

Abstract

This diploma thesis aims to contribute to the research of the Czech language picture of the world. It is based on fundamental theoretical and methodological resources of cognitive and cultural linguistics and focuses on the opposition of “man – animal”, or “human – animal”, in the Czech language, aiming to illustrate the way in which zooappellatives (animal names) relate to the reality of the human world. The most extensive part of the thesis is based mainly on an analysis of Czech dictionary material (etymological, reference, synonym and phraseological dictionaries), as well as comparing the scientific (biological) classification of animals to the categorization in natural language. In regard to the category ANIMAL, the thesis establishes four basic domains constituting the category’s conceptual model (framework): “the place where the animal lives”, “physical traits”, “the animal’s behaviour” and “relation to man”. The thesis also includes questionnaire-based research that focuses on analysing the way in which speakers of the Czech language understand the category ANIMAL, and attempts to determine whether they regard some animals as more prototypical than others.