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BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

Anglická přirovnání s komparáty označujícími zvířata (ve srovnání s
češtinou)

English similes with animal sources (in comparison with Czech)

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Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala vedoucí mé práce, paní doc. PhDr. Markétě Malé, Ph.D. za odborné vedení, cenné rady a podporu, které mi pomohly při zpracování této bakalářské práce.

ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce zkoumá anglická a česká přirovnání, přičemž se zaměřuje na adjektivní přirovnání, jejichž komparáta tvoří názvy zvířat, jako například *(as) free as a bird* (*volný jako pták*). Práce přirovnání definuje, rozděluje je na adjektivní a verbální formy a popisuje jejich struktury a komponenty v obou jazycích.

V analytické části jsou poté zkoumána data z British National Corpus 2014 a českých korpusů SYN2020 a ORAL. Pro každý jazyk bylo shromážděno více než 300 adjektivních přirovnání se zvířecími komparáty, která jsou dále zkoumána na základě jejich komponentů a prozodických rysů. Přirovnání z obou jazyků jsou mezi sebou následně porovnávána.

Práce ukazuje, že přirovnání v obou jazycích se dají rozdělit podle sémantických kategorií adjektiv a podle typů zvířat v komparátech. Tyto kategorie mají v angličtině i v češtině přibližně stejné zastoupení. Shodnost konkrétních adjektiv a komparát je však pouze částečná, liší se jak jednotlivé názvy zvířat, tak adjektiva s nimi spojovaná.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

přirovnání, idiomy, názvy zvířat jako komparáta, korpusová lingvistika, angličtina, čeština

ABSTRACT

The bachelor thesis examines similes in English and Czech, focusing on adjectival similes whose sources consist of animal names, such as *(as) free as a bird* (*volný jako pták*). The thesis defines similes, categorizes them into adjectival and verbal forms, and describes their structures and components in both languages.

In the analytical part, data from the British National Corpus 2014 and the Czech corpora SYN2020 and ORAL are analysed. A total of over 300 examples of adjectival similes with animal sources were collected from each language, and the results in both languages are examined from the perspective of their components. Additionally, the prosodic features of similes in both languages are analysed. Results from both languages are compared.

The thesis shows that similes in both languages can be classified on the basis of semantic categories of adjectives, and the animal names in the sources, and these categories display an almost equal representation in both languages. However, the correspondence between the languages with respect to individual adjectives and animal names is only partial, with English and Czech differing in individual animal sources, but also in the adjectives connected with them.

KEYWORDS

simile, idioms, animal sources, corpus linguistics, English, Czech

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List of abbreviations

BNC2014 = British National Corpus 2014

det = determiner

No./no. = number

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and significance of the study

Similes, along with other forms of figurative language, present a fascinating area of study, as they not only fulfil a communicative function but also offer insight into the culture of a language and its speakers. However, despite their significance and presence in language, similes are often overshadowed by metaphors and tend to be overlooked in scholarly research (Emmer 2023: 14).

Given that figurative language reflects the cultural values of a society, similes involving animals are particularly compelling, as they may reveal underlying human-animal relationships and societal perceptions of animals. Comparing similes in English and Czech offers valuable insights, as both languages originate from regions with similar climates and fauna. However, these nations differ significantly in their historical, cultural, and social contexts, all of which may have influenced how animals are perceived and represented in their languages.

1.2 Research questions and hypotheses

What are the common animal sources used in English and Czech similes?

We anticipate that the category of pets will be the most frequently represented in the source slot, as pets are the animals most closely associated with humans. Animals such as *dog* (*pes*), *cat* (*kočka*) and *mouse* (*myš*) might be the most common in both languages.

What are the common adjectives used in English and Czech similes with animal sources?

We expect to find adjectives related to appearance and character traits. Some of the frequently occurring adjectives may include *big* (*velký*), *strong* (*silný*), and *clever* (*chytrý*).

How do the structures and prosodic features of these similes compare between the two languages?

The structure of similes is expected to be similar in both Czech and English, as they share the same basic components. However, differences may arise with the use of initial *as* in English, while Czech similes may vary due to the different forms of adjectives according to

grammatical case. Prosodic features, such as alliteration and assonance, are expected to appear more frequently in English similes than in Czech.

How many adjectival similes with animal sources are identical in Czech and in English?

We expect approximately half of the similes to be comparable in both languages, as Czech and English cultures have evolved in relatively similar ways within the European context.

1.3 The organization of the thesis

To explore the issues outlined above, we will begin by examining the general characteristics of similes, using examples from English in Section 2.1. In Section 2.2, we will address Czech similes, highlighting specific language-dependent characteristics. Next, we will discuss the use of animal sources in similes and present a general semantic classification of sources (Section 2.3).

Before the analytical part, key parameters are presented in Section 2.4, followed by an overview of the materials and methods in Section 3.

The analytical part opens with an explanation on the creation of simile types for both languages (Section 4.1) and is then divided into three sections: analysis of English similes (4.2), analysis of Czech similes (4.3), and a comparison of results in both languages (4.4).

The results are summarised in Section 5, Conclusion.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Definition and characteristics of similes

According to The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English, a simile is “a figure of speech involving **the comparison** of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more **emphatic** or **vivid**.”¹ Čermák (2009: 487) provides a more linguistic definition: “A simile can be provisionally defined as a **fixed** and **idiomatic** expression used to designate and evaluate (primarily) a relationship of similarity between a name (noun), determined in a specific context, and a predetermined model.”²

Similes play a crucial role in our understanding and communicating about the world. Humans naturally perceive and relate entities based on **similarities**³, which is fundamental to cognitive processing and embedded in language. Most languages have grammatical and lexical tools for making comparisons, many of which are conventionalized and easily recognised by speakers (Emmer 2023: 17).

An example of a typical simile might be *He is as meek as a lamb*⁴, where the **target** *he* (the subject of comparison) is compared to the **source** *a lamb* (a prototypical bearer), highlighting the **ground** *meek*, the shared characteristics (Ibid.).

Similes usually facilitate the expression of properties that are challenging to describe directly. These include sensory perceptions like **colour** (*black as a pitch*), **direct physical perception** (such as temperature (*cold as ice*) or **texture** (*soft as silk*), as well as **emotive** or **taboo concepts – feelings** (*happy as Larry*) and cultural taboos surrounding **drink and intoxication** (*pissed as a fart*) (Norrick 1986: 41-42)⁵. Additionally, humour, hyperbole, and

¹ “simile”. The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English. Encyclopedia.com. 10 Jul. 2024. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/language-linguistics-and-literary-terms/literature-general/simile>.

² „[...] přirovnání, které můžeme tedy předběžně vymezit jako ustálené a idiomatické pojmenování sloužící k označení a hodnocení (především) podobnostního vztahu mezi jménem (substantivem), určeným v konkrétním kontextu, a předem daným modelem.“ (Čermák 2009: 487, translation Nykendajová)

³ “The concept of, say, blackness is necessarily tied to schemata like *coal is black, crows are black* etc.“ (Norrick 1986: 41)

⁴ Example from Čermák 2009: 252

⁵ Examples from Emmer 2023: 18

sarcasm motivate many similes (Emmer 2023: 18, see also Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 155).

2.1.1 Idiomaticity

Idiomaticity in similes refers to how conventionalized a simile is within a language. Generally, **an idiom** can be defined as “a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words.”⁶ While not all similes are idiomatic, many have become fixed expressions within a language, understood culturally rather than on the basis of the individual words.

Both semantic and formal aspects must be considered when determining whether a simile is idiomatic. Palmer (1976: 98-99) notes that idioms often have **grammatical** or **syntactical restrictions**. Cruse (2006: 82) identifies two main features of prototypical idioms: **non-compositionality** and **syntactic fixedness**. “Idioms are non-compositional in the sense that their global meanings cannot be predicted on the basis of any stable readings that their constituents may have in other contexts.” (Ibid.)

When defining idioms, we might confer the distinction between the two main approaches to phraseology – taxonomic and frequency-based probabilistic, which reflects different ways of understanding idiomatic multi-word units:

1. **Taxonomic Approach:** This approach’s main interest is in developing and working with formal taxonomies of phraseological units, such as free combinations (*under the table*), restricted collocations (*under attack*), figurative idioms (*under microscope*) and pure idioms (*under the weather*) (Howarth 1998, cited in Groom 2017: 27)⁷.
2. **Probabilistic Approach:** This approach is concerned with patterns of word combinations that occur frequently in large language corpora, such as collocations or lexical bundles. These units may or may not be idiomatic in the traditional sense, but their significance comes from their recurrent use in the language. In contrast with the

⁶ “Idiom.” The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English. Encyclopedia.com. 12 Jul. 2024 <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/language-linguistics-and-literary-terms/language-and-linguistics/idiom>.

⁷ Howarth, P. (1998) ‘Phraseology and second language proficiency.’ *Applied Linguistics* 19: 24-44.

first approach, semantic non-compositionality is not a criterion (Groom 2017: 45-55).

In this work, we will adopt **the probabilistic approach**, as our focus will be on analysing corpus data to identify common similes.

2.1.2 Simile versus other figures of speech

When examining similes, it is important to consider their connection to two other comparison forms: **metaphor** and **literal comparison**.

2.1.2.1 Simile versus metaphor

Similes and metaphors both share the concept of **figurativeness**⁸, but differ in how they express comparison. Similes explicitly compare two different things using connecting words like *like* or *as* (e.g. *He is brave as a lion.*), while metaphors imply the comparison without these connectors (e.g. *He is a lion*). Both similes and metaphors can become conventionalized over time, which aids in understanding (Gargani, 2014: 3).

The choice between similes and metaphors often depends on the effect the speaker or writer wishes to achieve. Similes are regularly used in descriptive writing and speech to make direct comparisons and convey emotions in a clear and vivid way. Metaphors, on the other hand, are favoured in literary and rhetorical contexts where deeper engagement and interpretation are needed. They convey complex and integrated meanings, and can often have more force than similes due to their brevity (Fogelin, 2011: 29). While the distinction between similes and metaphors may seem clear, it is not always straightforward as in some cases, both figures of speech may convey similar meanings and can be used interchangeably depending on the context.

2.1.2.2 Simile versus literal comparison

Similes and literal comparisons both highlight **similarities** between two entities, but they differ in purpose and expression. **Similes** (such as *Love is like a rollercoaster.*⁹) are

⁸ “Linguistic expressions are said to be figurative, or used figuratively, if their intended meaning is (a) something other than their **literal meaning** and (b) can be understood on the basis of generally applicable principles of meaning extension (rather than an ad hoc arrangement, for instance between Pete and Liz before a party so that if Liz says *I love that picture* she means ‘I want to go home now’).” (Cruse 2006: 63)

⁹ Example from Gargani 2016: 62

figurative, comparing two **unlike things** to emphasize a shared characteristic and create vivid imagery. **Literal comparisons** (such as *A roundabout is like a rollercoaster*.¹⁰), on the other hand, directly compare two things based on **measurable** or **observable attributes**, aiming to convey precise information (Čermák, Hladká 2017). However, distinguishing similes from literal comparisons can be challenging, as the syntactic frames used for similes often also encompass literal comparison (Emmer 2023: 25).

Čermák (2007: 187-188) outlines three key aspects for recognizing idioms, including similes: **recurrence**, **invariability of components**, and **figurativeness**. While most similes are fixed in form, have minimal variability and are considered a whole unit (Ibid.: 393), literal comparisons are only constrained by the syntactic frame and allow for free paradigmatic selection and analysis of their constituents.

Additionally, a fundamental cognitive difference exists between literal comparisons and similes. The source of a simile is a **prototypical bearer** of the feature or quality ascribed to the target. Our mental lexicon contains a large set of prototypes used in various similes, shared among speakers. Similes, therefore, are categorisations based on analogy. Literal comparisons do not rely on prototypes and treat both entities as subjects of comparison (Emmer 2023: 26-27).

Fogelin (1988) discusses the difference between figurative and literal comparisons in terms of **salience**, which refers to the prominent features in comparison. According to Ortony's salience imbalance theory, figurative comparisons (similes) emphasize a salient feature of the source that is less prominent in the target (Ortony 1979, cited in Tartakovsky & Shen 2019: 204¹¹, see also Norrick 1986: 43-44). For instance, while *Encyclopaedias are like dictionaries* highlights literal, salient similarities (both used for reference, being organized in alphabetical order), *Encyclopaedias are like gold mines* emphasizes abstract, hardly salient similarities, such as value, demonstrating the imbalance (Ortony 1993: 347, cited in Walaszewska 2013: 324)¹². Norrick (1986) adds that in similes, the relationship between the ground and the source is typically either **objective** (e.g., *black as a crow*) or **culturally coded**

¹⁰ Example from Gargani 2016: 62.

¹¹ Ortony, A. (1979) Beyond literal similarity. *Psychological Review* 86(3): 161–180.

¹² Ortony, A. (1993). "The role of similarity in similes and metaphors". In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (342-356). (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

(e.g., *meek as a lamb*). Fixed similes that deviate from this salience, such as *black as a table* or *meek as a window*, are uncommon because they fail to highlight characteristic features that are immediately recognizable.

Tarkovsky & Shen (2019: 209) introduce the concept of **dissimilarity**, which means that unlike in literal comparisons, in similes the target and source need to belong to **different taxonomies**. Emmer (2023: 28), however, argues that this criterion is not exclusive to established similes, citing examples like *The film is almost as good as drinking*, and *He smells like blue cheese*. These examples illustrate different taxonomies, but are not established similes. Instead, they fit in the category of **nonce similes**¹³, a transitional category between literal comparisons and established similes.

Moon (2011: 149) described the phenomenon of comparing two dissimilar things as a **category mismatch**. For example, in *Her words were sharp as a razor*, abstract words are compared to concrete *razor*. This category mismatch allows the use of a **reversibility test** to determine whether a comparison is literal or a simile. In this case, the reversed *Razor was sharp as her words*, changes the meaning, making the sentence incomprehensible. However, sentences such as *Pam looks like my sister*, can be reversed without change in meaning, suggesting that they are literal comparisons (Emmer 2023: 29).

According to Emmer (2023: 29), **the reversibility test** is a simple and reliable tool for identifying literal, ad hoc comparisons. Similes, on the other hand, are irreversible for two reasons:

1. The target-source relationship is **not reciprocal**, with the source illustrating the ground of comparison.
2. The source in similes functions as **an intensifier** of the ascribed quality or feature, a function that does not occur in literal comparisons (Emmer 2023: 29).

However, Tversky (1977: 328, cited in Fogelin 2011: 62-63¹⁴; see also Gargani 2016: 61) lists examples, such as *an ellipse is like a circle* (not *a circle is like an ellipse*), or *North Korea is like Red China* (not *Red China is like North Korea*), which do not fit this rule,

¹³ More on nonce similes in section 2.1.3

¹⁴ Tversky, A. (1977). Features of Similarity. *Psychological Review* 84, 327–352.

saying that similarity judgements are sometimes directional, and the reversed statement is not equivalent in general to the converse similarity statement.

Another diagnostic test to distinguish between literal comparisons and similes is offered by Cruse (2006: 165):

“A rough-and-ready way of distinguishing ‘true similes’ from ‘literal similes’ is to see what happens when they are **transformed into metaphors**: a literal simile will either not make sense at all or will suffer a major change in meaning, whereas a true simile yields a metaphor whose meaning is close to that of the simile: *Peter is like a lion* (true simile) vs *Peter is a lion* (metaphor); *Your kitchen is like mine* (literal simile) vs *Your kitchen is mine* (metaphor not possible).“

Finally, an interesting phenomenon arises when examining the different functions of similes and literal comparisons: fixed similes sometimes include a source that is not easily understood in the current context or whose motivation is unclear, such as *happy as Larry* or *dumb as a doornail* (Čermák, Hladká 2017). This reflects how similes, unlike literal comparisons, often rely on culturally specific or historically rooted imagery that may not be immediately transparent.

2.1.3 Nonce and standard similes

Similes are sometimes evaluated on the basis of their aesthetic effect, with poetic constructions often marked as similes due to their figurativeness. Gargani (2016) uses the terms ‘poetic comparison’ for similes and ‘non-poetic comparison’ for literal comparisons, implying that all similes are poetic. However, this does not apply to many standard similes, such as *soft as a baby’s bottom* or *black as coal*. Fishelov (1993: 2-3, cited in Emmer 2023: 34)¹⁵ differentiates between ‘poetic’ and ‘non-poetic’ similes, noting that while poetic similes are often found in poetry, they are not exclusive to it. Poetic similes, or **nonce similes**, are unique, one-off expressions designed to evoke specific aesthetic effects, as seen in the example: *She was staring at him like a forgotten torch trying to pierce through the night, desperately searching for its long-gone owner* (Emmer 2023: 34).

¹⁵ Fishelov, D. (1993). *Metaphors of genre: the role of analogies in genre theory*. University Park (Pa.): Pennsylvania state university press.

Tartakovsky & Shen (2019: 206) focus on these similes, referring to them as **non-standard poetic similes**. They describe these similes as encompassing various potential effects where the relationship between the ground and the source is often puzzling, which they argue justifies the term ‘poetic’. They note that “[i]n the NSPS [non-standard poetic similes], the ground and the source are in need of reconciliation, and the relationship between them is oftentimes enigmatic” (Tartakovsky & Shen 2019: 206). However, exceptions exist, such as “*The sun will turn as black as a widow’s skirt*” which, despite its creativity, is easily understandable and lacks the enigmatic quality typical of non-standard poetic similes. (Ibid.)

Nonce similes are tailored for particular occasions, making them unsuitable for standard communication and challenging to track in linguistic studies. In contrast, standard similes are conventionalized, recurrent expressions found in everyday language and are documented in dictionaries for description and preservation. These standard similes are traceable in corpora and are used in communication to convey established and readily recognized meanings (Emmer 2023: 35).

2.1.4 Semantic complements of similes, explicit and implicit similes

According to Emmer (2023: 32) the default simile structure comprises five semantic components, each with its own characteristics and distinct function. Various terms are used for the individual components, but according to Emmer (see also Čermák, Hladká 2017), this is the most accurate nomenclature:

Table 1: The default simile structure (Emmer 2023: 32)

comparandum (target)	relator	tertium comparationis (ground)	comparator	comparatum (source)
Robin	was	high	as	a kite.
Lenny	cried	(-)	like	a baby.

The individual elements are further explained by Čermák (2009: 395):

Comparandum (target): The referent, always supplemented by context, is the nominal expression being described. The entire simile acts as a specifying and referring predicate related to this element.

Relator: The relational element, usually verbal in nature, is the first fixed component on the left side of the expression.

Tertium comparationis (ground): The shared feature, quality, mode, aspect, etc., sometimes explicitly stated and lexically expressed, relates to both the comparandum and the comparatum, forming the basis of their similarity relationship.

Comparator: The formal marker of the simile, typically the word *like* or *as*, which expresses the general relationship between the comparandum and the comparatum.

Comparatum (source): The generalized model or prototype, which is always the single semantic component on the right side of the expression. This is the core of the simile, serving to clarify and contextualize the comparandum.

Not all similes explicitly contain all five components. Mandatory elements are the **target**, the **comparator** and the **source**.

The first example in Table 1 has an **explicit ground** (*high*), making the simile **explicit** (Čermák 2007: 401) or **closed** (Tartakovsky & Shen 2019: 205) with no free ground interpretation needed. As pointed out by Margolis (1957: 187, cited in Waleszewska 2013: 324)¹⁶, closed similes specify “the respects in which the comparison is intended”, and hence neutralize – though do not eliminate – the figurativeness of the similes. The second example in Table 1 **lacks an explicit ground**, making the simile **implicit** (Čermák 2007: 401) or **open** (Tartakovsky & Shen 2019: 205), where the ground is either implied by the relator or unnecessary for interpretation.

Some open similes can be easy to understand without the ground, such as *Madison runs like the wind*. The missing ground can be implied as *fast*, with the relator *run* suggesting velocity. In contrast, a sentence such as *Their lack of communication made me feel like a mushroom* requires knowledge about mushrooms (thriving in the dark) to recover the intended ground of *being uninformed*. However, explicitly stating the ground as *uninformed* results in an infelicitous construction, highlighting the incompatibility between the animate target (me) and the inanimate source (mushroom) (Emmer 2023: 33).

¹⁶ Margolis, J. (1957). Notes on the logic of simile, metaphor and analogy. *American Speech*, vol. 32, pp. 186-189.

Understanding implicit similes can vary across different speakers, social groups or contexts. For instance, *John sounds like a politician* might imply different grounds such as deceitfulness, charisma or diplomacy (Emmer 2023: 34).

2.1.5 Formal aspect of components, verbal and adjectival similes

According to Čermák (2007: 387), the left-hand side of similes generally contains verbs or adjectives, while the right-hand side strongly prefers nouns. This distribution aligns with the fundamental purpose of similes, which is to compare one entity to another. Nouns, representing concrete and abstract entities, typically occupy the right-hand side, while verbs or adjectives, representing the behavioural feature or quality shared by the target and the source, occupy the left-hand side (Emmer, 2023: 31).

We identify two main types of similes based on the leftmost lexical item, which is generally considered the head element of the simile. The first type, **verbal similes**, emphasize the action or state of the subject and are implicit. They follow the structure ‘A [verb] like/as B’. For example, in *He runs like a cheetah*, the verb *runs* serves as the **relator** and *cheetah* is a **source**, with the ground not explicitly stated. The second type is **adjectival similes**, which usually follow the structure ‘A is (as) adjective as/like B’. An example is *He is as brave as a lion*, where *brave* functions as the **ground**.

2.1.6 Simile functions and effects

The primary purpose of a simile is to compare two entities, but two other major functions can emerge from their specific usage. One such function is **humour**, which arises when the relationship between the compared entities is bizarre, as in *He was sprinting like a legless ostrich*. This simile juxtaposes the action of sprinting with the incongruous image of a legless ostrich, creating a humorous effect (Emmer 2023: 35-36). Similarly, **irony** is often interwoven with similes when the ground is the exact opposite of a salient feature of the source, exemplified by *The boy is as brave as a mouse* (Tartakovsky & Shen 2019: 5, see also Fishelov 2007: 74).

Another important function of similes is **intensification**, which is generally not found in verbal similes but is prominent in adjectival similes. This function is evident in the sentence *Stacy is mad as a hornet*, which means she is very or completely mad (Emmer 2023: 35-36).

Moon (2008: 7) describes adjectival similes as “pragmatically emphasizing the degree of the quality denoted by the adjective.” While the intensification function of similes is widely recognized, questions remain about the extent to which the comparison between the target and the source remains active in their interpretation.

Čermák and Hladká (2017) highlight a noteworthy phenomenon related to intensification that is present in both Czech and English. As the intensifying component of a simile strengthens, it can lead to the depletion of other semantic features of the comparatum (**‘desemantization’**), which, in turn, allows for greater variability in the tertium comparationis, sometimes reaching the point of arbitrariness. For instance, in Czech, the Moravian expression *jak sviňa* (e.g., *vedro jak sviňa*, *prší jak sviňa*) demonstrates this desemantization, similar to expressions like *...jako hrom*, *...jako blázen*, *...jako stehno*, and *...jako prase*.¹⁷

In English, Emmer (2023: 49) observes a comparable phenomenon. He notes that expressions such as *...as fuck*, *...as shit*, and *...as hell* are not true similes but rather serve as intensifying post-modifiers. Moon (2008: 5) also mentions these frames, giving examples *...as anything*, *...as hell* and *...as you please*. She marks the second element **‘an emphatic particle’**.

2.2 Czech similes and their characteristics

2.2.1 Formal aspect of components

Similarly to English, both main components of a simple, undeveloped simile can be realized through all four autosemantic parts of speech: nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs (which may also be substituted by pronouns, such as *sníst něco jako nic* (eat something like nothing), and numerals, such as *dělat jako čtyři* (work like four)). On the left side of a simile, it is common to encounter only verbs and adjectives, for example, *poslouchat jako hodiny* (listen like a clock) or *lehký jako pírko* (light as a feather), which are comparable to **adjectival** and

¹⁷„Postupné posilování intenzifikační složky může způsobit vyprázdnění ostatních sémantických rysů komparáta (viz desémantizace) a následně uvolnit variabilitu tertium comparationis až k hranici libovolnosti, srov. doklady užití mor. p. *jak sviňa* (*vedro jak sviňa*, *abstraktní jak sviňa*, *prší jak sviňa*, *zpívá jak sviňa*, *pozdě jak sviňa*; o desémantizaci zde svědčí i otupení příznaku vulgarity), podobně *... jako hrom*, *... jako blázen*, *... jako stehno*, *... jako prase* ad.“ (Čermák, Hladká 2017, translation Nykendajová)

verbal structures in English. The occurrence of nouns and especially adverbs is rare, as in *chlap jako hora* (a man like a mountain) or *rychle jako blesk* (fast as lightning), which can be considered a transformation of *být rychlý jako blesk* (Čermák, 2009: 488).

On the right side of the comparator, just like on the left, all four autosemantic parts of speech can appear. However, it differs from the left side in that it predominantly features nouns or substantivized adjectives, such as *mít hlad jako vlk* (to be as hungry as a wolf) or *hrát jako ponocný* (to play like a night watchman). Participial adjectives, usually with prefixes, such as *nenážraný* (greedy), *opilý* (drunk), and *přibitý* (nailed down), are particularly frequent. An isolated verb (a finite verb) and an adverb are the least represented here. Additionally, to the right of the comparator, there may also be a clause, as in *rozprchnout se, jako když do vrabců střílí* (scatter like when you shoot at sparrows).

From this, it is clear that the left side of a simile is predominantly composed of verbs, while the right side consists mainly of nouns. Thus, the most common basic simple structure of a Czech simile can be identified as a combination of Verb - Comparator - Noun (*tancovat jako medvěd* - dance like a bear), or possibly Verb - (Adjective) - Comparator - Noun (*být bílý jako stěna* - be white as a wall)¹⁸, and Verb - Comparator – Deverbial adjective (*pracovat jako posedlý* - work like a man possessed) (Čermák 2009, p. 489).

Fixed similes do not necessarily adhere to a single form; they may exhibit syntagmatic variability or paradigmatic variability, or a combination of both, as in *být (mírný/trpělivý) jako ovečka* (to be as gentle/patient as a lamb) (Čermák, Hladká 2017).

2.2.2 Semantic perspective

Čermák characterizes the general structure of a simile from a semantic perspective with the formula similar to the one we saw in English similes, demonstrated on the example from Čermák (2009: 494): *ten sládek (comparandum = target) je (relator) tlustý (tertium comparationis = ground) jak (comparator) sud (comparatum = source)*

It might be interesting to note that according to Čermák's statistics, about 80% of comparanda in Czech similes pertain to people, while the remaining 20% refer to other

¹⁸ Interestingly, Čermák considers the adjectival type of simile to be a form of verbal simile, characterized by the use of copular verb and adjective, otherwise sharing the structure.

entities. These are further categorized into abstract and concrete referents. However, there are almost no expressions with animals in the comparandum slot (Čermák 2009: 494). Regarding comparata, 50% represent concrete objects, 20% denote animals, functions or human professions, and the remainder include specific names, names of places, abstract concepts and other categories (Čermák 2007: 392).

Regarding the function of the **relator** in Czech similes, it can appear in three distinct forms. In the first form, the relator appears alone on the left side of the expression (before the comparator) and serves solely a formal function. All semantic weight is transferred to the right side of the expression. An example of this form is the expression *je (R) jako prašivý pes*. This form corresponds with **open (implicit) simile**. In the second form, the relator is accompanied on the left side by the tertium comparationis and serves as its complement, both formally and semantically. This form might be exemplified in the simile *je (R) zpráskaný jako pes* and corresponds with **closed (explicit) similes**. In the final form, the relator is entirely omitted, and only the comparandum and comparatum appear on the left side of the expression. An example of this is *budova jako kráva* (Chmelíková 2022: 13) or *chlap jak hora* (Čermák 2009: 495).

In the subsequent chapters, the components will be discussed in more detail, particularly in the context of their roles and interactions within various types of similes, focusing on their contrast with English.

2.3 Similes with animal sources

Animals have been a fundamental part of human life since prehistoric times. Historically, people relied on animals primarily for sustenance, using their remains to craft tools and clothing. However, as human civilization evolved, so too did the relationship between humans and animals. In the modern era, animals are not only sources of food but also serve roles in protection, labour, and companionship. Throughout history, humans have consistently treated animals in ways that maximized their utility – valuing those that were beneficial and disposing of those deemed unnecessary or harmful (Horálek, Němec 1986: 54, cited in Chmelíková 2022: 15).¹⁹

¹⁹ Horálek J., Němec I. (1986). *Dědictví řeči*. Prague: Panorama.

“The rich array of lexicalized similes comparing human qualities, activities, and states to those of animals, which originated from the zoosphere, indicates that humans have long and carefully observed the behaviour and habits of animals. Over generations, they compared these to human behaviours and customs, personified them, and used them to characterize their peers. Similes comparing human attributes, actions, or states to those of animals were meant to enliven, dynamize, emphasize, or add an ironic or mocking character to the verbal expression. Phrases like *je pilný jako včelka* ([He] is as industrious as a bee) or *je poslušný jako beránek* ([He] is as obedient as a lamb) are undoubtedly much more vivid, expressive, and dramatic than simple statements such as *je pilný* ([He] is industrious) or *je poslušný* ([He] is obedient).” (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 153).²⁰

Lexicalized similes based on **zoapelatives**²¹ result from extensive observation and accumulated life experience. General knowledge about animals, such as the mole’s poor eyesight or the badger’s solitary nature, has led to the development of established similes in Slavic languages, such as *slepý jako krtek* (as blind as a mole) or *žít jako jezevec* (to live like a badger) (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 153).

While these similes originated from rural and natural observations, they have become widely used in modern language, even among urban dwellers who have never encountered these animals. However, not all fixed similes based on the zoosphere have transparent motivations for their origin.

2.3.1 Categorization of similes with animal sources according to Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch (2004)

From the perspective of their initial motivation, or lack thereof, Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch (2004: 153) distinguish two major groups of animal-based similes. The first group consists

²⁰ „Bohatá škála lexikalizovaných přirovnání lidských vlastností, činností a stavů ke zvířecím, která vznikla na bázi zoosféry, svědčí o tom, že člověk chování a zvyklosti zvířat po celé generace velmi bedlivě pozoroval a porovnával je s chováním a zvyklostmi lidí, personifikoval je, aby pak s jejich pomocí charakterizoval své bližní. Přirovnání lidské vlastnosti, činnosti nebo stavu ke zvířecím mělo slovní projev oživit, dynamizovat, zvýraznit anebo mu dodat ironizující či zesměšňující charakter. Vyjádření typu *je pilný jako včelka*, *je poslušný jako beránek* jsou nepochybně mnohem výraznější, živější, expresivnější a dramatičtější než prosté vyjádření *je pilný*, *je poslušný*.“ (Kouptsevitch, Mrhačová 2004: 153, translation Nykendajová)

²¹ words derived from or associated with the names of animals

of **genuine lexicalized similes with transparent motivation**²². These are the most common type, comprising similes of real, existing human properties, actions, and states, created based on similarity, e.g., *zdravý jako ryba* (healthy as a fish), *jíst jako vrabec* (eat like a sparrow) or *skákat jako blecha* (jump like a flea) (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 155-156).

The second group includes **false lexicalized similes**²³, which are further divided into subgroups. The first subgroup consists of **similes based on personification**²⁴. This type relates to human properties assigned to animals based on perceived similarities in behaviour between humans and animals, e.g., *lstivý jako kočka* (as sly as a cat) or *drzý jako opice* (cheeky as a monkey) (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 157).

The second subgroup consists of **formal similes**²⁵. Unlike most similes, these did not arise from observation. They are not similes in the phraseological sense described earlier but are expressive representations of a high degree of a given property, action, or state, usually of a negative character, appearing in highly emotionally charged speech. They arise situationally, but some phrases are fully lexicalized. This type uses only a few animal names, such as *pes*, *prase* (in some regions *sviňa*), rarely *kráva*, *tele*, *vůl*. Examples are *je to horké jako prase* (it is hot as a pig), *je zpocený jako pes* ([he] is sweating like a dog), *je to velké jako kráva* (it is big as a cow) (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 158). This type was already mentioned in connection with the phenomenon of desemantization in Chapter 1.1.6.

The third subgroup consists of **anecdotal fixed similes**²⁶. Similarly to the previously mentioned subgroup (and unlike genuine similes), this group did not originate from observation and knowledge. It comprises both adjectival and verbal similes which resemble jokes and serve to amuse or engage the listener, e.g. *platný jako pes v kostele* (as useful as a dog in a church), *mluvit jako když blecha kašle* (to talk like a flea coughing) or *vypadá jako mouchy snězte si mě* ([He/she] looks like “flies, come and eat me”) (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 158-159).

²² Pravá lexikalizovaná přirovnání (přirovnání s transparentní motivací vzniku)

²³ Nepravá lexikalizovaná přirovnání

²⁴ Přirovnání založená na personifikaci

²⁵ Formální přirovnání

²⁶ Anekdotická ustálená přirovnání

The final subgroup consists of **similes with hidden motivation**²⁷:

“These are a highly interesting but entirely marginal, strongly expressive type of lexicalized simile. They most likely originate from ellipsis and analogy. For example, the expression *opilý/ožralý jako čuně, prase, svině* (drunk as a pig) might have emerged from the analogy that a drunk person is dirty and rolling on the ground, thus resembling a pig. This led to the lexicalized simile *být opilý/ožralý* (and consequently, to look like) *jako čuně, prase, svině*.” (Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 159-160).²⁸

2.3.2 Semantic categorization by Norrick (1986) and Moon (2008)

Norrick (1986:44) discusses the common semantic categories to which adjectives and nouns in similes typically belong. Analysing 366 similes listed in *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* (1970), he notes that about 25% of adjectives describe colours or other directly perceived qualities, while 38% of sources involve animals, 19% involve plants and natural products, and 14% involve artifacts, clothing, buildings, and similar items. In comparison, Moon's (2008: 8) analysis of corpus-attested similes shows a slightly lower percentage involving creatures, but a higher percentage involving artifacts and the natural environment. Additionally, over 70% of these similes contain adjectives that refer to colours, general physical properties (not always directly perceived), dimensions, speed, or age.

Table 2 displays the typical patterns of semantic types according to Moon (2008: 8-9)²⁹.

²⁷ Přirovnání se skrytou motivací

²⁸ „Jde o velmi zajímavý, leč zcela okrajový, silně expresivní typ lexikalizovaného přirovnání, který s největší pravděpodobností vznikl elipsou, zkrácením na základě analogie. Například výraz *opilý/ožralý jako čuně, prase, svině* mohl vzniknout na základě takovéto analogie: opilý člověk je špinavý, válí se po zemi, a tím připomíná čuně, prase, svini, odtud lexikalizované přirovnání *být opilý/ožralý (a následně vypadat) jako čuně, prase, svině*.“ (Mrhačová, Kouptsevitch 2004: 159-160, translation by Nykendajová).

²⁹ Using broad semantic classification derived from Dixon (1991: 76ff). Dixon, R. M. W. (1991). *A New Approach to English Grammar on Semantic Principles*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

„Linkages in as-similes chime with the traditional Western concept of the Great Chain of Being, a hierarchy with humans (or God and angels) at the top, followed by creatures, plants, and complex objects (artefacts), and inanimates at the bottom. Different order elements are associated with particular kinds of attribute: humans with thought and moral behaviour, animals with instinctual behaviour, complex objects or artefacts with functions, and so on.“ (Moon 2008: 35)

Table 2: The typical semantic patterns (Moon 2008: 8)

Noun type	Adjective type	Example
creature	physical, propensity	<i>blind as a bat, stubborn as a mule</i>
person	propensity, physical	<i>happy as Larry, drunk as a lord</i>
body part	physical	<i>dry as a bone</i>
plant	propensity	<i>cool as a cucumber, green as grass</i>
artefact	physical, dimension, propensity	<i>clean as a new pin, thin as a rake, bright as a button</i>
substance	physical, colour, propensity	<i>hard as iron, black as ink, bold as brass</i>
food	physical, propensity	<i>flat as a pancake, nice as pie</i>
environment	physical, propensity	<i>hot as blazes, solid as (a) rock</i>
weather, etc.	physical, colour	<i>fresh as a breeze, white as snow</i>

2.4 Parameters for analysis

2.4.1 Structure of adjectival similes

In this chapter we will go through the distinct parts of adjectival similes that are necessary for their analysis in the corpora. As we have already observed, they can be described by a formalised frame, in English “(as) *ADJECTIVE as NOUN GROUP*” (Moon 2008: 4) and in Czech “*ADJECTIVE jako/jak NOUN GROUP*”³⁰.

2.4.1.1 The initial as

The initial *as* in English similes is **optional**, which means it cannot be relied upon for identifying similes. Moon (2008: 5), in her analysis of The Bank of English³¹ corpus found that “almost all simile types occur at least once without initial *as*, and more than half occur more commonly without it than with.”

The presence of the initial *as* is influenced by several factors, including the simile’s position in the sentence and its prosodic features. Among these prosodic elements, the number of syllables is particularly significant (Emmer 2024: 30).

³⁰ Although the **verb (relator)** is considered the first element of simile structure in Czech according to Čermák (chapter 2.2.1), for the purposes of comparison with English, adjectives will be regarded as the first element of adjectival similes in both languages. This adjustment reflects that English simile structure typically excludes verbs, and in adjectival similes, verbs are usually copular and carry less meaning.

³¹ “The Bank of English corpus was created by COBUILD at the University of Birmingham. It comprises 450 million words (approximately 70% British English, 21% North American English, 8% Australian English), mainly taken from 1990s written sources but including over 20 million words of spoken interaction and 40 million words of transcribed radio broadcasts.” (Moon 2008: 35)

While the initial *as* functions as a **degree adverb**, it can also be viewed as a correlate of the comparator *as* (e.g., *as green as grass*), though this analysis is problematic due to the difference in their parts of speech. In corpora, the initial *as* is usually tagged as a general adverb. Other comparative constructions allow *so* as a variant in the initial position, particularly in negative statements (e.g., *not so clear as*) or idiomatic phrases (e.g., *as/so long as*). However, *so* does not appear in similes, making its presence a clear indicator that a phrase is not a simile (Emmer 2023: 39-40).

Czech similes do not have an equivalent introductory word.

2.4.1.2 The adjective

In the analysis of English adjectival similes, the adjective is considered **the central element**, both semantically and syntactically, making its presence essential for identifying similes. Typically, these adjectives are morphologically simple, often monosyllabic or disyllabic (commonly ending in -y), though compound adjectival similes are also relatively common (Moon 2008: 45). Some similes undergo **gradation**, such as *large as life* becoming *larger than life* or *good as sex* becoming *better than sex* (Emmer 2023: 40). This transformation is also possible in animal-related similes, such as *faster than a cheetah* or *stronger than a bear*.

A key challenge arises from the blurred distinction between adjectives and adverbs in English, which can lead to adjectives being misclassified as adverbs in corpora. Many adjectival similes function as adverbials of manner, further complicating their classification. This ambiguity must be addressed when designing corpus queries: excluding adverb tags may reduce recall but including them could generate irrelevant results (Emmer 2023: 40-41). There is also a distinct, albeit uncommon, category of **adverbial similes**, structured as '(as) ADVERB as NOUN GROUP', e.g., *In fact, we were sitting as quietly as mice in different corners* (Moon 2008: 6).

Norrick (1986: 40) explores the meanings of simile adjectives and the relationship between the adjective, the source noun group, and object of description in terms of figurativeness. He identifies three main subtypes: **literal**, **metaphorical**, and **incongruent**. In literal similes, the adjective retains its primary meaning (e.g., *quick as a flash*, *flat as a pancake*). In metaphorical similes, the adjective is literal when related to the source noun but metaphorical when applied to the object described (e.g., *cool as a cucumber*, *sharp as a tack*). In

incongruent similes, the adjective describes a property that applies to the object but not to the source (e.g., *daft as a brush*, *poor as a church mouse*).

In Czech, the adjective also plays a crucial role in similes, though Czech adjectives are often longer and more complex than their English counterparts due to case and declension variations. Consequently, a single simile may have several different forms. However, unlike in English, the distinction between adjectives and adverbs in Czech is clearer, which simplifies classification and avoids the problems present in English.

2.4.1.3 Comparator *as*, *jako/jak*

An essential element in identifying similes is the form of the comparator. English similes typically use *like* in open similes (and after verbal heads (Norrick 1986: 39)) and *as* in closed similes (and after adjectival heads (Ibid.)). These comparators are generally best understood as **prepositions**, though they are sometimes misclassified as subordinate conjunctions. This misclassification is particularly problematic with *as*, which may be incorrectly tagged as a conjunction, especially in structures like *as...as*, where it might be interpreted as a correlative conjunction (Emmer 2023: 41).

The comparator is obligatory in adjectival similes, making it a crucial component for their identification. However, including *as* in corpus queries can exclude certain transformations, such as *larger than life* or *better than sex*, which do not use *as* (Emmer 2023: 41).

“There seems to be little difference between such forms [*as*-forms and *than*-forms] in terms of meaning or emphatic force: this contrasts with the case in general English, where, for example, correlative *Sam is as happy as Chris* has a quite different meaning from comparative *Sam is happier than Chris*. *Than*-variations are found with 22% of attested simile types but are not especially common: the only really recurrent cases are *white as snow/whiter than snow*, and *hot as hell/hotter than hell*.” (Moon 2008: 6)

In some adjectival similes, *as* can also be replaced by *like*, as in *hard like a rock*. Although non-standard, this substitution appears in larger corpora and may suggest an emerging trend (Emmer 2023: 41). Moon (2008: 6) adds, “In a few cases, *as*-similes exist alongside parallel expressions with the structure *like NOUN GROUP* (without an adjective).” For

example, *quick as lightning* parallels the more common *like lightning*, and *regular as clockwork* parallels *like clockwork*. However, these similes deviate from the regular framework, and are difficult to trace in corpora.

In Czech similes, the comparator is also an obligatory element, and according to Čermák (2009: 496), it is “the only formal feature of the entire system of similes”. The most common forms are *jako* or *jak*.

2.4.1.4 The noun group

The noun group is the final element of an adjectival simile in both Czech and English, and it varies in complexity.

In English, the head noun may occasionally be followed by **prepositional phrases**, usually indicating location (*happy as a pig in clover*), or the noun phrase can be expanded or replaced by **verbal structures** (*sure as I’m standing here*) (Moon 2008: 4). However, most noun phrases in standard similes follow a basic ‘**(determiner) + noun**’ structure (Emmer 2023: 41).

The grammatical number of the noun phrase influences the choice of the determiner, particularly the article. Similes can include countable singular nouns (*sharp as a razor*), countable plural nouns (*cheap as chips*), or uncountable singular nouns (*clear as crystal*). While countable nouns in similes typically appear with the **indefinite article**, the definite article is also possible, especially when referring to contextually unique phenomena (*blue as the sky*). However, as observed by Emmer (2023: 42), the definite article is much less frequent.

Similar to adjectives, inaccurate tagging can occur with nouns in similes. Nouns serving as comparator are sometimes mislabelled as adjectives or even verbs. This issue primarily arises with lexical items that, due to conversion, can belong to **multiple word classes**. For example, *pitch* can be both a noun and a verb, with the part-of-speech-tag typically assigned based on the surrounding lexical items. In the Spoken BNC2014³², if a general adverb

³² British National Corpus 2014

precedes *pitch*, it is tagged a verb, regardless of its actual word class within the given sentence (Emmer 2024: 33).³³

In Czech similes, the noun phrase can also be short and simple (e.g., *být hravý jako kotě* – playful as a kitten)³⁴, or a longer fixed expression (e.g., *je uvázaný jako pes u boudy* – tied up like a dog by the kennel)³⁵. Occasionally, the source is not a noun but a subordinate clause, such as *je to rovné jako když kanec chčije* (It's straight as when a boar pisses)³⁶ or *je hubený jako by šváby louskal* (thin as if cracking cockroaches)³⁷.

However, unlike English, determiners are rarely used in Czech similes. Consequently, the most common form of the noun group in Czech similes is either **adjective + noun** or simply **noun**.

2.4.1.5 Modifiers of adjectival similes

English adjectival similes can be attenuated by phrases such as *about*, *almost*, or *at least*. In Czech, while it is formally possible to modify similes with the word *tak*, this is relatively uncommon.

2.4.2 Position of adjectival similes in the clause

As stated by Moon (2008: 5-6),

“the default position for similes is post-copular³⁸, but a few occur post-nominally³⁹ or elliptically⁴⁰. Similes are also used pre-nominally, typically in hyphenated form: *This was no dry-as-dust dispute about the interpretation of obscure clauses in marine charter-parties*. Of the set of 228 similes, around 20% sometimes occur pre-nominally in BoE [The Bank of English corpus], though usually only once or twice. However,

³³ „[...] nepřesné tagování se týká i substantiva v roli komparáta, které občas bývá označeno jako adjektivum, případně sloveso. Tento problém se objevuje především u lexikálních jednotek, jejichž slovnědruhá kategorie vlivem konverze nabízí více možností. Např. *pitch* může být substantivum i sloveso, přičemž slovnědruhový tag zpravidla bývá přiřazen na základě okolních lexikálních jednotek. Pokud se ve Spoken BNC2014 před *pitch* objevuje obecné adverbium, *pitch* je označeno jako sloveso, nehledě na skutečnou slovnědruhou příslušnost *pitch* v rámci dané věty.“ (Emmer 2024: 33, translation Nykendajová)

³⁴ Čermák 2009: 169

³⁵ Čermák 2009: 272

³⁶ Čermák 2009: 149

³⁷ Čermák 2009: 497

³⁸ Following the verb *to be*, such as *She is as brave as a lion*.

³⁹ Coming after the noun it describes: *They found the house as welcoming as a home*.

⁴⁰ Part of sentence is implied but not explicitly stated: *She looked amazing. Elegant as a princess*.

over half of all tokens of *dry as dust* are in this form, as are 25% of tokens of *hard as nails* and *dull as ditchwater/dishwater*.”

2.4.3 Special cases of adjectival similes and their transformations

Mrhačová (1999: 14) notes that fixed similes can sometimes be transformed into phrases without the comparator⁴¹ while retaining their meaning. For example, *tvrdohlavý jako beran* can be simplified to *tvrdohlavý beran*. Nevertheless, these variations differ from similes stylistically and in frequency, as the expression without explicit comparison is less expressive, less vivid and also less commonly used; cf., *být líný jako veš* → *být líná veš*. Theoretically, such a transformation is generally possible with fixed similes, but the limiting factors include the meaning of the zoopelative, the sentence context, and conventions. For example, *být slepý jako krtek* cannot be transformed into *slepý krtek* (Mrhačová 1999: 14, see also Mrhačová & Kouptsevitch 2004: 162).

This same phenomenon is observed by Moon (2008: 6), speaking about **occasional nominal forms derived from similes**, primarily used on an ad hoc basis. For instance, phrases like *daft as brush* can lead to nominal derivatives such as *the daftness of brushes*. Additionally, some nominal parallels suggest a broader pattern of stereotypical collocation, such as *patient as Job* correlating with *the patience of Job* and *Joblike patience*. Similarly, certain similes are linked with related metaphorical noun phrases, such as *busy as a bee* with *a busy bee* and *fat as a pig* with *fat pig*. Although, according to Moon, these are not true co-derivatives, they reinforce the collocational connection within the simile.

Moon (2008: 6-7) also talks about “widespread occurrence of compound adjectival forms which realize the same linkage of ADJECTIVE and NOUN but in inverted order (**NOUN-ADJECTIVE**), and mainly with similar meanings.” Some of the examples provided by her are *straight as a die* → *die-straight*, *sharp as a tack* → *tack-sharp* or *tough as old boots* → *boot-tough*. Although Moon found these forms infrequently in her corpus, they illustrate a tendency towards creating ad hoc variants. However, there are other significant lexical items, that are understood in their own right (have a different or wider range of meaning) and are

⁴¹ According to Mrhačová, these structures are still considered types of similes. However, it could be argued that as they deviate from the traditional simile structure, the expression may be more accurately viewed as a metaphor.

much more common than the cognate similes mentioned before. These are expressions such as *crystal-clear* (*clear as crystal*), *rock-solid* (*solid as a rock*), *bone-dry* (*dry as a bone*) or *stick-thin* (*thin as a stick*) (Moon 2008: 7, see also Emmer 2023: 44-45).

In Czech, similar transformations occur, such as *sněhobílý* (snow-white) from *bílý jako sníh* (white as snow).

However, due to their non-standard forms and difficulty in systematic corpus analysis, these special cases of similes will be excluded from the analysis.

2.4.4 Prosodic features

Prosodic features contribute to the ease with which speakers can recall and reproduce similes, while also serving the often-overlooked **aesthetic function** of these expressions. Features such as **alliteration** (e.g., *big as a barn*), **assonance** (e.g., *high as a kite*), and **rhyme** (e.g., *drunk as a skunk*) are key carriers of this function. According to Moon (2008: 35), these prosodic features are present in 23% of the adjectival similes in her list. Emmer (2023) finds that alliteration occurs in 12.3% of cases, assonance in 6.8%, and rhyme in 1.62% of his corpus sample. In some instances, the phonetic appeal of a simile might have been the primary factor in its creation, especially in examples with particularly striking prosodic features (Emmer 2023: 43).

2.4.4.1 Alliteration

Alliteration, according to Britannica⁴², is “the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words or stressed syllables.” While the letter and sound alliteration typically align, it is not always the case, as seen in *as sure as the sun*. For the purposes of the analysis, we will follow Emmer’s view and define alliteration as **the repetition of word-initial sound**, including both consonants and vowels.

2.4.4.2 Assonance

Assonance, according to Britannica⁴³, is “the **repetition of stressed vowel sounds** within words with different consonants, as in the phrase *quite like*. [...] As a poetic device, internal

⁴² Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2024, August 6). *alliteration*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/alliteration>.

⁴³ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2017, May 5). *assonance*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/assonance>.

assonance is usually combined with alliteration (repetition of initial consonant sounds) and consonance (repetition of end or medial consonant sounds) to enrich the texture of the poetic line.” As exemplified by Emmer (2023: 44), the combination of assonance and alliteration may be observed in *as fit as a fiddle*. However, as he also states, assonance is generally a less prominent feature, especially in similes composed of multisyllabic words like *as miserable as sin*.

2.4.4.3 Rhyme

Rhyme, according to Britannica⁴⁴, is “the correspondence of two or more words with **similar-sounding final syllables** placed so as to echo one another.” Rhyming similes are particularly easy to remember; however, they often prioritize rhyme over semantic appropriateness. In such cases (*drunk as a skunk* or *thick as a brick*), the source of the simile is chosen for its rhyming ability rather than for its suitability in describing the characteristic in question (Emmer 2023: 44).

2.4.5 Classifying simile types

Before compiling simile lists, it is essential to define what qualifies as a unique simile type. Moon (2008: 11-12) identifies three primary methods for classifying independent similes.

1. **The conceptual approach:** This method groups synonymous similes into broader conceptual categories, disregarding nuances in connotation. For example, the simile cluster THIN consist of *thin/skinny/lean* etc. *as a rake/reed/stick/whippet* etc. While this approach reduces the number of entities, it can obscure the frequency of individual similes and the regional, conceptual and associative differences among them. Also, deciding when to treat two similes as a single conceptual simile can be challenging (Moon 2008: 11-12; Emmer 2023: 42).
2. **Lexicographical (dictionary) approach:** This method, commonly used in dictionaries, fixes either the noun or adjective and lists possible variations in the other slot (*thin as a beanpole/lath/matchstick/rail/rake/reed/stick/whippet* or *thin/skinny/slim/slender as a reed*). It simplifies entries but “[s]uch groupings imply that there is no distinction in meaning or usage between variants. In keeping with

⁴⁴ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020, February 4). *rhyme*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/rhyme>.

other polysemous items, polysemous *as*-similes are normally treated in two or more sense groupings” (Moon 2008: 12).

3. **Lexical (type/corpus) approach:** Each simile variant (*thin as a rake*, *skinny as a rake*, *thin as a stick*, etc.) is treated as an independent type. This approach is practical for corpus research as it avoids the need to distinguish between different usages of similar similes but can result in a lengthy list of variations. Managing this involves setting frequency thresholds or commenting on observed frequencies (Emmer 2023: 43). This approach is taken in the analytic part of this work. However, according to Moon (2008: 13) there are still some decisions that need to be made concerning minor types of variation of tokens and the question whether they represent the same simile:
 - a. **Spelling variations:** both standard (*grey/gray as stone*) and non-standard (*straight as a die/dye*), as well as quasi-homophonous pairs, such as *dull as ditchwater* and *dull as dishwater*. These can be treated as spelling variants of the same simile type.
 - b. **Noun phrase variations (in stable collocations):** such as *neat as a (new) pin*, *honest as the day (is long)*. The key criterion here is that the two core lexical words should be fixed and consistently reoccur.
 - c. **Inserted words:** metalinguistic terms, such as *proverbial*, or intensifying oaths like *bloody*. Even with these inserts, the simile will be considered a token of its original type.
 - d. **Gender-specific variants:** e.g. *proud as a pea-hen* or *cunning as a vixen*. These are both in Moon’s work grouped together with the canonical forms *proud as a peacock* and *cunning as a fox*. This same approach will be adopted here.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ In Czech similes, **diminutives** will also be put together under one simile form, however not grouped together with a base form (such as *včela*, *včelka/včelička*).

3 Material and method

3.1 Material

This thesis draws on three separate corpora: for English, **British National Corpus 2014** (both spoken and written parts) and for **Czech SYN2020** and **ORAL** corpora. The corpora were selected to make it possible to explore the use of similes in a variety of registers of present-day British English and Czech, both written and spoken.

3.1.1 British National Corpus 2014

The British National Corpus 2014 (BNC2014) is a comprehensive collection of contemporary British English, compiled from a variety of real-life contexts. Managed by Lancaster University and Cambridge University Press, the BNC2014 is a 100-million-word corpus (10 million spoken, 90 million written) of present-day British English of words of both spoken and written English.⁴⁶ The corpus was accessed via #LancsBox X⁴⁷, a tool that offers extensive research functionalities for linguistic analysis.

3.1.2 SYN2020 Corpus

The SYN2020 corpus is a synchronic, representative corpus of contemporary written Czech, containing 100 million word tokens, including punctuation, and focusing on the period 2015–2019. Its composition is arbitrary, with fiction, specialized literature, and journalism each making up one-third (Křivan 2022).

3.1.3 ORAL Corpus

The ORAL corpus contains transcribed recordings of mostly informal conversations between native Czech speakers from across the Czech Republic. The speakers, who were friends or family, were recorded in natural settings between 2002 and 2011. The corpus is not balanced, with most data from the Bohemia region and less from Moravia and Silesia. The total size is 5,368,391 words and 582 hours of recordings (Křen 2023).

⁴⁶ For the description of the BNC2014 see <http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnc2014/>. (Accessed 17/9/2024)

⁴⁷ Brezina, V. & Platt, W. (2024) #LancsBox X [software], Lancaster University, <http://lancsbox.lancs.ac.uk>.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Query design in BNC2014

[pos="JJ.*"] [word="as|like"] [pos="AT.*|MC.*"]? [pos="JJ.*"]? [pos="NN.*sem="L2"]⁴⁸

The query is designed to search for a general adjective (in any form) followed by the word *as* or *like*, an optional determiner (an article or cardinal number), an optional adjective, and a noun classified semantically as ‘a living creature’ in the USAS semantic tagset.⁴⁹

This query yields 683 results.

3.2.1.1 Notes on creating the query

Including Adverbs – The query initially aimed to include adverbs, as some adjectives may have been incorrectly tagged. However, the query with an adverb in the first position yielded no results. Therefore, including adverbs proved ineffective and was ultimately deemed unnecessary.

Despite excluding adverbs from the initial query, some still appear in the analysed sample in the form of adverbs homonymous with adjectives, which have been misclassified in the corpus tagging process. For example, in the sentence *Didn't he crawl as gentle as a sleepy kitten*, the word *gentle* functions as an adverb modifying the verb *crawl*, though it was misclassified as an adjective in the corpus. Similarly, in *...and he'd been caught as easy as a chicken in a sack*, *easy* also functions as an adverb. These instances suggest that other homonymous adverbs may have been incorrectly tagged as adjectives in the corpus. Nonetheless, we chose to include these cases in the sample.

Omitting *than* – In the initial version of the query, *than* was considered as an alternative to *as* and *like*. However, it produced very few relevant results, returning examples such as (1) instead.

- (1) [...] *the fact that sheep populations are usually much larger than dog populations* (Larrieu et al. , 2013). (BNC2014, AcaNatRa32)

⁴⁸ Designed with User manual, available at <https://lancsbox.lancs.ac.uk/#manual1>. (Accessed 17/9/2024)

⁴⁹ USAS semantic tagset is available at <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas> (Accessed 17/9/2024)

Punctuation – Efforts were made to improve the relevance of results by restricting punctuation, especially full stops, after the adjective in order to avoid false hits, as shown in example (2). However, we would lose some instances of similes containing **parcellation** (exemplified in (3); more in section 4.2.3).

(2) *Choosing the right diet is really **important**. As a **dog** owner, you end up picking up their poo.* (BNC2014, NewSeTim898)

(3) *There had been an air of power about him that felt **animalistic**. Like a **lion** in the wilderness.* (BNC2014, FictFan10)

3.2.1.2 Refining the results in BNC2014

The results of the above query were checked manually, and false positives were excluded. The most usual reasons for exclusion are presented in Table 3 below.⁵⁰

It is important to highlight that animal sources were considered not only in similes where the animal name syntactically serves as **the head** of the noun phrase functioning as the source, but also in cases where the animal name acts as **a modifier** within the noun phrase.

Table 3: Most frequent types of irrelevant results in BNC2014

Reason	Example	No. of results
source does not contain an animal, such as <i>egg(s)</i> , <i>feather(s)</i> , or <i>shell(s)</i>	<i>She launched forward, her fingers crooked like claws.</i> (BNC2014, FictMis306)	100
literal comparison	<i>..., pensioner Don Proctor, 80, spotted rats as big as cats gorging on leftovers in a car park rubbish bin.</i> (BNC2014, NewMaDas411)	92
‘Layered simile’ - two or more adjectives preceding the comparator, usually with <i>and</i> ⁵¹	<i>But his mind kept working, despite the pain, sly and busy as a fox.</i> (BNC2014, FictMis590)	66

⁵⁰ There is some overlap, particularly with literal similes where the source is not an animal and literal comparisons, as well as double similes and literal comparisons. However, within the hierarchy of reasons, any other justification always takes precedence over a literal comparison.

Also, it is necessary to say that the line between nonce similes and the similes we are searching for is sometimes very thin, as well as the line between literal comparisons and similes.

⁵¹ We will focus more on these in the section 3.2.3.

as serves as a conjunction or preposition	<i>You can go away without worrying as bees can survive without human input.</i> (BNC2014, MagHou23)	24
nonce simile	<i>You're jumpy as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs.</i> (BNC2014, FictWom116)	25

Other reasons were: utterance separated by full stop or comma, the adjective is not in any relationship with the following prepositional phrase, animal source is a proper name, no adjective, *like* serves as a filler word, *twice as...*, *as sure as...*, *recognisable as...*, verbal simile, duplicate result (identical concordance) and two sources separated by *or* or *and*.

The total number of excluded irrelevant results is 368.

3.2.2 Query design in SYN2020 and ORAL

Due to the absence of semantic categories in the Czech corpus, an alternative methodological approach was required. Initially, the query (Q1) was employed to extract potential instances of similes. This query targets comparative constructions featuring adjectives followed by *jako* or *jak* and a noun in the nominative case (singular or plural) in original Czech texts. The decision to exclude translated texts ensures that no external linguistic influence distorts the analysis. Additionally, the Czech equivalent of *than* (*než*) was purposefully omitted to align the results with the English dataset.

(Q1): `[tag="A."][word="jako|jak"][tag="A."]?[tag="NN..1.*"] within <doc srclang="cs:čeština" />`

Subsequently, the results were manually reviewed, and expressions that could be associated with animals were isolated. This led to the formulation of a more specific and extensive query (Q2):

(Q2): `[tag="A.*"][word="jako|jak"][tag="A.*"?[lemma="albatros|aligátor|antilopa|bachyně|beagle|beran|beránek|blána|blecha|boa|bobr|bříško|brouček|buldok|býk|čajíček|červ|červík|chameleon|chlívek|chlupáč|chmýří|chobotnice|chocholouš|čmelák|čuník|dalmatinec|dinosaur|dobytek|doga|dráp|drek|drozd|drůbež|filet|gekon|had|havět|havran|hmyz|hnízdo|holub|holubice|holubička|hovado|hovno|hraboš|hrana|hrdlička|hřebec|husa|hyena|jedinec|jeřáb|ještěrka|jezevec|kamzík|kanár|kanárek|káně|kapr|kapustňák|kerberos|klec|klokán|klubíčko|klubko|kobyla|kočička|kočka|kohout|komár|kost|koťátko|kotě|koza|kožíšek|krab|králík|kráva|kře`

ček|křídlo|křivka|křižák|krtek|kukla|kůň|kuřátko|kuře|kůzle|kvákání|labuť|lachtan|larva|leopard|lev|liška|lůj|lvici|mamut|mazlíček|medvěd|medvíd'átko|medvídek|morče|motýl|motýlek|moucha|mozeček|mravenec|mršina|mrtvola|mušle|myš|myška|netopýr|nosorožec|ocas|ohař|opičák|opice|opička|orangutan|ovce|ovečka|pach|pádlo|pakůň|pastvina|páv|pávica|pavouk|pavučina|pejsek|pelíšek|peří|peříčko|perlička|pes|pírko|pižmo|plameňák|potkan|prasátko|prase|predator|psíček|ptáček|pták|pudlík|racek|rak|roj|ryba|rybička|rybka|rys|šakal|samec|sardinka|savec|šelma|šimpanz|skokan|skořápka|slaneček|slepice|slon|šnek|sob|sokolík|soumar|sova|srna|stáj|statek|štěně|štěnice|straka|strakáč|surikata|šváb|sviňa|svině|sysel|ťapka|tele|tělo|treska|trus|tuleň|tvor|úhoř|úl|ulita|užovka|vajíčko|včela|včelička|včelka|vejce|vepř|veš|veverka|vlasovec|vlk|vrabec|vrána|vůl|vydra|zajíc|zajíček|zebra|želva|zimoviště|žíně|žirafa|žížala|zvíře" & tag="NN..1.*"]within <doc srclang="cs: čeština" />

This yielded 542 results.

A similar methodology was applied in the ORAL corpus. The same initial query was used (without specifying the source language since no translations are present in ORAL). The animal-related sources were then extracted, leading to a more targeted query (Q3).

(Q3): [tag="A.*"] [word="jako|jak"] [tag="A.*"] ? [lemma="beruška|blecha|býk|čuně|cyp|d'as|delfin|dobytek|doga|fena|had|holub|hovado|kačena|kanec|kost|kráva|kukačka|kůň|liščák|lvíček|medvídek|myš|opice|pes|pírko|prasátko|prase|pudlík|rak|rybička|rys|šváb|sviňa|svině|sysel|tele|vajíčko|veš|vlk|želva" & tag="NN..1.*"]

This produced 136 results. The results from both corpora were merged, resulting in a total of 679 instances extracted from the queries.

3.2.2.1 Refining the results in SYN2020 & ORAL

The results were then manually reviewed, and, as with the English corpus, non-simile cases were excluded. The reasons for exclusion were largely the same as for the English examples, with one notable addition: **the presence of intensifying post-modification**. An overview of the most common types of irrelevant expressions is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Most frequent types of irrelevant results in SYN2020 & ORAL

Reason	Example	No. of results
source does not contain an animal, such as <i>pírko</i> , <i>blána</i> , <i>vejce</i>	<i>Je lehoučká jako pířko a hebká jako pohlazení, posiluje obranyschopnost pokožky, hydratuje...</i> (SYN2020, token no.: #111393237)	100
intensifying post-modification (sources: <i>svině</i> , <i>sviřna</i> , <i>cyp</i> , <i>prase</i> , <i>kráva</i> , <i>hovado</i>)	<i>tak už ten signal máme pomalej jak prase.</i> (ORAL, token no.: #5269801)	81
literal comparison	<i>... místní opylovači neměli pro cizokrajné květy jazýčky tak dlouhé jako čmeláci, kteří se těmito rostlinami na druhém konci světa...</i> (SYN2020, token no.: #60499656)	51
‘Layered simile’ - two or more adjectives preceding the comparator, usually with <i>a</i> (and) or comma	<i>... přestával myslet na smrt a cítil se opět svobodný a volný jako pták.</i> (SYN2020, token no.: #37946077)	34
nonce simile	<i>Zůstala mi v uších malá hudba , krásná jako moucha na tváři renesanční madony.</i> (SYN2020, token no.: #39716444)	20

Other reasons comprise phrases *známý jako ... (known as ...)*, *jako* serving as a **conjunction**, **verbal** similes, **no adjective**, animal being a **proper name**, *jako* being a **filler word** in the utterance, deverbal adjective (e.g. *...snažila se prozatím alespoň ovládnout vlastní tep srdce, pádícího jako divoký kůň.* (SYN2020, token no.: #6839533)), sources separated by *nebo*, *jak...tak* phrases and duplicate concordance.

3.2.3 ‘Layered similes’

The term ‘layered similes’ is used here as an ad hoc label for expressions that unexpectedly emerged in the findings in both English and Czech. Although these expressions cannot be incorporated into the analytical section focused on adjectival similes, they are nonetheless worthy of examination, as similes are somehow present in some instances. The defining feature of these expressions is that **two or more adjectives**, seemingly referring to the same source, create the impression of a ‘layered simile’. This structure can result in a more vivid or intensified comparison, as exemplified in (4) and (5). However, in such expressions, it is

not always clear whether both adjectives refer directly to the source. It is possible that only the second adjective functions as part of the simile.

(4) *I regret to inform you all that disaster, **swift and deadly as a serpent**, has stung the Plongeur. We descend to inevitable death.* (BNC2014, FictSci71)

(5) ... *seděl vrah se sklopenou hlavou, **tichý, litující a pokorný jako ovečka**.* (SYN2020, token no.: #53728738)

A typical characteristic of these expressions in English (occurs in 32% of them) is a comma or a full stop placed between the last adjective and the comparator, further dividing the comparison, as shown in example (6). In Czech, this tendency was not observed.

(6) *He makes a little huff. His face is **scrumpled and sweet, like a disgruntled puppy**.* (BNC2014, FictHis22)

These similes often exhibit creativity and novelty (especially in English, not so prominent in Czech), sometimes evolving into extended nonce similes, such as in example (7) and (8).

(7) *At last, as forced, **tiny and reluctant as an earwig being extracted from a crack**, the answer came: 'All right.'* (BNC2014, FictMis502)

(8) ... *nemohla zpívat, padla bych k zemi jako **podt'atá nebo probodnutá jako motýl při hledání zlatého prachu**, zemřela bych na rozsvícené lampě...* (SYN2020, token no.: #112347421)

Similar phenomenon is '**layering**' the sources, which are usually connected by *or* in English (example (9)) and *nebo, či* in Czech (example (10))⁵². These were also excluded from the analysis.

(9) ..., *but Agnes stood her ground, **immoveable as a cow or a horse**. Viola sighed and said, ...* (BNC2014, FictMis564.xml)

(10) *Pes o samotě je stejně **vážný jako lev nebo, had nebo přednosta úřadu**...* (SYN2020, token no.: #97236207)

⁵² which is moreover a case of literal comparison rather than a simile

4 Analytical part

4.1 The representative sample of adjectival similes with animal sources

For the purposes of the analysis and the construction of the frequency list of similes, a standardized list of similes (**'simile types'**) was compiled according to the following criteria:

1. In instances where similes appear in both **singular and plural forms**, the more frequent form is used as a simile type. When the occurrence of singular and plural forms is equal, the singular form is preferred. In cases where the frequency is equal but one of the forms includes modification (*meeek as a newborn lamb* vs. *meeek as lambs*), the unmodified form is preferred.
2. When there is **inconsistency in the use of articles** within a simile, the version with the most commonly used article is used in a simile type. If there is an equal distribution of articles, the indefinite article (*a/an*) is preferred.
3. When multiple similes share the same adjective (ground) and noun (source animal), but differ in their **specific modifications**, they are grouped under the most common form of the simile, which is treated as a simile type. If the score is equal, the simpler form (such as *snake* instead of *snake bite*) or the standard form (such as *opice* instead of *vopice*) is preferred. Variations of these similes are **underlined in the frequency table**, with the specific variants detailed in a subsequent section. If only one form of the simile appears in the corpus, it is presented in its original form as the simile type.
4. When a simile can occur with both *like* or *as* as **the comparator** (or *jako* and *jak* in Czech), the more frequent form is included as the simile type. If the frequency of both comparators is equal, *as* (and *jako* in Czech) is preferred.

4.2 English similes

4.2.1 A quantitative survey of findings in English

The original query returned 683 matches in 525 texts. After refining the results according to the rules presented in the previous chapter, the total number of adjectival similes (tokens) with animal sources is 303, representing 225 distinct simile types.

4.2.1.1 Individual components of adjectival similes & content analysis

4.2.1.1.1 Initial *as*

Out of the 303 similes explored, 175 (57.8%) are **without** the initial *as*. 127 similes are **with** the initial *as* (such as example (11)), five of them also include the attenuator *about*. These five examples all appear to be meant in an **ironic manner** (*sensitive as a herd of rhinos, romantic as a friendly dog with fleas, romantic as a fish finger, popular as a fox in a hen house, trustworthy as a snake*).

In example (12), it is not clear whether there is initial *as* or not.

(11) *She was as timid as a mouse. Said sorry a couple of times.* (BNC2014, FictMis311)

(12) *... and gone mm mm they are just a quick as a rat yeah he is they are yeah yeah amazing...* (BNC2014, Sp2m1f63)

In spoken language, 14 out of 17 similes omit the initial *as*. In writing, the use of *as* varies by genre. In academic prose, both instances (2/2) include the initial *as*. In both e-language and fiction, the results show a slight preference for omitting the initial *as*, with a ratio of 9:5 in e-language and 114:91 in fiction. Magazines show an equal distribution (6:6), while newspapers demonstrate a preference for including *as* (12:9). In the written-to-be-spoken category, the majority of examples (25:7) omit the initial *as*.

4.2.1.1.2 Adjective

Adjectives were sorted into semantic categories (adapted from Emmer 2023: 143-149)⁵³:

1. **Colour/Light:** This category encompasses adjectives that describe hues, shades, or levels of brightness and darkness. These words often convey visual characteristics and can evoke specific associations or emotions related to color. Examples include *black, blue, light, dark, and pale*.
2. **Character/Behaviour:** Adjectives in this category refer to the inherent traits, tendencies, or behaviour of individuals or entities. They can indicate moral qualities, psychological attributes, or social dispositions, often describing how the entity acts

⁵³ With slight modifications – *weak* was re-categorized to appearance/physical (to be in the same category as its antonym *strong*), *drunk* was re-categorized to sensation/emotion

or reacts in various situations. Examples include *bold, gentle, pure, good, dappy*⁵⁴ and *thick*.

3. **Appearance/Physical Description:** This category includes adjectives that pertain to the physical attributes or outward characteristics of people, animals, or objects. These descriptors can refer to size, shape, condition, or general visual impression, often affecting how an entity is perceived visually. Examples include *fit, strong, weak, blind, fat, ugly, and stiff*.
4. **Sensation/Emotion:** Adjectives in this category describe feelings, states of being, or sensory experiences that individuals might undergo. They can express both emotional states and physical sensations, often reflecting subjective experiences that can influence mood or well-being. Examples include *fresh, happy, healthy, high, mad, nervous, silent, and warm*.
5. **Material quality/texture:** This category includes adjectives that describe the physical properties or surface characteristics of objects, materials, or substances. Examples include *rough, soft, hard, smooth, solid, and fragile*.

Table 5 provides, for each category, the number of adjective types, the number and percentage of simile types and simile tokens, and the most frequent adjectives.

Table 5: Categories of adjectives and the most frequent examples in English

category	adjectives (types)	simile types		simile tokens		most frequent adjectives (in tokens)
	total	total	%	total	%	
character/behaviour	99	131	58.2%	157	51.8%	<i>quick, free</i> (11), <i>rare</i> (7)
appearance/physical	29	47	20.9%	72	23.8%	<i>strong</i> (14), <i>thick</i> (9), <i>fit</i> (8), <i>weak</i> (4)
sensation/emotion	19	31	13.8%	55	18.2%	<i>quiet, sick</i> (11), <i>mad</i> (6)
colour/light	8	13	5.8%	16	5.3%	<i>black</i> (6), <i>white</i> (3), <i>pale</i> (2)
material quality/texture	2	3	1.3%	3	1%	<i>soft</i> (2), <i>rough</i> (1)
total	157	225	100%	303	100%	

⁵⁴ *Dappy* = Silly; disorganized; lacking in concentration (Collins Dictionary: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/submission/11925/Dappy>)

Table 6 provides a slightly different perspective on the adjectives, highlighting those with the highest number of simile types, along with their sources, ranked by the number of tokens for each. Consequently, although these adjectives are not the most frequent in the dataset, they can be seen as the most ‘simile-forming’.

Table 6: English adjectives with the highest number of simile types + the corresponding sources

Adjective	No. of simile types	Sources
<i>quick</i>	9	2 tokens: <i>a snake, weasel</i> 1 token: <i>a buzzard, a fish in midstream, a gazelle, a hawk, a rat, a reindeer, an adder</i>
<i>thick</i>	7	3 tokens: <i>pig shit</i> 1 token: <i>a boar spear, a cow's girth, a rhino, fleas on dog's back, lice on a Newgate cloak, pig's muck</i>
<i>mad</i>	6	1 token: <i>a frog, a goat, a polecat, a shad, a shaved cat, a snake</i>
<i>black</i>	4	3 tokens: <i>crow</i> 1 token: <i>a rook, squid ink, whale skin</i>
<i>strong</i>	4	10 tokens: <i>an ox</i> 2 tokens: <i>a bull</i> 1 token: <i>a boar, a hound puppy</i>

4.2.1.1.3 Comparator

In 275 cases (90.8%), the comparator is *as*, in 28 cases the comparator is *like*.

In speech, there are 12 cases with *as* and 5 cases with *like*. In writing, only in fiction and written-to-be-spoken there is more than 1 case of *like* comparator (16 and 5, respectively).

4.2.1.1.4 Source

In 76 cases, there is no determiner nor number before the head of the noun group (the animal name). In 214 cases (70.6%), the determiner is *a/an* and in 10 cases there is a definite article *the*. The last 3 cases comprise numerals – *two, five* and *six*.

As for the number, 78.2% of similes are in singular (237 cases) and the rest (66 cases) is in plural. In plural, 59 appear without any article (89.4% of plural), 4 with the article *the* and 3 with a numeral. In singular, 214 appear with *a/an* (90.3% of singular), 17 without an article and 6 with the article *the*.

The animal sources were categorized according to their ‘**animal noun**’, such as

Lethal as a maddened bull – animal noun: *bull*

Natural as a birdsong – animal noun: *bird*

Rare as hen's teeth – animal noun: *hen*

These were then sorted into the following categories:

1. **Aquatic** – animals that primarily live in water environments, whether freshwater or marine, such as *angelfish, clam* or *eel*
2. **Bird** – birds belonging to the class Aves, characterized by feathers, wings and beaks, typically capable of flight, that could not be categorized as domestic or typically perceived as exotic, such as *bird, crow, canary*
3. **Domestic** – animals that have been domesticated by humans for agricultural purposes or as livestock, living in controlled environments, such as *bull, goat, goose, hen*
4. **Exotic** – animals that are not commonly found in the wild in our area, often from distant or tropical regions, viewed as unusual or rare, such as *meerkat, panda, parrot, lion*
5. **General** – category only used for one case of simile with the source *animal*
6. **Insect** – small animals from the class Insecta, often possessing wings and segmented bodies, such as *louse, insect, flea*
7. **Pet** – animals commonly kept by humans for companionship, typically domesticated and living in households, such as *cat, dog, mouse, rabbit*
8. **Wild** – animals that live in natural, uncontrolled environments, without domestication or human intervention, usually in our area, such as *fox, beaver, lizard*
9. **Extinct** – animals that no longer inhabit our planet, such as *dinosaur, dodo* or *mammoth*

Table 7 presents the categories accompanied with the number of animal nouns in each category and frequencies of simile types and tokens. It also presents the most frequent animal nouns that belong to each category.

Table 7: Categories of animals in English dataset + their most common examples

category	animal nouns	simile types		simile tokens		most frequent animal nouns (in tokens)
	total	total	%	total	%	
pet	13	49	21.8%	69	22.8%	<i>dog, mouse, cat (15), kitten (6), rat (5)</i>
domestic	20	43	19.1%	69	22.8%	<i>ox (13), pig (9), hen (7), lamb (6), cow, bull (5)</i>
wild	20	41	18.2%	47	15.5%	<i>snake (8), fox (6), wolf (4), bear, skunk, ferret, weasel (3)</i>
bird	18	31	13.8%	44	14.5%	<i>bird (16), crow (5), dove, swan (3), lark, penguin (2)</i>
exotic	15	21	9.3%	24	7.9%	<i>monkey, parrot (4), rhino (3), lion (2)</i>
aquatic	12	20	8.9%	23	7.6%	<i>fish (8), eel (3), shrimp, clam (2)</i>
insect	17	18	8%	23	7.6%	<i>flea (8)</i>
general	1	1	0.4%	1	0.3%	<i>animal (1)</i>
extinct	1	1	0.4%	3	1%	<i>dodo (3)</i>
total	117	225	100%	303	100%	

Table 8 provides an overview of the animals, that appear in most simile types and their corresponding adjectives with token numbers.

Table 8: English animal nouns with the highest number of simile types + the corresponding adjectives

Animal noun	No. of simile types	Adjectives
<i>cat</i>	14	2 tokens: <i>lithe</i> 1 token: <i>smug, moody (wet cats), careful, wary (a wet cat), complacent (a purring cat), mad (shaved cat), cute, silent, dainty, uncomfortable (cat in a dog kennel), friable (old cat shit), agile, graceful</i>
<i>dog</i>	8	8 tokens: <i>sick</i> 1 token: <i>wide (a panting dog), damp (a dog's breath), romantic (a friendly dog with fleas), friendly, trivial (a dog barking), automatic, obedient</i>
<i>fish</i>	7	2 tokens: <i>white (a fish's belly)</i> 1 token: <i>cold, useless (a landed fish), stiff (a smoked fish), open-mouthed, quick (a fish in midstream), romantic (a fish finger)</i>

<i>bird</i>	6	11 tokens: free 1 token: <i>bland (birdsong), natural (birdsong), gay, skinny, fragile (a bird's heartbeat)</i>
<i>pig</i>	6	4 tokens: <i>thick (pig shit (3), pig's muck (1))</i> 2 tokens: <i>fat</i> 1 token: <i>filthy, ignorant (pig shit), dappy (pig shit)</i>
<i>snake</i>	6	2 tokens: <i>sweet, quick</i> 1 token: <i>silent, trustworthy, mad, cunning</i>
<i>fox</i>	6	1 token: <i>sinuous (an urban fox), wary (a fox round a kennel), sly, popular, friendly (a fox in a hen coop), sharp-faced</i>

4.2.2 The most frequent adjectival similes with animal sources

The 31 most frequent English adjectival similes attested in the data are presented in Table 9. This is, by coincidence, also the list of similes that occurred in the corpus twice or more times. The table lists the basic forms of the similes and illustrates their internal variability (i.e. the use of determiners and modifiers, and variation of the animal noun in number). The underlined phrases are also present in the corpus in their modified variation, which is then discussed in the section 4.2.2.1

Table 9: List of 31 English adjectival similes with animal sources with a minimum frequency 2

simile in its standardized (most frequent) form	No. of tokens				
	frequency	initial <i>as</i>	<i>as</i> : <i>like</i> comparator	source in plural	det ⁵⁵ : zero det
<u><i>free as a bird</i></u>	11	3	9 : 2	3	8 : 3
<u><i>quiet as a mouse</i></u>	10	5	10 : 0	4	5 : 5
<i>strong as an ox</i>	10	4	10 : 0	0	10 : 0
<i>sick as a dog</i>	8	4	8 : 0	1	7 : 1
<i>rare as hen's teeth</i>	7	5	7 : 0	3 ⁵⁶	0 : 7
<i>fit as a flea</i>	6	2	6 : 0	1	5 : 1
<i>dead as a dodo</i>	3	1	3 : 0	0	3 : 0
<i>drunk as a skunk</i>	3	2	3 : 0	1	2 : 1
<i>sick as a parrot</i>	3	1	3 : 0	0	3 : 0
<u><i>black as a crow</i></u>	3	3	3 : 0	1	2 : 1

⁵⁵ Determiner – either an article (*a/an, the*) or numeral

⁵⁶ *Teeth* is always used in plural, the difference is in the form of *hen's/hens'*

<i>thick as pig shit</i>	3	0	3 : 0	0	0 : 3
<u><i>meeek as lambs</i></u>	3	2	3 : 0	1	1 : 2
<i>weak as a kitten</i>	3	2	3 : 0	0	3 : 0
<i>gentle as a lamb</i>	2	1	3 : 0	1	1 : 1
<i>sweet like a snake</i>	2	0	0 : 2	0	2 : 0
<i>slippery as an eel</i>	2	2	2 : 0	1	1 : 1
<i>white as a fish's belly</i>	2	2	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<i>timid as a mouse</i>	2	2	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<u><i>fit as (five) bullocks</i></u>	2	0	2 : 0	2	1 : 1
<i>happy as a clam</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<u><i>quicck as a snake</i></u>	2	0	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<i>happy as a lark</i>	2	0	2 : 0	1	1 : 1
<i>quicck as a weasel</i>	2	0	2 : 0	1	1 : 1
<i>healthy as a horse</i>	2	0	2 : 0	1	2 : 0
<i>big as a bull's head</i>	2	2	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<u><i>tough as an ox</i></u>	2	1	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<i>fat as pigs</i>	2	1	1 : 1	1	0 : 2
<i>hungry as a wolf</i>	2	2	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<i>lithe as a cat</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0	2 : 0
<i>naked as monkeys</i>	2	2	2 : 0	2	0 : 2
<i>strong as a bull</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0	2 : 0

4.2.2.1 Variations within the simile and other observations

The simile *free as a bird* demonstrates significant variability, as it accommodates both comparators, appears in both singular and plural forms, and includes two notable modifications in the corpus: *free like a bird released from a cage* and *free as joyous birds in the air*. Similarly, even though it keeps the *as* comparator, *quiet as a mouse* is flexible in its use of singular and plural forms (both *mouses* and *mice*) and exhibits two modifications of the source: *quiet as velvet-shod mice* and *quiet as a little mouse*. Other modifications include *black as a crow's armpit*, *meeek as a newborn lamb*, and *tough as an old ox*. A special case is *quicck as a snake bite*, a modification of *quicck as a snake*, where in the first case the animal

noun serves as a modifier. This situation is however quite rare. In summary, some form of modification occurs in 6 out of the first 30 similes, representing 20%.

Conversely, similes such as *strong as an ox* do not permit the *like* comparator, retain their determiner, and appear in a consistent form. Likewise, *dead as a dodo* maintains a stable structure, differing only in presence of initial *as*. Additional examples of these similes consistent in form include *sick as a parrot*, and *weak as a kitten*.

With regard to **plural forms**, more than half of the similes in the list (16 out of 30) allow pluralization, as evidenced in the corpus, with 2 of these similes appearing exclusively in the plural (*fit as (five) bullocks*, *naked as monkeys*). **The *like* comparator** is observed in only 3 similes out of the list, with 1 simile exclusively featuring this comparator in the corpus (*sweet like a snake*). **The initial *as*** appears in 21 similes in the list, and in 7 of these, it is used consistently. As for **determiners**, when the source is singular, the determiner is typically *a* or *an*, with the exception of *thick as pig shit*, which appears without an article in all three occurrences. In similes where the source is plural, the determiner is usually omitted.

4.2.3 Special interesting cases of similes in English

4.2.3.1 Parcellation, detached sentence elements

An intriguing phenomenon called **parcellation** (Nekvapil 1991) is observed in four cases within the simile dataset (two examples provided below). Despite the expression being interrupted by a comma or full stop, it still adheres to the core structural features of a simile. Thus, it may be classified as an adjectival simile, albeit with **parcellation**, or with the **source functioning as a detached sentence element**. However, this remains a marginal occurrence and is included here primarily as a point of curiosity.

(13) *You can't help it. It's **automatic. Like a dog.** Beat.*(BNC2014, WtsDra72)

(14) *Next to her, Vale had gone **tense, like a hound on point.*** (BNC2014, FictFan8)

4.2.4 Prosodic features in analysed similes in English

4.2.4.1 Alliteration

Alliteration in this section is defined as the repetition of the same initial sound⁵⁷ in the adjective and any word within the noun group. Table 10 lists the alliterating consonants and the similes that contain them.

Table 10: Alliterating consonants in English adjectival similes + their corresponding simile types

Consonant	Simile types	No. of simile types
/s/	<i>serene as swans on this water, silent as a snake, skinny as a stork, sluggish as snails, stiff as a smoked fish, sweet like a snake</i>	6
/b/	<i>big as a bull's head, bland as birdsong, busy as a beaver</i>	3
/g/	<i>gaunt as a goat, gay as a goose, green as a goose</i>	3
/k/	<i>careful as a cat, complacent like a purring cat, cute as cats</i>	3
/f/	<i>fit as a flea, friendly as a fox in a hen coop, fit as (five) bullocks</i>	3
/d/	<i>damp as dog's breath, dead as a dodo</i>	2
/h/	<i>healthy as a horse</i>	1
/w/	<i>wary as a wet cat</i>	1
/l/	<i>long-snouted as a lurcher</i>	1

Alliteration occurs in 23 out of 225 simile types, representing 10.2% of the total. It is most prominent in shorter similes, typically those containing only one word in the noun group, where brevity amplifies the alliterative effect – examples include *gaunt as a goat* or *green as a goose*. Perhaps the most strongly alliterative simile is *dead as a dodo*, which features the /d/ sound four times.

Additionally, there is one more example containing alliteration only in the source: *scarce as a pregnant panda*.

4.2.4.2 Assonance

Following the approach used by Emmer (2023: 141–142), a simile is considered assonant if it contains the same stressed vowel sound in the adjective and in any word within the noun

⁵⁷ Both consonants and vowels were considered, however, there was no instance with alliterating vowel occurrence.

group. However, similes that feature rhyme are not included in the list of assonantal similes. Although rhyme technically includes assonance, these similes are addressed separately in section 4.2.4.3.

In Table 11, the vowels present in the assonantal similes are categorized along with their corresponding simile types.

Table 11: Vowels in English assonantal similes + their corresponding simile types

Vowel	Simile types	No. of simile types
/ɪ/	<i>thick as pig shit, animalistic like a lion in the wilderness, filthy as pigs, giddy as a kipper, ignorant as pig shit, pink as a shrimp, quick as a fish in midstream, skinny as a mink, stiff as a smoked fish, thick as pig's muck, thin as a stick insect's inside leg</i>	11
/e/	<i>effectual as headless chickens, friendly as a fox in a hen coop, helpless as the pet turtle, restless as a tethered bear, smelly as a ferret</i>	5
/æ/	<i>agile like a cat, angry as a thwacked wasp, mad as a shaved cat</i>	3
/ɒ/	<i>strong as an ox, popular as a fox, solid as an ox's shoulder</i>	3
/ʌ/	<i>drunk as monkeys, rough as a cow's tongue</i>	3

Assonance occurs in 26 out of 225 simile types, representing 11.6% of the total. The most frequent vowel in assonant similes is /ɪ/, appearing in 11 different simile types. It is also noteworthy that none of the similes in the sample exhibit both alliteration and assonance.

Additional instances of assonance found only in the source include similes *awkward as a duck in mud, black as squid ink, dappy as pig shit, and ignorant as pig shit.*

4.2.4.3 Rhyme

Emmer (2023: 142) defines rhyme as the exact repetition of sounds following the onset of the stressed syllable in the ground and notes that due to this specificity, rhyme is a rare feature. This is evidenced in our dataset, with only two examples – *mad as a shad* and *drunk as a skunk* – featuring rhyme, making up just 0.01% of the total.

4.3 Czech similes

4.3.1 A quantitative survey of findings in Czech

After refining the results according to the rules presented in the previous chapter, the total number of adjectival similes (tokens) with animal sources is 331, representing 213 distinct simile types.

4.3.1.1 Individual components of adjectival similes

4.3.1.1.1 Adjective

11.8% (39 cases) of adjectives have a colloquial ending (-ej), as seen in example (15):

- (15) *Byla do poloviny zafoukaná a v tom zmrzlej jako psí hovno Jindra, protože mu došel benzín.* (SYN2020, token no. #36090659)

For the purposes of the analysis, the adjectives were standardized (converted to 3rd person singular, masculine, e.g., *těžký, tlustý, rychlý*). They were then categorized into semantic categories, copying the process in English (see section 2.1.2.1). An overview of the categories and their statistics is provided in Table 12. Table 13, on the other hand, presents those adjectives which appear in most simile types.

Table 12: Categories of adjectives and most frequent adjective examples in Czech

category	adjectives (types)	simile types		simile tokens		most frequent adjectives (No of tokens)
	total	total	%	total	%	
character/behaviour	77	105	49.3%	157	47.4%	<i>volný, chytrý (11), chudý (9), líný (8)</i>
sensation/emotion	27	47	22.1%	80	24.2%	<i>šťastný (16), zdravý (9), utahaný (6)</i>
appearance/physical	30	46	21.6%	74	22.4%	<i>tlustý (13), těžký (11), velký (8)</i>
colour/light	9	13	6.1%	18	5.4%	<i>červený (4), černý (3), bílý, rezavý, rudý, žlutý (2)</i>
material quality/texture	2	2	0.9%	2	0.6%	<i>sametový, hladký (1)</i>
total	145	213	100%	331	100%	

Table 13: Czech adjectives with the greatest number of simile types + the corresponding sources

Adjective	No. of simile types	Sources
<i>tlustý</i>	5	9 tokens: <i>prase</i> 1 token: <i>králík, prasátko, kráva, lachtan</i>
<i>chytrý</i>	5	7 tokens: <i>opice</i> 1 token: <i>sova, rys, myš, had</i>
<i>silný</i>	4	1 token: <i>medvěd, kůň, býk, kapr</i>
<i>zalezlý</i>	4	1 token: <i>myška, krtek, červ, jezevec</i>
<i>hladový</i>	4	2 tokens: <i>vlk</i> 1 token: <i>šakal, chocholouš, pes</i>
<i>rychlý</i>	4	2 tokens: <i>pták, myška</i> 1 token: <i>zvíře, ještěrka</i>

4.3.1.1.2 Comparator

In 249 cases (75.2%), the comparator used is *jako*, while in the remaining 82 cases, the comparator is *jak*. It is particularly interesting that in the ORAL corpus (speech), 65.4% of comparators are *jak* (34 cases). In the SYN2020 corpus (written), the situation is reversed, with *jako* being used in 82.8% of cases (231 instances).

4.3.1.1.3 Source

In terms of source nouns, 83.7% (277 cases) are singular, with the remainder being plural. A small portion (2.7%, 9 cases) of sources is in colloquial form, as shown in example (16):

(16) *Pojď si ho srovnat, je **drzej jako vopice!*** (SYN2020, token no.: #29680472)

Animal sources were categorized according to their ‘**animal noun**’, similar to the approach in English, with a slight adjustment – diminutives of the same animal nouns were grouped together (e.g., *rybka/rybička, včelka/včelička*), while the original forms (*ryba, včela*) were kept separate. For example:

Uzavření jako bezmocní ptáci v kleci – animal noun: *pták*

Hladký jako králičí kožíšek – animal noun: *králík*

Zdravý jako rybka – animal noun: *rybka/rybička*

These were then sorted into the same categories as in English (see section 4.2.1.1.4). The results are displayed in Table 14, which also includes the most frequent animal nouns in each category. Table 15 then presents the animal nouns, which appear in most simile types.

Table 14: Categories of animals in Czech similes

category	animal nouns	simile types		simile tokens		most frequent animal nouns (in tokens)
	total	total	%	total	%	
domestic	26	52	24.4%	87	26.3%	<i>prase, kráva (16), kůň (9), beránek (7), králík (6)</i>
pet	11	37	17.4%	55	16.6%	<i>myš, pes (18), kotě (5), kočka, myška (3)</i>
wild	18	34	16%	38	11.5%	<i>liška (5), vlk, sysel, šnek, kamzík, krtek, medvěd (3)</i>
exotic	16	31	14.6%	40	12.1%	<i>opice (12), had, želva (5), opičák (3)</i>
bird	15	20	9.4%	31	9.4%	<i>pták (15), sova, havran (2)</i>
aquatic	12	18	8.5%	33	10%	<i>rybka/rybička (14), rak (5), sardinka, ryba (3)</i>
insect	14	17	8%	43	13%	<i>blecha (15), včelka/včelička (5), moucha, veš (4)</i>
general	1	3	1.4%	3	0.9%	<i>zvíře (3)</i>
extinct	1	1	0.5%	1	0.3%	<i>mamut (1)</i>
total	114	213	100%	331	100%	

Table 15: Czech animal nouns with the highest number of simile types + the corresponding adjectives

Animal noun	No. of simile types	Adjectives
<i>pes</i>	15	2 tokens: <i>utahaný, vzteklý, zmrzlý (pes/psí hovno)</i> 1 token: <i>zmrzlý, nervózní, uštvaný, hladový, přitulný, nadržенý, zavřený (psi v ohradě), nevěrný, zpráskaný, seřezaný, ztrhaný, splavený, spráskaný</i>
<i>kůň</i>	7	3 tokens: <i>zplavený</i> 1 token: <i>stahaný, citlivý, silný, velký, šlachovitý (závodní koně), splavený</i>

<i>myš</i>	6	9 tokens: <i>chudý (kostelní myš)</i> 4 tokens: <i>mokrý</i> 2 tokens: <i>zpocený</i> 1 token: <i>strnulý, chytrý, zplavený</i>
<i>želva</i>	5	1 token: <i>smutný, klidný, šťastný, krásný, pomalý</i>
<i>prase</i>	5	9 tokens: <i>tlustý</i> 3 tokens: <i>líný</i> 2 tokens: <i>těžký</i> 1 token: <i>opálený, špinavý</i>
<i>opice</i>	5	7 tokens: <i>chytrý</i> 2 tokens: <i>drzý</i> 1 token: <i>vzteklý (hladová opice), zkouřený, vychytralý</i>
<i>králík</i>	5	1 token: <i>tlustý, bílý (angorský králík), zmrzlý (trus polárního králíka), hladký (králíčí kožíšek), nadržený</i>
<i>pták</i>	5	10 tokens: <i>volný</i> 2 tokens: <i>rychlý (pták (v letu))</i> 1 token: <i>veselý, svobodný, uzavřený (bezmocní ptáci v letu)</i>

4.3.2 The most frequent adjectival similes with animal sources

The 39 Czech similes which occurred twice at least in the dataset are presented in Table 16. The similes underlined are also present in the corpora with some variation, which is then listed below the table.

Table 16: List of 39 Czech adjectival similes with animal sources with a minimum frequency 2

simile in its standardized (most frequent) form	No. of tokens			
	frequency	colloquial adjective (-ej)	<i>jako : jak</i> comparator	source in plural
<i>šťastný jako blecha</i>	15	1	10 : 5	1
<i>volný jako pták</i>	10	0	10 : 0	2
<i>tlustý jako prase</i>	9	4	5 : 4	0
<i>chudý jako kostelní myš</i>	9	0	5 : 4	1
<i>těžký jako kráva</i>	8	2	4 : 4	0
<i>velký jako kráva</i>	7	0	6 : 1	0
<u><i>chytrý jako opice</i></u>	7	2	4 : 3	0
<u><i>zdravý jako rybka/rybička</i></u>	7	0	7 : 0	0
<u><i>čilý jako rybička</i></u>	6	2	5 : 1	0

<u>pilný jako včelka/včelička</u>	5	0	5 : 0	0
<i>červený jako rak</i>	4	1	2 : 2	0
<i>klidný jako beránek</i>	4	0	4 : 0	0
<i>líný jako veš</i>	4	1	4 : 0	1
<u>mokrý jako myš</u>	4	0	2 : 2	1
<i>utahaný jako kotě</i>	3	0	2 : 1	1
<i>krotký jako beránek</i>	3	0	3 : 0	0
<i>línej jako prase</i>	3	3	3 : 0	0
<i>oškubaný jak slepice</i>	3	0	1 : 2	0
<i>zplavený jak kůň</i>	3	0	1 : 2	0
<i>slepý jako krtek</i>	2	0	1 : 1	0
<i>drzej jako vopice</i>	2	2	1 : 1	0
<i>černý jako havran</i>	2	0	2 : 0	1
<i>utahaný jako pes</i>	2	1	2 : 0	0
<i>ožralý jako dobytek</i>	2	0	1 : 1	1
<i>němý jako ryba</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>zmatený jak lesní včela</i>	2	0	0 : 2	1
<i>vzteklý jako pes</i>	2	0	1 : 1	0
<i>těžký jako prase</i>	2	0	1 : 1	0
<i>mlsný jako koza</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>mazaný jako liška</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>rychlý jako pták</i>	2	0	1 : 1	0
<i>hladoví jako vlci</i>	2	0	1 : 1	2
<i>zpocený jako myš</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>vychcaný jak beruška</i>	2	0	0 : 2	0
<i>pyšný jako páv/pávice</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>kluzký jako had</i>	2	0	2 : 0	0
<i>rezavý jak liška</i>	2	0	0 : 2	1
<i>rychlý jako myška</i>	2	1	2 : 0	0
<u>zmrzlej jako pes</u>	2	2	1 : 1	0

4.3.2.1 Variations within the simile and other observations

In terms of variation, the simile *chytrý jako opice* appears in two instances as *vopice*. In *zdravý jako rybka/rybička*, there is one occurrence of *rybka*, with the remaining examples using *rybička*. In *čilý jako rybička*, there is a single instance where the adjective *čiloučký* is used. The simile *pilný jako včelka/včelička* shows three occurrences of *včelka* and two of *včelička*. In *mokrý jako myš*, there is one case that uses the variation *přitopená myš*, while in *rychlý jako pták*, there is one instance of *pták* and another of *pták v letu*. Similarly, in *pyšný jako páv/pávice*, there is one occurrence of each variant, as is the case with *zmrzlej jako pes* and its alternative *psí hovno*. Out of 39 cases, six (15.4%) feature source variations.

The similes *zdravý jako rybka/rybička* and *pilný jako včelka/včelička*, on the other hand, show **little variation** in terms of plural forms or comparators. A similar lack of variation is observed in *klidný jako beránek* and *krotký jako beránek*, which appear exclusively in these forms in the corpus.

Regarding **plural forms**, only a quarter of the similes (10 out of 39) allow for pluralization, as evidenced in the corpus. One simile, *hladoví jako vlci*, appears solely in the plural form. **The jak comparator** is found in at least one instance in 23 similes, with three simile types occurring exclusively with this comparator. **Colloquial varieties** of the adjective appear in 12 similes, with two similes – *drzej jako vopice* and *zmrzlej jako pes* – appearing exclusively in colloquial forms.

4.3.3 Prosodic features in analysed similes in Czech

4.3.3.1 Alliteration

Alliteration in this section is defined as the repetition of the same initial consonant sound in the adjective and any word within the noun group. Table 17 lists the alliterating consonants in Czech similes and the simile types that contain them.

Alliteration is present in 9 out of 213 simile types, accounting for 0.04% of the total. While the consonant /m/ appears most frequently, it still occurs only in three simile types. In conclusion, alliteration is not a prominent feature in Czech similes.

Table 17: Alliterating consonants in Czech adjectival similes + their corresponding simile types

Consonant	Simile types	No. of simile types
/m/	<i>malý jako mravenec, mohutný jako mamut, mokrý jako myš</i>	3
/r/	<i>rudý jako rak</i>	1
/p/	<i>přítulný jako pes, pyšný jako páv/pávice</i>	1
/v/	<i>veselí jako vrabci</i>	1
/h/	<i>hladký jako hřebeč</i>	1
/l/	<i>lstiví jako lišky</i>	1

4.3.3.2 Assonance

In Czech, assonance is defined as vowel agreement in the final syllables of lines.⁵⁸ However, in the context of similes, the first element is always an adjective that terminates in vowels such as /ý/, /í/, /é/, or /á/ (or occasionally /e/ in -ej endings). These vowel endings shift according to grammatical case, complicating the establishment of consistent assonance. Additionally, the nouns referring to animals generally end in short vowels. While there may seem to be potential examples, such as *drzej jako vopice*, the assonantal effect is minimal due to the adjective's morphological changes across cases. Consequently, assonance will not be discussed here.

4.3.3.3 Rhyme

Adjectives in Czech typically end in vowels such as /ý/, /í/, /á/, or /é/, while the corresponding nouns do not share these endings. There are rare instances where partial rhyme occurs, as in *vypasení jako chovní vepři*, where *vypasení* and *chovní* exhibit a degree of rhyme; however, this is disrupted by the inclusion of *vepři*. As a result, much like assonance, rhyme is not a prevalent feature in Czech similes and will not be addressed in this context.

4.4 Comparison of the results in English and Czech

In this part of the thesis, English-Czech Practical Dictionary, version 6.1, Lingea s.r.o., 2022, was used for the translation between Czech and English.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ „zvuková shoda samohlásek v koncových slabikách veršů” (<https://slovník-cizich-slov.abz.cz/web.php/slovo/asonance>)

⁵⁹Retrieved from: <https://slovníky.lingea.cz/anglicko-cesky> Last accessed 9/11/24.

4.4.1 General comparison (categories)

In English, 303 adjectival similes (tokens) and 225 distinct simile types were identified. In Czech, there are 331 adjectival similes and 213 simile types. As seen, the numbers are almost analogous, which makes the results relatively easily comparable.

Adjectives: In English, there are 157 distinct adjectives, in Czech, there are 145. The distribution of the semantic types of adjectives is given in Figure 1.

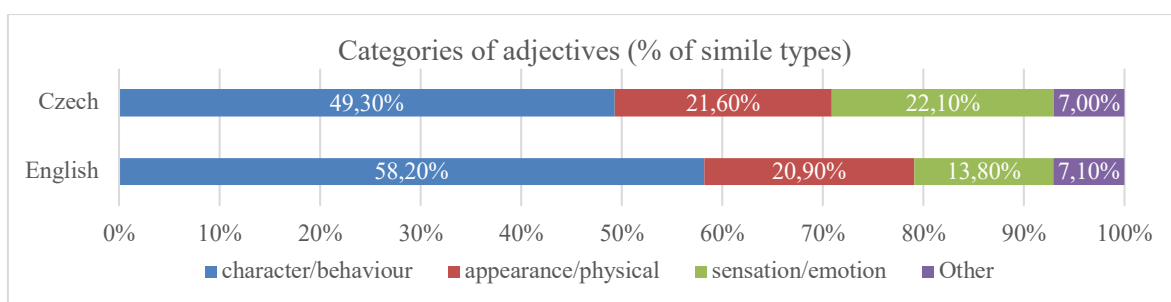


Figure 1: Categories of adjectives in English vs. in Czech

The most versatile adjectives in English include *quick*, *thick*, *mad*, *black*, and *strong*. In Czech, the most simile-forming adjectives are *tlustý*, *chytrý*, *silný*, *zalezlý*, *hladový*, and *rychlý*. Notably, three adjectives – *rychlý* (*quick*), *tlustý* (*thick*), and *silný* (*strong*) - are shared between English and Czech. Interestingly, the Czech adjective *zalezlý* (*hidden*) lacks a direct English counterpart in the corpus explored.

Nouns: Regarding the form of nouns in similes, in English, 78.2% are singular, while the remainder are plural. Similarly, in Czech, 83.7% of the nouns are singular.

Animal Nouns: In English, there are 117 distinct animal-related nouns, in Czech, there are 114 of them. The distribution of the semantic categories of animals is given in Figure 2.

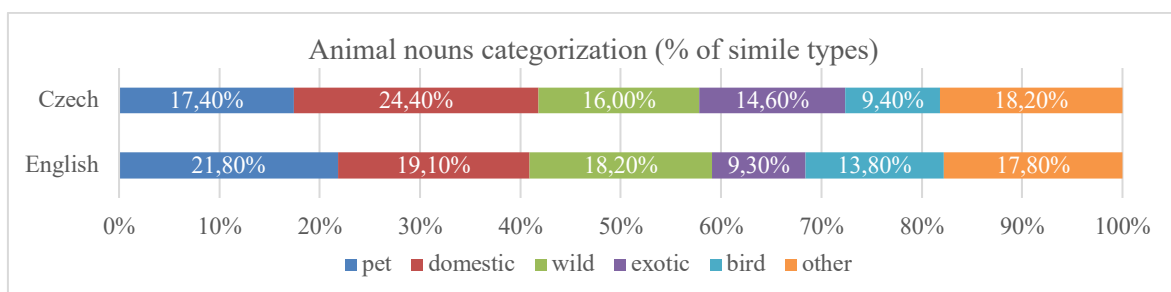


Figure 2: Animal nouns categorization in English vs. in Czech

The most productive animal nouns in English similes are *cat, dog, fish, bird, pig, snake, and fox*. In Czech, they are *pes, kuň, myš, želva, prase, opice, králík, and pták*. The nouns for *dog (pes), pig (prase), and bird (pták)* appear on both English and Czech lists.

Common Similes: Several similes appear with a frequency of 2 or more in both corpora: *free as a bird (volný jako pták), black as a crow (černý jako havran), meek as lambs (krotký jako beránek), gentle as a lamb (klidný jako beránek), fat as pigs (tlustý jako prase) and hungry as a wolf (hladoví jako vlci)*.

Alliteration: In English, alliteration occurs in 10.2% of simile types, most frequently with the /s/ sound. In Czech, alliteration is significantly less common, appearing in only 0.04% of simile types, with the /m/ sound being the most frequent.

4.4.2 Detailed comparison of adjectives and sources (animal nouns) in Czech and English simile types

Table 18 presents a detailed comparison of English and Czech similes by focusing on adjectives that appear in both languages. Variants where the translation is not entirely precise but still deemed representative are marked with a **question mark**. Synonyms are grouped within the same cell of the table, with their respective sources listed collectively. The sources are retained in their most commonly occurring form, following the guidelines outlined in section 4.1. When the sources in both Czech and English overlap (even if they differ in modifications), they are highlighted in **bold**.

Table 18: English & Czech corresponding adjectives + their sources in both languages

English adjective	Czech adjective	English sources	Czech sources
<i>asleep</i>	<i>ospalý?</i>	<i>innocent lamb</i>	<i>sysel</i>
<i>big</i>	<i>velký, veliký</i>	<i>a bull's head, white mouse</i>	<i>kráva, kuň, slon</i>
<i>black</i>	<i>černý</i>	<i>a crow, a rook, squid ink, whale skin</i>	<i>havran, vrány</i>
<i>bright, sharp</i>	<i>vychcaný, vypečený, bystrý, vychytralý</i>	<i>the parrots, a pigeon</i>	<i>beruška, svatomartinská husa, rys, opice</i>
<i>clever</i>	<i>chytrý</i>	<i>a weasel</i>	<i>hadové, myši, opice, rys, sova</i>

<i>cold</i>	<i>zmrzlý</i>	<i>a fish</i>	<i>drozd, trus polárního králíka, pes</i>
<i>constant, persistent</i>	<i>vytrvalý</i>	<i>the cicada hum, African mosquitoes</i>	<i>buldok</i>
<i>cunning</i>	<i>mazaný</i>	<i>a rat, a snake</i>	<i>liška, opičák</i>
<i>dainty, sweet, cute, adorable</i>	<i>slad'oučký, roztomilý</i>	<i>a cat, a snake, the floppy bunny</i>	<i>medvídek, lvíček</i>
<i>damp</i>	<i>mokrý</i>	<i>a dog's breath</i>	<i>myš</i>
<i>diligent, busy?</i>	<i>pilný</i>	<i>a stag beetle, rabbits, a beaver</i>	<i>bobr, včelka/včelička</i>
<i>docile, obedient</i>	<i>poslušný</i>	<i>a kitten, dogs</i>	<i>ovečka, ovce</i>
<i>drunk</i>	<i>ožralý, nalitý</i>	<i>a skunk, monkeys</i>	<i>dogo, sova pálená, dobytek</i>
<i>effectual</i>	<i>zdatný</i>	<i>headless chickens</i>	<i>kamzíci</i>
<i>fierce</i>	<i>zběsilý</i>	<i>a lion, a mad wolf</i>	<i>roj včel</i>
<i>filthy</i>	<i>špinavý</i>	<i>pigs</i>	<i>čuně, čuník, prase</i>
<i>fit?, healthy</i>	<i>zdravý</i>	<i>(five) bullocks, a flea, a horse</i>	<i>vydry, ryba, rybka/rybička</i>
<i>free</i>	<i>volný, svobodný</i>	<i>a bird</i>	<i>ptáček, pták</i>
<i>frisky</i>	<i>čilý</i>	<i>a puppy</i>	<i>rybička</i>
<i>gay, dappy</i>	<i>veselý</i>	<i>a badger, a bird, a goose, pig shit</i>	<i>vrabci, pták</i>
<i>gentle, mild, pure, fragile</i>	<i>mírný</i>	<i>a lamb, a sleepy kitten, a dove, a dove's wing, a bird's heartbeat</i>	<i>holubice</i>
<i>graceful, gentle</i>	<i>ladný</i>	<i>a cat, an angelfish, a butterfly, a minnow fin, a graceful swan</i>	<i>antilopa</i>
<i>happy, giddy</i>	<i>šťastný</i>	<i>a clam, a lark, a kipper</i>	<i>blecha, želva</i>
<i>heavy</i>	<i>těžký</i>	<i>a bear</i>	<i>bejk, kráva, prase</i>
<i>helpless</i>	<i>bezbranný?</i>	<i>a sucking shrimp, the pet turtle</i>	<i>tuleň</i>
<i>hungry</i>	<i>hladový</i>	<i>a goat, a wolf</i>	<i>pes, šakali, vlci, vyskakaný chocholouš</i>
<i>loyal</i>	<i>věrný</i>	<i>a puppy</i>	<i>albatrosové, psíček</i>

<i>mad, angry, pissed</i>	<i>vzteklý</i>	<i>a frog, a goat, a polecat, a shad, a shaved cat, a snake, a thwacked wasp, a newt</i>	<i>hladová opice, pes</i>
<i>massive</i>	<i>mohutný</i>	<i>elephant</i>	<i>mamut</i>
<i>naked</i>	<i> nahý</i>	<i>eels, monkeys</i>	<i>káňata, zvířata</i>
<i>nervous, nervy, tense, jumpy, twitchy</i>	<i>nervózní, vystresovaný</i>	<i>a filly, frogs, a hound on point, a sick rat, a grasshopper, rabbits</i>	<i>kamzík, pes, křeček</i>
<i>pink</i>	<i>růžový</i>	<i>a shrimp</i>	<i>prasátko</i>
<i>quick, fast</i>	<i>rychlý</i>	<i>a buzzard, a fish in midstream, a gazelle, a hawk, a rat, a reindeer, a snake, a weasel, an adder, a greyhound on steroids</i>	<i>ještěrka, myška, pták, zvíře</i>
<i>satisfied</i>	<i>spokojený</i>	<i>a tiger</i>	<i>brouček</i>
<i>sensitive</i>	<i>citlivý</i>	<i>a herd of rhinos</i>	<i>kůň</i>
<i>serene</i>	<i>klidný</i>	<i>swans on this water</i>	<i>želvy, beránek</i>
<i>skinny, scrawny, bony, gaunt</i>	<i>šlachovitý</i>	<i>a bird, a calf, a rabbit, chicken feet, a goat</i>	<i>závodní koně</i>
<i>slippery</i>	<i>kluzký</i>	<i>an eel</i>	<i>had</i>
<i>sluggish</i>	<i>pomalý, líný</i>	<i>snails</i>	<i>želva, prase, vepř, veš</i>
<i>sly</i>	<i>lstivý</i>	<i>a fox</i>	<i>lišky</i>
<i>soft</i>	<i>sametový?</i>	<i>a kitten's fur, a piglet's ear</i>	<i>řapky koťete</i>
<i>solid</i>	<i>pevný</i>	<i>an ox's shoulder, cows</i>	<i>kobyla</i>
<i>stately</i>	<i>statný</i>	<i>a fattened cow</i>	<i>medvěd</i>
<i>strong</i>	<i>silný</i>	<i>a boar, a bull, a hound puppy, an ox</i>	<i>býk, kapr, kůň, medvěd</i>
<i>stubborn</i>	<i>tvrdohlavý</i>	<i>a mule</i>	<i>bejk</i>
<i>swift, agile, lithe</i>	<i>hbitý, mrštný, obratný, čiperný</i>	<i>a greyhound, a mantis, a predatory hawk, a cheetah, a cat, panthers</i>	<i>divoká kočka, kamzík, vopička, kočka, pouštní gekon, úhoř, lázeňská veverka</i>
<i>tall</i>	<i>vytáhlý</i>	<i>a giraffe</i>	<i>žirafa</i>
<i>thick, fat</i>	<i>tlustý, vypasený</i>	<i>a boar spear, a cow's girth, a rhino, fleas on dog's back,</i>	<i>lachtan, prasátka, králik, prase, kráva, chovný vepř</i>

		<i>lice on a Newgate cloak, pig shit, pig's muck, bees, pigs</i>	
<i>thin, slim</i>	<i>hubený, štíhlý</i>	<i>a ferret, a stick insect's inside leg, a heron</i>	<i>žížala, komár, koza, zebra</i>
<i>timid, meek</i>	<i>krotký, plachý</i>	<i>a mouse, lambs</i>	<i>beránek, slepice, zajíček</i>
<i>tough</i>	<i>nepoddajný</i>	<i>an ox</i>	<i>mladá drůbež</i>
<i>weak</i>	<i>slabý</i>	<i>a kitten, an un-shelled chick</i>	<i>moucha</i>
<i>white</i>	<i>bílý</i>	<i>a fish's belly, the swans</i>	<i>angorský králík, labutě</i>
<i>wide</i>	<i>široký</i>	<i>a panting dog</i>	<i>medvěd</i>
<i>yellow</i>	<i>žlutý</i>	<i>a bird of prey</i>	<i>kanár, kuřátko</i>

In English, 84 adjectives can be aligned with their Czech counterparts, while in Czech, there are 70 adjectives aligned with the English counterparts. These adjectives make up 55 lines ('simile meanings') and 17 of them display some kind of overlap between Czech and English sources. Additionally, four simile types are exclusively identical in both languages (there are no other animals than the identical ones):

- *filthy (špinavý) + pigs (čuně, čuník, prase)*
- *free (volný, svobodný) + a bird (ptáček, pták)*
- *sly (lstivý) + a fox (liška)*
- *tall (vytáhlý) + a giraffe (žirafa)*

Moreover, it may be interesting to examine the similarity between three simile meanings: *black (černý) as a crow or rook (havran, vrány)*, *gentle, mild, pure, fragile (mírný) as a dove or dove's wing (holubice)* and *timid, meek (krotký, plachý) as lambs (beránek)*, as we might observe similar similes in **the Bible** (*as innocent as doves* and *black as a raven*), as well as the phrase *a gentle lamb led to the slaughter*. Even though the exact similes were not found in our dataset, the similarity in meaning between the biblical and observed adjectives is evident and might have been the reason for the creation of the above mentioned similes. Nonetheless, this remains a hypothesis and could serve as a basis for further study.

Table 19 provides a comparison from the perspective of animal nouns, following a similar approach as in Table 20. Synonyms are grouped together, and in Czech, diminutives are

usually included.⁶⁰ When an adjective is the same in Czech and English, it is again highlighted in **bold**, and antonyms (Czech versus English) are underlined for highlighting this contrast.

The simile types where the animal served as a modifier rather than the head of the source noun phrase (e.g., in Czech *sametový jako řapky kotěte, zmrzlý jako trus polárního králíka*, or *těsný jako šnečí ulita*, and in English, *polished as beetle's wings*, or *natural as a birdsong*) were eliminated from this table, as they would influence the perception of the animals.

Table 19: English & Czech corresponding animal nouns + their adjectives in both languages

English animal noun	Czech animal noun	English adjectives	Czech adjectives
<i>animal</i>	<i>zvíře</i>	<i>pure</i>	<i>potrhaný, rychlý, nahý</i>
<i>badger</i>	<i>jezevec</i>	<i>gay</i>	<i>nalíčeny, zalezlý</i>
<i>bear</i>	<i>medvěd</i>	<i>furry, heavy</i>	<i>silný, široký, statný</i>
<i>beaver</i>	<i>bobr</i>	<i>busy</i>	<i>pilný</i>
<i>bee</i>	<i>včela, včelka/včelička</i>	<i>fat</i>	<i>zběsilý, zmatený, pilný</i>
<i>bird</i>	<i>pták, ptáček</i>	<i>free, gay, skinny</i>	<i>volný, rychlý, svobodný, uzavřený, veselý</i>
<i>bull</i>	<i>býk</i>	<i>strong, lethal</i>	<i>silný, těžký, tvrdohlavý</i>
<i>bulldog</i>	<i>buldok</i>	<i>ugly</i>	<i>vytrvalý</i>
<i>bullock, ox</i>	<i>vůl</i>	<i>clumsy, fit, strong, tough</i>	<i>omráčený</i>
<i>calf</i>	<i>tele</i>	<i>scrawny</i>	<i>překyselený</i>
<i>canary</i>	<i>kanár, kanárek</i>	<i>interchangeable</i>	<i>žlutý, zavřený</i>
<i>cat</i>	<i>kočka</i>	<i>agile, careful, complacent, cure, dainty, graceful, lithe, mad, moody, silent, smug, uncomfortable, wary, versatile</i>	<i>hbitý, samostatný, mrštný</i>
<i>chameleon</i>	<i>chameleon</i>	<i>versatile</i>	<i>proměnlivý</i>
<i>chick, chicken</i>	<i>kuře, kuřátko</i>	<i>weak, easy, effectual</i>	<i>žlutý, oškubaný,</i>

⁶⁰ If not strongly connotated otherwise – such as *beran* (perceived as strong, stately) and *beránek* (weak, mild)

<i>clam</i>	<i>mušle</i>	<i>happy</i>	<i>průsvitný</i>
<i>cow</i>	<i>kráva</i>	<i>solid, stately, wrong</i>	<i>těžký, tlustý, velký</i>
<i>crow</i>	<i>vrána</i>	<i>black, guttural, vicious</i>	<i>černý</i>
<i>dog, hound</i>	<i>pes, psíček</i>	<i>automatic, friendly, obedient, romantic, sick, wide, tense</i>	<i>hladový, nadržžený, nervózní, nevěrný, přítulný, seřezaný, splavený, spráskaný, uštvaný, utahaný, zavřený, zmrzlý, zpráskaný, ztrhaný</i>
<i>dove</i>	<i>holubice</i>	<i>mild</i>	<i>mírný</i>
<i>eel</i>	<i>úhoř</i>	<i>naked, slippery</i>	<i>obratný</i>
<i>elephant</i>	<i>slon</i>	<i>massive</i>	<i>veliký</i>
<i>fish</i>	<i>ryba, rybička/rybka</i>	<i>quick, stiff, useless, open-mouthed, cold</i>	<i>němý, zdravý, čerstvý, čilý</i>
<i>flea</i>	<i>blecha</i>	<i>fit, thick</i>	<i>šťastný</i>
<i>fox</i>	<i>liška</i>	<i>friendly, popular, sharp-faced, sinuous, sly, wary</i>	<i>lstivý, mazaný, rezavý</i>
<i>gazelle</i>	<i>antilopa?</i>	<i>quick</i>	<i>ladný</i>
<i>giraffe</i>	<i>žirafa</i>	<i>tall</i>	<i>vytáhlý</i>
<i>goat</i>	<i>koza</i>	<i>gaunt, hungry, mad, sure-footed</i>	<i>mlsný</i>
<i>goose</i>	<i>husa</i>	<i>crazy, gay, green</i>	<i>vypečený</i>
<i>hare</i>	<i>zajíc, zajiček</i>	<i>quiet</i>	<i>schoulený, plachý</i>
<i>hawk</i>	<i>káně</i>	<i>quick, swift</i>	<i>nahý</i>
<i>herring, kipper</i>	<i>slaneček</i>	<i>salty, giddy</i>	<i>namačkaný</i>
<i>horse</i>	<i>kůň, soumar?</i>	<i>healthy</i>	<i>citlivý, silný, šlachovitý, splavený, <u>stahaný</u>, velký, zplavený, naložený, <u>utahaný</u></i>
<i>kitten</i>	<i>kotě</i>	<i>docile, gentle, weak</i>	<i>hravý, utahaný</i>
<i>lamb</i>	<i>beránek</i>	<i>asleep, meek</i>	<i>klidný, krotký</i>
<i>lizard</i>	<i>ještěrka</i>	<i>impassive</i>	<i>rychlý</i>
<i>louse</i>	<i>veš</i>	<i>thick</i>	<i>líný</i>
<i>monkey</i>	<i>opičák, opice, opička</i>	<i>drunk, naked</i>	<i>mazaný, nadržžený, vykulený, chytrý, drzý,</i>

			<i>vychytralý, vzteklý, zkouřený, mrštý, zavřený</i>
<i>mosquito</i>	<i>komár</i>	<i>persistent</i>	<i>empatický, hubený</i>
<i>mouse</i>	<i>myš, myška</i>	<i>big, predictable, quiet, silent, timid</i>	<i>chudý, chytrý, mokrý, splavený, strnulý, zpoceny, rychlý, zalezlý</i>
<i>pig</i>	<i>čuně/čuník, prasátko, prase, vepř</i>	<i>fat, filthy, ignorant</i>	<i>špinavý, růžový, tlustý, líný, opálený, těžký, vypasený</i>
<i>pigeon</i>	<i>holub</i>	<i>sharp</i>	<i>zblblý</i>
<i>puppy</i>	<i>štěně</i>	<i>frisky, loyal, strong</i>	<i>dychtivý, schoulený</i>
<i>rabbit</i>	<i>králík</i>	<i>diligent, scrawny, twitchy</i>	<i>bílý, hladký, nadřžený, tlustý</i>
<i>rook</i>	<i>havran</i>	black	černý
<i>rooster</i>	<i>kohout</i>	<i>brave</i>	<i>rudý</i>
<i>serpent, snake</i>	<i>had</i>	<i>ambivalent, uncoiled, cunning, mad, quick, silent, sweet, trustworthy</i>	<i>dvojjazyčný, kluzký, propletený</i>
<i>snail</i>	<i>šnek</i>	<i>sluggish</i>	<i>schoulený</i>
<i>spider</i>	<i>pavouk</i>	<i>boundless</i>	<i>nebezpečný</i>
<i>swan</i>	<i>labuť</i>	<i>delicate, serene, white</i>	bílý
<i>turtle</i>	<i>želva</i>	<i>helpless</i>	<i>klidný, krásný, pomalý, smutný, šťastný</i>
<i>wolf</i>	<i>vlk</i>	<i>fierce, hot, hungry</i>	divoký, hladový

In English, there are 56 animal nouns that have corresponding Czech counterparts, while in Czech, there are 65 animal nouns with English equivalents. This totals 51 lines, which correspond to 51 different ‘animal meanings’. Of these, 16 lines share adjectives in both English and Czech, and 5 lines include antonymous adjectives.

There are also 5 instances of exclusive relationships between Czech and English nouns:

- *beaver (bobr) + busy (pilný)*
- *chameleon (chameleon) + versatile (proměnlivý)*
- *dove (holubice) + mild (mírný)*
- *giraffe (žirafa) + tall (vytáhlý)*
- *rook (havran) + black (černý)*

5 Conclusion

The study presented several findings regarding the comparison of animal-based similes in English and Czech. The research effectively addressed the challenges of distinguishing between literal expressions and similes, as well as navigating the specific linguistic and structural characteristics of both languages.

As predicted, animals such as *dog* and *mouse* emerged as **common sources of similes** in both Czech and English. In English, the pets category was the most frequent, also containing many instances of *cat*. However, in Czech, the category of domestic animals was more frequently used (with *prase* and *kráva* being the most common in the category), although *myš* and *pes* remained the most frequent individual results.

In terms of **adjectives**, both languages showed a high frequency of those related to character and behaviour, as expected. In English, this was followed by adjectives related to physical appearance, and *strong*, *quick*, *free*, quiet, and *sick* were the most common adjectives when observing individual adjective instances. In contrast, the second most common category in Czech was sensation and emotion, with the most common adjective *šťastný*. Other adjectives that appeared the most frequently are not surprising: *tlustý*, *volný*, *chytrý*, and *těžký*.

The most common similes in English included *free as a bird*, *quiet as a mouse*, and *strong as an ox*. In Czech, the most frequent were *šťastný jako blecha*, *volný jako pták*, *tlustý jako prase*, and *chudý jako kostelní myš*.

Structurally, similes generally shared **similar forms across the two languages**. However, challenges arose due to modifications in both. In English, the use of *as* and *like* in otherwise identical similes, as well as source modifications, complicated the analysis. In Czech, the use of *jako/jak*, grammatical cases of adjectives, colloquial forms, and diminutives posed issues. Despite these difficulties, the two main lexical components – adjective and animal noun – were consistently comparable.

As anticipated, **prosodic features** were more prevalent in English similes than in Czech, reflecting differences in the expressive qualities of the two languages. Alliteration was the only shared prosodic feature, though it appeared much more frequently in English similes.

Contrary to expectations, fewer **similarities between the two languages** were found. Only six similes with a frequency of two or more were identical, and a detailed analysis revealed that only 17 simile meanings (the quality in the ground had the same source in Czech and English) and 16 animal names shared comparable adjectives between the two languages. An intriguing result was the marginal yet notable occurrence of similes involving the same animal but with antonymous adjectives in the two languages (*e.g. lizard (ještěrka) + impassive (rychlý), horse (kůň) + healthy (stahaný, utahaný)*).

From a **methodological perspective**, the analysis of these similes proved complex for several reasons. A key challenge was distinguishing between literal comparisons and similes. While certain expressions initially appeared as similes, further analysis revealed that they lacked connotations typical of similes or were too literal. In Czech, many instances of intensifying post-modification also occurred, which complicated the refining of the results. The nuanced linguistic differences between the two languages also posed difficulties, particularly with Czech, where issues such as grammatical cases had to be resolved, and similes had to be standardized. Diminutives and colloquial forms further complicated the analysis and comparison.

An interesting phenomenon emerged during the analysis: the occurrence of **'layered similes'**, which included more than one adjective but adhered to simile structure otherwise. These instances, though excluded from the study, present a promising area for future research. Another noteworthy observation was the **parcellation** in English similes, where some similes were separated by commas or full stops between the adjective and the comparator.

In conclusion, this research hopefully provides a foundation for future studies on the structural and linguistic aspects of animal-based similes in different languages. It offers a methodology for further exploration while highlighting the challenges and limitations encountered in this study.

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Statement on the use of artificial intelligence tools – Vyjádření k využití nástrojů umělé inteligence

Umělá inteligence, konkrétně ChatGPT, byla v práci využita ke kontrole manuálních výpočtů. Použita byla při ověřování součtů v tabulkách 5, 7, 12 a 14, a také při kontrole počtů přirovnání v jednotlivých jazycích v tabulkách 18 a 19. Dále byla AI nápomocná při kategorizaci adjektiv a zvířat, přičemž její návrhy byly porovnány s manuálně přiřazenými kategoriemi. V případě nesouladu byl každý rozpor podroben dalšímu přezkoumání a kategorie pečlivě zváženy.

Appendix 1: English adjectival similes with animal sources from BNC2014, sorted alphabetically

adorable as the floppy bunny
agile as a cheetah
agile like a cat
ambivalent as the serpent in Eden
angry as a thwacked wasp
animalistic like a lion in the wilderness
asleep like innocent lambs
automatic like a dog
awkward as a duck in mud
barrel-chested like a rottweiler
big as a bull's head
big as white mice
black as a crow
black as a crow's armpit
black as a rook
black as crows
black as squid ink
black as whale skin
bland as birdsong
blurry like a hummingbird's wings
bony as chicken feet
boundless like a spider
brave as a rooster
bright as the parrots
busy as a beaver
careful as a cat
clever as a weasel
clumsy as bullocks
cold like a fish
common as rats
complacent like a purring cat
constant as the cicada hum
cool as a stickleback
crazy as a drunken goose
crazy as six ferrets in a blender
cunning as a rat
cunning as a snake
cute as cats
dainty as a cat
damp as a dog's breath
dappy as pig shit
dead as a dodo
deadly as a striking cobra
delicate as a butterfly
delicate as a minnow fin
delicate like a graceful swan
diligent as a stag beetle
diligent as rabbits
docile as a kitten
drunk as a skunk
drunk as monkeys
drunk as skunks
easy as a chicken in a sack
effectual as headless chickens
fast like a greyhound on steroids
fat as bees
fat as pigs
fat like pig baby
fierce as a lion
fierce as a mad wolf
filthy as pigs
fit as a flea

fit as bullocks	hot as salted wolves
fit as five bullocks	humourless as a crocodile's wheeze
fit as fleas	hungry as a goat
fragile as a bird's heartbeat	hungry as a wolf
free as/like a bird	ignorant as pig shit
free as birds	impassive as a lizard
free as joyous birds in the air	incongruous as a penguin
free like a bird released from a cage	ineradicable as the flea-beetle
friable as old cat shit	interchangeable as canaries
friendly as a fox in a hen coop	jumpy as a grasshopper
friendly as dog	jumpy as a sick rat
friendly as two turtle doves	lethal as a maddened bull
frisky as a puppy	light as a moth
furry like a bear	lithe as a cat
gaunt as a goat	lithe as panthers
gay as a badger	long-snouted as a lurcher
gay as a bird	loyal as a puppy
gay as a goose	mad as a frog
gentle as a lamb	mad as a goat
gentle as a sleepy kitten	mad as a polecat
gentle as lambs	mad as a shad
giddy as a kipper	mad as a shaved cat
good as penguin	mad as a snake
graceful as a cat	massive like elephant
graceful as an angelfish	meek as a newborn lamb
green as a goose	meek as lambs
guttural as crows	meek as lambs
happy as a clam	mild as a dove
happy as a lark	moody as wet cats
happy as larks	naked as eels
healthy as a horse	naked as monkeys
heavy as a bear	naked as monkeys
helpless as a sucking shrimp	natural as birdsong
helpless as the pet turtle	nervous as a filly

nervy as frogs
obedient like dogs
open-mouthed like a fish
pale as a dove's wing
pale as rhino
patient as a vulture
persistent as African mosquitoes
pink as a shrimp
pissed as a newt
polished as beetles' wings
popular as a fox in a hen house
predictable as mice
prickly like a hedgehog
pure as a dove's wing
pure as animals
queer as a blue gnu
quick as a buzzard
quick as a fish in midstream
quick as a gazelle
quick as a hawk
quick as a rat
quick as a reindeer
quick as a snake
quick as a snake bite
quick as a weasel
quick as an adder
quick as weasels
quiet as a hare
quiet as a little mouse
quiet as a mouse
quiet as mice
quiet as mouse
quiet as mice
quiet as mice

rare as hen's teeth
rare as hens' teeth
restless as a tethered bear
romantic as a fish finger
romantic as a friendly dog with fleas
rough as a cow's tongue
salty as a herring
satisfied like a tiger
scarce as a pregnant panda
scrawny as a calf
scrawny as a rabbit
sensitive as a herd of rhinos
serene as swans on this water
sharp as a pigeon
sharp-faced as foxes
sick as a dog
sick as a parrot
sick as dogs
silent as a bloody snake
silent as a cat,
silent as a mouse
sinuous as an urban fox
skinny as a bird
skinny as a mink
skinny as a stork
slim as a heron
slippery as an eel
slippery as eels
sluggish as snails
sly as a fox
smelly as a ferret
smug as a cat
soft as a kitten's fur
soft as a piglet's ear

solid as an ox's shoulder
solid as the cows
spiteful as a hornet
stately as a fattened cow
stiff as a smoked fish
strong as a boar
strong as a bull
strong as a hound puppy
strong as an ox
stubborn as a mule
sure-footed like a goat
sweet like a snake
swift as a greyhound
swift as a mantis
swift as a predatory hawk
tall like a giraffe
tense like a hound on point
terrified as the monkey module
thick as a boar spear
thick as a cow's girth
thick as a rhino
thick as fleas on dog's back
thick as lice on a Newgate cloak
thick as pig shit
thick as pig's muck
thin as a ferret
thin as a stick insect's inside leg

timid as a mouse
tough as an old ox
tough as an ox
trivial as a dog barking
trustworthy as a scorpion
trustworthy as a snake
twitchy as rabbits
ugly as a bulldog
uncoiled like a striking serpent
uncomfortable as cats in a dog kennel
unnoticed as the gulls
useless as a landed fish
vengeful as scorpions
versatile like a chameleon
vicious as a pecking crow
vicious as a rat
wary as a fox round a kennel
wary as a wet cat
weak as a bloody kitten
weak as a kitten
weak as an un-shelled chick
white as a fish's belly
white as the swans
wide as a panting dog
wrong as a two-headed cow
yellow like a bird of prey

Appendix 2: English adjectival similes with animal sources from BNC2014, sorted according to their animal noun

adder	thick as a boar spear
quick as an adder	bull
angelfish	big as a bull's head
graceful as an angelfish	lethal as a maddened bull
animal	strong as a bull
pure as animals	bulldog
badger	ugly as a bulldog
gay as a badger	bullock
bear	clumsy as bullocks
furry like a bear	fit as bullocks
heavy as a bear	fit as five bullocks
restless as a tethered bear	bunny
beaver	adorable as the floppy bunny
busy as a beaver	butterfly
bee	delicate as a butterfly
fat as bees	buzzard
beetle	quick as a buzzard
polished as beetles' wings	calf
bird	scrawny as a calf
bland as birdsong	canary
fragile as a bird's heartbeat	interchangeable as canaries
free as/like a bird	cat
free as birds	agile like a cat
free as joyous birds in the air	careful as a cat
free like a bird released from a cage	complacent like a purring cat
gay as a bird	cute as cats
natural as birdsong	dainty as a cat
skinny as a bird	friable as old cat shit
yellow like a bird of prey	graceful as a cat
boar	lithe as a cat
strong as a boar	mad as a shaved cat

moody as wet cats	vicious as a pecking crow
silent as a cat,	dodo
smug as a cat	dead as a dodo
uncomfortable as cats in a dog kennel	dog
wary as a wet cat	automatic like a dog
chameleon	damp as a dog's breath
versatile like a chameleon	friendly as dog
cheetah	obedient like dogs
agile as a cheetah	romantic as a friendly dog with fleas
chick	sick as a dog
weak as an un-shelled chick	sick as dogs
chicken	trivial as a dog barking
bony as chicken feet	wide as a panting dog
easy as a chicken in a sack	dove
effectual as headless chickens	mild as a dove
cicada	pale as a dove's wing
constant as the cicada hum	duck
clam	awkward as a duck in mud
happy as a clam	eel
cobra	naked as eels
deadly as a striking cobra	slippery as an eel
cow	slippery as eels
rough as a cow's tongue	elephant
solid as the cows	massive like elephant
stately as a fattened cow	ferret
thick as a cow's girth	crazy as six ferrets in a blender
wrong as a two-headed cow	smelly as a ferret
crocodile	thin as a ferret
humourless as a crocodile's wheeze	filly
crow	nervous as a filly
black as a crow	fin
black as a crow's armpit	delicate as a minnow fin
black as crows	fish
guttural as crows	cold like a fish

	open-mouthed like a fish		crazy as a drunken goose
	quick as a fish in midstream		gay as a goose
	romantic as a fish finger		green as a goose
	stiff as a smoked fish	grasshopper	
	useless as a landed fish		jumpy as a grasshopper
	white as a fish's belly	greyhound	
flea			fast like a greyhound on steroids
	fit as a flea		swift as a greyhound
	fit as fleas	gull	
	thick as fleas on dog's back		unnoticed as the gulls
flea-beetle		hare	
	ineradicable as the flea-beetle		quiet as a hare
fox		hawk	
	friendly as a fox in a hen coop		quick as a hawk
	popular as a fox in a hen house		swift as a predatory hawk
	sharp-faced as foxes	hedgehog	
	sinuous as an urban fox		prickly like a hedgehog
	sly as a fox	hen	
	wary as a fox round a kennel		rare as hen's teeth
frog			rare as hens' teeth
	mad as a frog	heron	
	nervy as frogs		slim as a heron
gazelle		herring	
	quick as a gazelle		salty as a herring
giraffe		hornet	
	tall like a giraffe		spiteful as a hornet
gnu		horse	
	queer as a blue gnu		healthy as a horse
goat		hound	
	gaunt as a goat		tense like a hound on point
	hungry as a goat	hummingbird	
	mad as a goat		blurry like a hummingbird's wings
	sure-footed like a goat	stick insect	
goose			thin as a stick insect's inside leg

kipper	naked as monkeys
giddy as a kipper	terrified as the monkey module
kitten	mosquito
docile as a kitten	persistent as African mosquitoes
gentle as a sleepy kitten	moth
soft as a kitten's fur	light as a moth
weak as a bloody kitten	mouse
weak as a kitten	big as white mice
lamb	predictable as mice
asleep like innocent lambs	quiet as a little mouse
gentle as a lamb	quiet as a mouse
gentle as lambs	quiet as mice
meek as a newborn lamb	quiet as mouse
meek as lambs	quiet as mice
lark	quiet as velvet-shod mice
happy as a lark	silent as a mouse
happy as larks	timid as a mouse
lion	mule
animalistic like a lion in the	stubborn as a mule
wilderness	newt
fierce as a lion	pissed as a newt
lizard	ox
impassive as a lizard	solid as an ox's shoulder
louse	strong as an ox
thick as lice on a Newgate cloak	tough as an old ox
lurcher	tough as an ox
long-snouted as a lurcher	panda
mantis	scarce as a pregnant panda
swift as a mantis	panther
mink	lithe as panthers
skinny as a mink	parrot
monkey	bright as the parrots
drunk as monkeys	sick as a parrot
naked as monkeys	penguin

	good as penguin		sensitive as a herd of rhinos
	incongruous as a penguin		thick as a rhino
pig		rook	
	dappy as pig shit		black as a rook
	fat as pigs	rooster	
	fat like pig baby		brave as a rooster
	filthy as pigs	rottweiler	
	ignorant as pig shit		barrel-chested like a rottweiler
	thick as pig shit	scorpion	
	thick as pig's muck		trustworthy as a scorpion
pigeon			vengeful as scorpions
	sharp as a pigeon	serpent	
piglet			ambivalent as the serpent in Eden
	soft as a piglet's ear		uncoiled like a striking serpent
polecat		shad	
	mad as a polecat		mad as a shad
puppy		shrimp	
	frisky as a puppy		helpless as a sucking shrimp
	loyal as a puppy		pink as a shrimp
	strong as a hound puppy	skunk	
rabbit			drunk as a skunk
	diligent as rabbits		drunk as skunks
	scrawny as a rabbit	snail	
	twitchy as rabbits		sluggish as snails
rat		snake	
	common as rats		cunning as a snake
	cunning as a rat		mad as a snake
	jumpy as a sick rat		quick as a snake
	quick as a rat		quick as a snake bite
	vicious as a rat		silent as a bloody snake
reindeer			sweet like a snake
	quick as a reindeer		trustworthy as a snake
rhino		spider	
	pale as rhino		boundless like a spider

squid

black as squid ink

stag beetle

diligent as a stag beetle

stickleback

cool as a stickleback

stork

skinny as a stork

swan

delicate like a graceful swan

serene as swans on this water

white as the swans

tiger

satisfied like a tiger

turtle

helpless as the pet turtle

turtle dove

friendly as two turtle doves

vulture

patient as a vulture

wasp

angry as a thwacked wasp

weasel

clever as a weasel

quick as weasels

whale

black as whale skin

wolf

fierce as a mad wolf

hot as salted wolves

hungry as a wolf

Appendix 3: Czech adjectival similes with animal sources from SYN2020 and ORAL, sorted alphabetically (in their basic form)

bezbranný jako tuleň	dychtivý jako štěně	mírný jako holubice
bílý jako angorský králík	empatický jako komár	mlsný jako koza
bílý jako labuť	hbitý jako kamzík	mohutný jak mamut
buclatý jako medvěd'átko	hbitý jako divoká kočka	mokrý jako myš
bystrý jako rys	hladký jako hřebec	mokří jak myši
černý jako vrány	hladký jako králičí kožíšek	mokrý jako přitopená myš
černý jako havran	hladovej jak pes	moudrý jako sova
černí jako havrani	hladoví jako šakali	mrštný jako pouštní gekon
čerstvý jako rybička	hladoví jako vlci	mrštnej jako vopička
červený jak/o rak	hladový jako vyskákaný	mrštný jako kočka
červenej jak rak	chocholouš	nacpaní jako sardinky
chamtivý jako hladový	hravý jako kotě	nadržený jako králík
šakal	hubený jak žížala	nadržený jako opičák
chudý jak/o kostelní myš	hubený jako komár	nadržený jako pes
chudí jak/o kostelní myši	hubený jako koza	nazí jako káňata
chytrý jako opice	klidný jako beránek	nahrbený jako šimpanz
chytrý jako rys	klidní jak želvy	nakulenej jak sysel
chytří jak hadové	kluzký jako had	nalíčený jako jezevec
chytří jako myši	krásný jako želva	nalitej jak doga
chytrý jako sova	krotký jako slepice	naložený jako soumar
chytrý jako opice	krotký jako beránek	namačkaní jako sardinky
čilý jako rybička	ladný jako antilopa	namačkaní jako slanečci
čilej jak/o rybička	línej jako prase	nazí jako zvířata
čiloučká jako rybička	línej jako vepř	nažranej jak dobytek
čiperný jak lázeňská	línej jako veš	nebezpečný jako jedovatý
veverka	líní jako vši	pavouk
citlivej jako kůň	líný jako veš	němý jako ryba
cvičený jako pudlík	lstivý jako lišky	nepatrný jako červík
divocí jako vlci	malý jako mravenec	nepoddajný jako mladá
drzej jak/o vopice	mazaný jako liška	drůbež
dvojjazyčný jako had	mazaný jako opičák	nervózní jak kamzík

nervózní jak pes	roztomilý jako lvíček	splavený jako pes
neústupný jako beran	rozvalení jako kapustňáci	spokojený jako brouček
nevěrní jako psi	rudí jak kohouti	spráskaní jako psi
obratný jako úhoř	rudý jak rak	stahaní jak koně
omráčeněj jako vůl	růžový jako prasátko	šťastný jak/o blecha
opálení jako prasata	rychlý jako pták v letu	šťastnej jako blecha
oškubaný jako kuře	rychlý jako myška	šťastní jako blechy
oškubaný jak/o slepice	rychlý jako ještěrka	šťastný jako želva
ožralej jak doga	rychlej jako myška	statný jako medvěd
ožralý jako dobytek	rychlý jak pták	štíhlý jako zebra
ožralí jak dobytci	rychlý jako zvíře	strnulý jako myš
ožralý jak sova pálená	sametový jako t'apky kotěte	svobodný jako pták
pevný jako kobyla	samostaný jako divoká	těsný jako šnečí ulita
pilný jako včelka	kočka	těžký jako bej
pilný jako bobr	schoulený jako malý šnek	těžký jak/o kráva
pilný jako včelička	schoulený jako štěně	těžkej jako kráva
plachej jako zajíček	schoulý jako zajíc	těžký jak/o prase
plíživí jak šneci	seřezaní jako psi	tlustý jak králík
pomalý jak želva	silný jako býk	tlustý jako kráva
poslušný jak ovečka	silný jako kůň	tlustý jak/o prase
poslušný jako ovce	silný jako kapr	tlustej jak/o prase
potrhaný jako zvíře	silný jako medvěd	tlustej jako lachtan
překyselenej jako tele	široký jako medvěd	tlustí jako prasátko
přítulný jak pes	slabý jako moucha	tvrdohlavý jako bejk
proměnlivý jako chameleon	šlachovití jako závodní	ukrytý jako krab v písku
propletení jako hadi	koně	uložený jako larva
průhlední jako mladé	slad'oučkový jako medvídek	uštvaný jako pes
sardinky	slepý jako krtek	utahaný jako kotě
průsvitní jak říční mušle	smutný jak želva	utahaný jako pes
pyšný jako páv	špinavý jako čuně	utahaní jak kořata
pyšný jako pávice	špinavý jako čuník	utahaní jako soumaři
rezavý jak liška	špinavý jako prase	utahanej jako pes
rezaví jak lišky	splavený jako kůň	uzavření jako bezmocní
rozlezlí jak švábi	splavený jako myš	ptáci v kleci

veliký jako slon	vystresovaný jako křeček	žíhaný jako hyena
velký jak/o kráva	vytáhlý jako žirafa	zkouřenej jako opice
velký jako kůň	vytrvalý jako buldok	žlutý jako kanár
věrný jako psíček	vzteklý jak/o pes	žlutý jako kuřátko
věrní jako albatrosové	vzteklý jako hladová opice	zmatení jak lesní včely
veselí jako vrabci	zakutáný jako hraboš	zmatený jak lesní včela
veselý jako pták	zalezlý jako jezevec	zmrzlý jak trus polárního králíka
volný jako ptáček	zalezlý jak krtek	zmrzlej jak pes
volný jako pták	zalezlí jako myšky	zmrzlej jako drozd
volní jako ptáci	zalezlí jako píseční červi	zmrzlej jako psí hovno
vospalej jak sysel	zavření jak opičky v kleci	zplavený jak/o kůň
votrávenej jak šváb	zavření jak kanárci v kleci	zpcený jako myš
vychcaný jak beruška	zavření jak psi v ohradě	zpcení jako sysli
vychytralý jako opice	zběsilý jak roj včel	zpráskaný jako pes
vykulený jako opičák	zblblý jak benátský holub	ztrhaní jak psi
vypasení jako chovní vepři	zdatní jako kamzíci	
vypečený jako	zdravý jako rybka	
svatomartinská husa	zdravý jako rybička	
vypelichaný jako přejetá	zdraví jako vydry	
veverka	zdravý jako ryba	

Appendix 4: Czech adjectival similes with animal sources from SYN2020 and ORAL, sorted according to their animal noun (in their basic form)

albatros	proměnlivý jako chameleon
věrní jako albatrosové	chocholouš
antilopa	hladový jako vyskákaný chocholouš
ladný jako antilopa	čuně/čuník
beran	špinavý jako čuně
neústupný jako beran	špinavý jako čuník
beránek	dobytek
klidný jako beránek	nažranej jak dobytek
krotký jako beránek	ožralí jak dobytci
beruška	ožralý jako dobytek
vychcaný jak beruška	doga
blecha	nalitej jak doga
šťastnej jako blecha	ožralej jak doga
šťastní jako blechy	drozd
šťastný jak/o blecha	zmrzlej jako drozd
bobr	drůbež
pilný jako bobr	nepoddajný jako mladá drůbež
brouček	gekon
spokojený jako brouček	mrštný jako pouštní gekon
buldok	had
vytrvalý jako buldok	dvojjazyčný jako had
býk	chytří jak hadové
silný jako býk	kluzký jako had
těžký jako bejk	propletení jako hadi
tvrdohlavý jako bejk	havran
červ	černý jako havran
zalezlí jako píseční červi	černí jako havrani
červík	holub
nepatrný jako červík	zblblý jak benátský holub
chameleon	holubice

mírný jako holubice	kohout
hraboš	rudí jak kohouti
zakutaný jako hraboš	komár
hřebec	empatický jako komár
hladký jako hřebec	hubený jako komár
husa	kotě
vypečený jako svatomartinská husa	hravý jako kotě
hyena	sametový jako ťapky kotěte
žíhaný jako hyena	utahaní jak kořata
ještěrka	utahaný jako kotě
rychlý jako ještěrka	koza
jezevec	hubený jako koza
nalíčený jako jezevec	mlsný jako koza
zalezlý jako jezevec	krab
kamzík	ukrytý jako krab v písku
hbitý jako kamzík	králík
nervózní jak kamzík	bílý jako angorský králík
zdatní jako kamzíci	hladký jako králičí kožíšek
kanár	nadržený jako králík
žlutý jako kanár	tlustý jak králík
kanárek	zmrzlý jak trus polárního králíka
zavření jak kanárci v kleci	kráva
káně	těžkej jako kráva
nazí jako kánata	těžký jak/o kráva
kapr	tlustý jako kráva
silný jako kapr	velký jak/o kráva
kapustňák	křeček
rozvalení jako kapustňáci	vystresovaný jako křeček
kobyła	krtek
pevný jako kobyła	slepý jako krtek
kočka	zalezlý jak krtek
hbitý jako divoká kočka	kůň
mrštný jako kočka	citlivej jako kůň
samostatný jako divoká kočka	silný jako kůň

splavený jako kůň	malý jako mravenec
šlachovití jako závodní koně	mušle
velký jako kůň	průsvitní jak říční mušle
zplavený jak/o kůň	myš
stahání jak koně	chudí jak/o kostelní myši
kuřátko	chudý jak/o kostelní myš
žlutý jako kuřátko	chytrí jako myši
kuře	mokrý jako myš
oškubaný jako kuře	mokrý jako přitopená myš
labuť	mokří jak myši
bílý jako labutě	splavený jako myš
lachtan	strnulý jako myš
tlustej jako lachtan	zpcený jako myš
larva	myška
uložený jako larva	rychlej jako myška
liška	rychlý jako myška
lstivý jako lišky	zalezlí jako myšky
mazaný jako liška	opičák
rezaví jak lišky	mazaný jako opičák
rezavý jak liška	nadržený jako opičák
lvíček	vykulený jako opičák
roztomilý jako lvíček	opice
mamut	drzej jak/o vopice
mohutný jak mamut	chytrý jako opice
medvěd	chytrý jako opice
silný jako medvěd	vychytralý jako opice
statný jako medvěd	vzteklý jako hladová opice
široký jako medvěd	zkouřenej jako opice
medvíďátko/medvídek	opička
buclatý jako medvíďátko	mrštnej jako vopička
slad'oučký jako medvídek	zavření jak opičky v kleci
moucha	ovce
slabý jako moucha	poslušný jako ovce
mravenec	ovečka

poslušný jak ovečka	psíček
páv/pávice	věrný jako psíček
pyšný jako páv	ptáček
pyšný jako pávice	volný jako ptáček
pavouk	pták
nebezpečný jako jedovatý pavouk	rychlý jak pták
pes	rychlý jako pták v letu
hladovej jak pes	svobodný jako pták
nadržený jako pes	uzavření jako bezmocní ptáci v kleci
nervózní jak pes	veselý jako pták
nevěrní jako psi	volní jako ptáci
přítulný jak pes	volný jako pták
seřezaní jako psi	puďlík
splavený jako pes	cvičený jako puďlík
spráskaní jako psi	rak
uštvaný jako pes	červený jak/o rak
utahanej jako pes	červenej jak rak
utahaný jako pes	rudý jak rak
vzteklý jak/o pes	ryba
zavření jak psi v ohradě	němý jako ryba
zmrzlej jak pes	zdravý jako ryba
zmrzlej jako psí hovno	rybička/rybka
zpráskaný jako pes	čerstvý jako rybička
ztrhaní jak psi	čilej jak/o rybička
prasátko	čiloučká jako rybička
růžový jako prasátko	čilý jako rybička
tlustí jako prasátka	zdravý jako rybička
prase	zdravý jako rybka
línej jako prase	rys
opálení jako prasata	bystrý jako rys
špinavý jako prase	chytrý jako rys
těžký jak/o prase	šakal
tlustej jak/o prase	hladoví jako šakali
tlustý jak/o prase	chamtivý jako hladový šakal

sardinka	tele
nacpaní jako sardinky	překyselenej jako tele
namačkaní jako sardinky	tuleň
průhlední jako mladé sardinky	bezbranný jako tuleň
šimpanz	úhoř
nahrbený jako šimpanz	obratný jako úhoř
slaneček	včela
namačkaní jako slanečci	zběsilý jak roj včel
slepice	zmatení jak lesní včely
krotký jako slepice	zmatený jak lesní včela
oškubaný jak/o slepice	včelička/včelka
slon	pilný jako včelička
veliký jako slon	pilný jako včelka
šnek	vepř
plíživí jak šneci	línej jako vepř
schoulený jako malý šnek	vypasení jako chovná vepř
těsný jako šnečí ulita	veš
soumar	línej jako veš
naložený jako soumar	líní jako vši
utahání jako soumaři	líný jako veš
sova	veverka
chytrý jako sova	čiperný jak lázeňská veverka
moudrý jako sova	vypelichaný jako přejetá veverka
ožralý jak sova pálená	vlk
štěně	divocí jako vlci
dychtivý jako štěně	hladoví jako vlci
schoulený jako štěně	vrabec
šváb	veselí jako vrabci
rozlezlí jak švábi	vrána
votráveneť jak šváb	černý jako vrány
sysel	vůl
nakuleneť jak sysel	omráčeneť jako vůl
vospaleť jak sysel	vydra
zpocení jako sysli	zdraví jako vydry

zajíc
schoulený jako zajíc

zajíček
plachej jako zajíček

zebra
štíhlý jako zebra

želva
klidní jak želvy
krásný jako želva
pomalý jak želva

smutný jak želva
šťastný jako želva

žirafa
vytáhlý jako žirafa

žížala
hubený jak žížala

zvíře
nází jako zvířata
potrhaný jako zvíře
rychlý jako zvíře