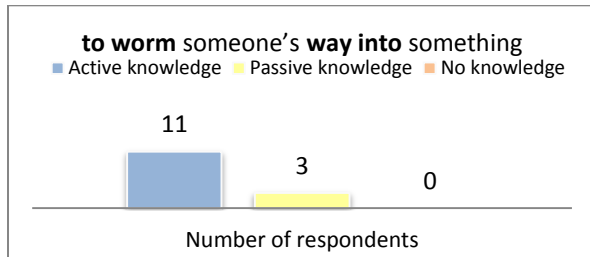
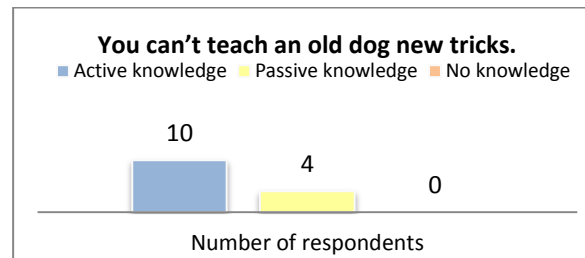
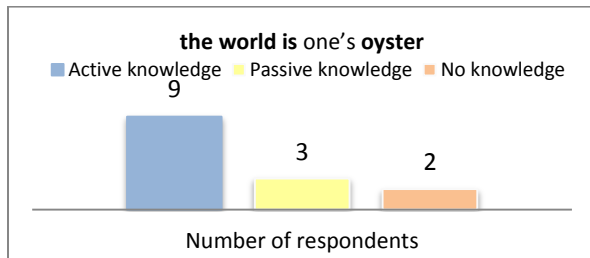
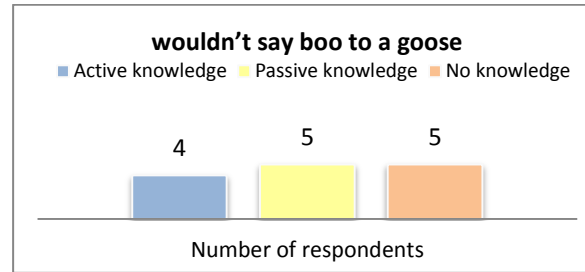
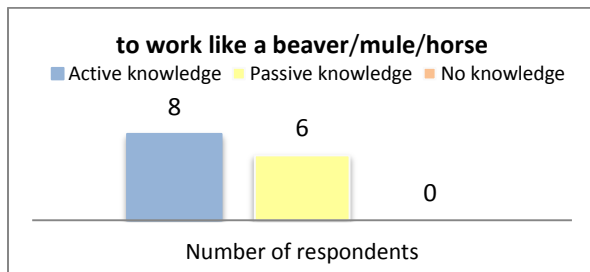
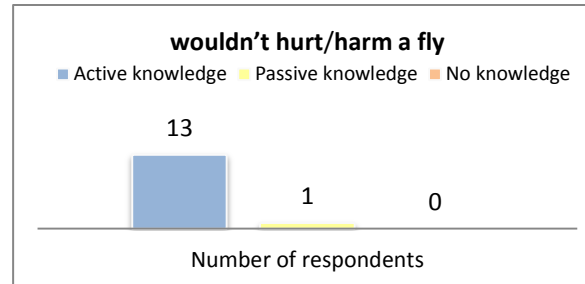
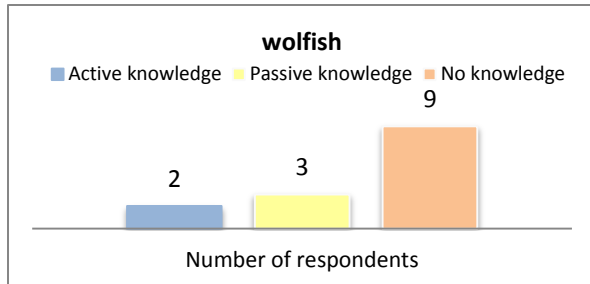
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Appendix no. 3 Animal metaphors: questionnaire no. 2 – Czech speakers

The following questionnaire contains 40 items (animal metaphors) that are actively used among the native speakers of English language. The aim of it is to find out which of the listed metaphors are known also among the Czech learners and/or teachers of English. For this purpose each of the items is presented along with three different contexts from which I would like you to choose the only possible one.

Please **DO NOT GUESS!** In case you do not know the right answer, leave the question (item) unanswered (unmarked).

Note that the style used in this questionnaire imitates spoken, sometimes even colloquial language. The informal style perfectly corresponds with the communication situations in which the chosen metaphors occur most often.

Your current occupation

- a) a student
- b) a teacher/a lecturer
- c) both

Your age _____

1. as the crow flies

- a) You can't really do it as the crow flies, you need to do some research first.
- b) You simply can't trust him. He will betray you as the crow flies.
- c) Her hometown is about five minutes from here as the crow flies.

2. to be barking up the wrong tree

- a) Jill's been barking up the wrong tree her whole life. She was born unlucky.
- b) It took him about two weeks to realize that he was barking up the wrong tree and he finally talked to the actual owner.
- c) After he dropped the hammer on his toe, he started barking up the wrong tree.

3. to be like a bull in a china shop

- a) When the Canadian tourists came to our pub, they felt like a bull in a china shop.
- b) Looking around this place that painting here is just terrible. It's like a bull in a china shop.
- c) Don't let her anywhere near my collection of dishes, she's like a bull in a china shop.

4. to be no spring chicken

- a) Things aren't as they used to be. I ain't no spring chicken anymore, son. It takes me some time get up.
- b) You shouldn't mess with Jim else you'll get in trouble real quick. He's no spring chicken.
- c) Stop feeding me this nonsense as I can see right through you. I'm no spring chicken, you know.

5. the birds and the bees

- a) Jack and Sally are there for each other 24/7. They're like the birds and the bees.
- b) I didn't know anything about the birds and the bees until recently. I met this girl...
- c) That place was completely jammed. It was like the birds and the bees all over the place.

6. a can of worms

- a) Tidy your room for god's sake. It looks like a can of worms.
- b) All he says is just can of worms. Don't even listen to him.
- c) I don't know if I want to have anything to do with this. Getting into this problem looks like opening a can of worms to me.

7. a case of dog eat dog

- a) I don't like the dog-eat-dog politics of our company. They are encouraging people to be nasty to each other.
- b) This whole trial is a case of dog eat dog. They keep chasing ghosts.
- c) Your dog-eat-dog attitude is hurting us. You can't simply give stuff away because you like someone.

8. a catnap

- a) What the hell are you doing? This is not a catnap!
- b) That woman is a proper catnap. She's stunning.
- c) Well, think I'm gonna have a catnap, I'm feeling real tired.

9. to chicken out (of something)

- a) The girls in my class always chicken out about everything. I can't listen to them anymore.
- b) Could you chicken out already? I'm tired of listening to you.
- c) Private! I'll make sure you won't chicken out this time, you pathetic whelp.

10. to clam up (on somebody)

- a) Clam up on me and we will be done in no time.
- b) You'd better clam up if you know what's good for you.
- c) She's decided to clam up on her boyfriend for his birthday. It's supposed to be a surprise.

11. to come out of one's shell

- a) Dan finally came out of his shell and told us about his homosexuality.
- b) Lily is very impatient. She comes out of her shell very often.
- c) He used to be a quiet kid but he has really come out of his shell recently.

12. to cry wolf

- a) She cried wolf, everybody within 30 meters could easily hear her.
- b) Dammit Jason, stop crying wolf again, nothing's happened.
- c) Alex cried wolf because nobody could actually hear him.

13. Do bears shit in the woods?

- a) You've been avoiding me the whole day. Do bears shit in the woods?
- b) You ask me for help but I don't know. Do bears shit in the woods?
- c) She asked: 'Do you really like beer so much?' I replied: 'Do bears shit in the woods?'

14. an eager beaver

- a) Wow, she really is an eager beaver. I couldn't be bothered to work on Sundays.
- b) Stop being an eager beaver and try doing something for others as well.
- c) He's always been an eager beaver. He's very shy around strangers.

15. a fly on the wall

- a) Nah, it's just a fly on the wall. You don't need to worry about it.
- b) Stop being a fly on the wall and make yourself useful! This place isn't going to build itself.
- c) I would so much like to be a fly on the wall when Mike tells him he'd crashed his car.

16. to go ape

- a) He went ape when she told him about her new colleague. Haven't seen him this angry yet.
- b) Every time I need you to be serious, you just go ape and start making fun of me.
- c) He has gone ape since his mother dropped him on his head.

17. goose bumps

- a) We have to avoid those goose bumps else our car might not make it to Texas.
- b) I always get goose bumps when I listen to this song. It rocks!
- c) His comments make me goose bumps. One day I swear I'll kill him.

18. a guinea pig

- a) Jill asked me to be a guinea pig for her new diet experiment.
- b) You look like a guinea pig. Buy some new clothes please.
- c) What a guinea pig. I still can't believe he did that to you.

19. Has the cat got your tongue?

- a) Has the cat got your tongue or what? I don't understand where you get these ideas.
- b) Who's responsible for this mess? Jamie, hello? Has the cat got your tongue again?
- c) I think the cat has your tongue again. Why else would there be so many misleading facts about the project in the newspaper?

20. to have a whale of something

- a) Are you having a whale of it? Because it's really not funny.
- b) I have a whale of horror movies. I can't stand watching them at night.
- c) We had a whale of a time in Disneyland. It was wicked.

21. to have ants in one's pants

- a) I think I have some ants in my pants. Do you want to hear me out?
- b) Keep running you coward. You must have a thousand ants in your pants.
- c) Look at Toby. Looks like he's got ants in his pants again. He simply won't remain still.

22. to have other/bigger fish to fry

- a) I'm tired of being your fish. I wish you had other fish to fry.
- b) As much as I enjoy talking to you, I have other fish to fry right now, so if you'll excuse me...
- c) Do not go anywhere! I have other fish to fry with you.

23. to have to (go and) see a man about a horse

- a) Are you crazy? You may probably have to see a man about a horse.
- b) Hold that thought, I have to go and see a man about a horse.
- c) This place is empty. You have to go and see a man about a horse.

24. Hold your horses!

- a) You should really hold your horses or you might get a speeding fine.
- b) Hold your horses and get ready for something special tonight.
- c) Hold your horses, young man. First let me see your ID.

25. to kill the goose that lays the golden egg

- a) You need to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Otherwise they'll just keep coming.
- b) If you kill the goose that lays the golden egg, it means you get rid of the problem.
- c) We've really killed the goose that lays the golden egg by terminating the contract with her, haven't we? Her book could have made us a fortune.

26. to let the cat out of the bag

- a) By having approved these new rules, they have let the cat out of the bag.
- b) Jenny has let the cat out of the bag. Now they know about our surprise plans.
- c) Don't let the cat out of the bag again, you know that Jane hates when you criticize her. She just doesn't want to hear unpleasant truth about her appearance.

27. a monkey business

- a) Her monkey business is doing well. I still don't get it.
- b) There's some monkey business in their accounting. I don't trust their funding.
- c) I always come home very tired. My job is a hell of a monkey business.

28. pet (subject, theory..) – adjective

- a) He hated her pet hobby. All she ever did was talk about it.
- b) I can't stand her pet problems. Everybody has some so why doesn't she just shut it.
- c) We had some pet friends in our hometown but we never really liked them.

29. a pet

- a) You always behave like a pet. You're such a nice person.
- b) She's always been his pet. All he does is praise her for whatever she does.
- c) Poor, Casey. She's looked like a pet since she lost the beauty competition.

30. to pussyfoot (about/around)

- a) If you don't pussyfoot around, you may wake the child!
- b) You didn't have to pussyfoot about me when I wasn't here. That wasn't very nice of you.

c) Jason, stop pussyfooting about. Just tell me what's the deal.

31. to ram something down someone's throat

a) I hate when Christians try to ram their views down my throat.

b) She has to ram the apple down my throat otherwise I'll never eat it.

c) He's a proper drinker. He rammed that drink down his throat very quickly.

32. to smell a rat

a) Someone must have told them about our position! I think I smell a rat among us.

b) I smell a rat. Have you been cooking again, John?

c) I've had cold for the last few days, so I can't smell a rat.

33. to smell fishy

a) She likes to smell fishy no matter where she goes.

b) Ugh. Peter smells fishy. Does he ever bathe?

c) The plan smells fishy. I wouldn't do it if I were you.

34. (straight) from the horse's mouth

a) The meal must be from the horse's mouth. It tastes horrible.

b) Look at those clothes! They look as if you've taken them straight from the horse's mouth.

c) Believe me, I know it straight from the horse's mouth, because my brother works there.

35. turtleneck

a) Look at her turtleneck! Almost as if her head was sitting on the body.

b) My boyfriend likes to wear turtlenecks. He generally likes warm clothes.

c) My friend Gilly is such a turtleneck. She would never stand up to bullies.

36. to worm someone's way into something

a) She managed to worm her way into the personal life of her boss. No wonder she got promoted.

b) He wormed his way into the radio. He's earned the right to be a rockstar.

c) You first have to worm your way into the school. Only then can you start thinking of getting a degree.