

Abstract

This paper deals with the relationship between a man and a dog. This topic was chosen because of its up-to-date nature in the Czech society reflected in the number of owned dogs and their popularity as pets. The specific aim of the thesis is the deeper understanding of meanings and roles attributed to dogs in society from the point of view of my respondents - seniors. The view of animals in the society is based on the theory of social constructivism, according to which the meanings of phenomena, and hence of animals in the society, are created during social interactions. The research was conducted on the basis of participating observations and narrative interviews with randomly selected seniors. In the theoretical basis of the thesis, the relationship between people and animals in different times and societies is emphasized, highlighting a different approach to them in today's society. Classification of animals in the society is further explained and most frequent categories are presented. This classification concerns wild animals, farm animals, and pets, of which dogs are the most popular ones. One of the findings is the importance attributed to dogs in the society. Dogs in the society can be seen as animals but also as individual personalities. The frequent phenomenon in my analysis is anthropomorphism - the projection of human qualities, emotions, and thoughts onto dogs. Anthropomorphic dogs can play many roles in the family, but the most common is the role of a child. This conclusion is accompanied by another finding of this research - growing importance of the emotional bond between dogs and people.