

Animals as a Source Domain for Metaphorical Expressions in English Economic Discourse

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Abstract

According to the paradigm of cognitive semantics by M. Johnson and G. Lakoff metaphor is a fundamental cognitive ability that allows us to talk and think about abstract concepts and phenomena. It means that one thing is partially described in the terms of something else. Metaphor allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, or at least more highly structured subject matter. As they explain, in every culture conceptual metaphors create a coherent system and are reflected in conventional figurative language (Johnson and Lakoff 2003, 3–6). Evidently, in this framework, metaphor is a natural and common phenomenon which is no longer considered as an ornamental device restricted to literature. As most figurative expressions in everyday language have become conventional, this also holds for the domain of economics. There are many metaphors relating to particular concepts, e.g. sports, gambling, weather, health, war, etc. which are widely used in the business world. The images of animals are popular in the financial sector. The terms a *bear* and a *bull* can describe investors. Investors who are optimistic about the market's future are referred to as bullish investors or "bulls" and those who are pessimistic about the stock market's future are called bearish investors or "bears." The paper attempts to provide insights into how animal-related words acquire metaphorical meaning and explores some of the potential benefits of animal metaphors used in economic discourse.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, concept, metaphor, animal metaphor, economic discourse, etymological analysis

Abstrakt

Zgodnie z paradygmatem lingwistyki kognitywnej G. Lakoffa i M. Johnsona (2003, 3–6) metafora należy do grona ważniejszych narzędzi myślenia i odgrywa kluczową rolę w konstruowaniu społecznej i politycznej rzeczywistości. W ujęciu tym metaforę postrzega się nie jako składnik języka potocznego, ale jako barwne, poetyckie wyrażenie językowe, które przenika do naszego powszedniego życia, przy czym nie tylko do języka, lecz także do myślenia i działania. Wyrzistość w angielskim dyskursie ekonomicznym osiąga się przy połączeniu w jednym kontekście modeli metafory z różnymi źródłami pochodzenia, które można ująć w kilka grup: wojna, sport, gry hazardowe, pogoda, itp. Metafory odzwierzęce, czyli wyrażenia językowe zawierające w swojej strukturze nazwy zwierząt lub mające odniesienie do zwierząt, są dość powszechnie używane. Za przykład posłużyć mogą wyrażenia *a bear market* „bessa” i *a bull market* „hossa”, które należą do slangu giełdowego. Metafora *a bear market* oznacza sytuację, kiedy to notowania kursu akcji są wysokie z tendencją stopniowego zniżania, co powoduje, iż maklerzy giełdowi spodziewają się strat finansowych i patrzą z pesymizmem w przyszłość. *A bull market* ma znaczenie odwrotne i oznacza sytuację niskiego notowania kursu na giełdzie z obserwowalną tendencją wzrostu, która to pozwala inwestorom patrzeć z optymizmem w przyszłość. W artykule podjęto próbę uzasadnienia teorii lingwistyki kognitywnej i ukazania, co kryje się pod metaforyką takich pojęć i możliwością generowania nowych znaczeń.

Słowa kluczowe: lingwistyka kognitywna, koncepcja, metafora, metafora odzwierzęca, dyskurs w zakresie nauk ekonomicznych, analiza etymologiczna

The significance of metaphor as a creative force in language has been recognized, and many claims have been made on its behalf. According to Stephen Ullman metaphor “is closely intertwined with the very texture of human speech” which is encountered “in various guises”: as a factor in motivation, as an expressive device, a source of polysemy and synonymy, as an outlet for intense emotions, as a means of filling gaps in vocabulary, etc.

However, from Aristotle onwards it is common to address metaphor at the level of literature because “there can be no doubt about the crucial importance of metaphor in language and literature” (Ullman 1962, 212–214).

A different conception of language structure and linguistic investigation was offered by Ronald Langacker. So far the central claim of cognitive grammar has been that grammar forms a continuum with lexicon and is fully describable in terms of symbolic units, i.e. form-meaning pairings. In contrast, the author argues that grammar is not autonomous with respect to semantics, but rather is reduced to patterns for the structuring and symbolization of conceptual content. One of the questions that stimulated a cognitive approach concerned the problem of figurativeness. Langacker notes: “if figurative language were systematically eliminated from our data base, little if any data would remain” (1987, 55). It is assumed that grammatical structure accommodates figurative language as a natural, expected phenomenon rather than a special, problematic one. Admitting that figurativeness is a natural and common phenomenon, multi-word expressions (metaphors, idioms, collocations, phrasal verbs etc.) should be considered central to the language.

Some theorists have suggested that metaphors are not merely stylistic, but they are cognitively important as well. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argue that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but also in thought and action: “Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (2003, 3). Accordingly, cognitive approach addresses metaphor in terms of systems, considering it a phenomenon at a high and abstract level of thought where whole experiential areas are conceptualized metaphorically and have coherent realization at the level of words and idioms. The authors give several examples of daily metaphors, such as: TIME is conceptualized as a COMMODITY or MONEY, as evidenced by the sentences: You’re *wasting* my time; How do you *spend* your time these days? You’re *running out* of time; You need to *budget* your time; I *lost* a lot of time when I got sick, etc. (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, 7–9). The essential element here is that metaphor is a universal phenomenon with culture-specific realizations, and operates concept-to-concept rather than word-to-word or utterance-to-utterance. At the heart of a conceptual metaphor is a comparison, where elements and semantic features in one concept area – the source domain, such as MONEY can be mapped onto another conceptual area – the target domain such as TIME.

Issues related to metaphor

Within the theory of conceptual metaphor there are some disputable issues. For instance, there is a debate between scientists who suggest that many metaphors derive from metonymies, and those who notice important analytic distinctions between them (Moor 2004). Some researchers argue that metaphors arise from and are not independent of metonymies. According to the conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson the basic distinction is that in a metaphor we conceptualize one domain or the target domain, which is constituted by the immediate subject matter, in terms of another or the source domain, in which important metaphorical reasoning takes place. In a metonymy there is only one domain, the immediate subject matter. In other words, in metaphor we conceptualize one domain in terms of another. In metonymy, an element in a domain provides mental access to another element within the same domain. Although these are considerable distinctions, there are the cases where metaphor and metonymy are difficult to distinguish, i.e. it is not clear whether we deal with one domain or two domains. Furthermore, metonymy appears to be more clearly and importantly connected with metaphor, because many metaphors (of the correlation kind) have metonymic basis, as argued by Kövecses (2013). What distinguishes his position from the other proponents of metonymy-based metaphors is that he relies on several particular characteristics of the conceptual system. It is assumed that correlation-based metaphors emerge from frame-like mental representations through a metonymic stage. This happens when one of the elements of a frame-like mental status is generalized to a concept that lies outside the initial frame in a different part of the conceptual system. The generalization process leads to sufficient distance between the initial and the new frame on which metaphors can be based. On various language examples, through the application of cognitive processes of generalization and specialization he proves that at least in some cases metaphors derive from metonymies (Kövecses 2013, 79–80).

The other issue which seems important relates to metaphor and lexicography. From the point of lexicography cognitive approach is more suitable for thematic dictionaries, which go from concepts to lexical items, than standard alphabetical dictionaries, which go from words to concept meanings.¹ However, it is marked (Moor 2004, 199) that current monolingual dictionaries, in fact generally, give an impression that they confirm

¹ Specialist dictionaries which are organized alphabetically by metaphor: Palmatier (1995), Palmatier and Ray (1989); or by animals or by animal behavior: Lyman (1994).

to a substitution view of metaphor processing or occasionally a comparison view and, with a few exceptions, no attention is paid within metaphor studies to lexicography and its practical problems. There are also comments on inconsistencies in the lexicographical treatment of metaphor in dictionaries. Unlike the prevailing tendency in monolingual lexicography bilingual dictionaries treat metaphorical senses explicitly or include some special features on metaphor “figurative labels” more frequently. In particular this occurs when both literal and metaphorical senses have the same translation in the target language or special glossed phraseologies are given for metaphorical usages. One of such dictionaries is the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, edited by Michael Rundel, first published in 2002.

Applications of the conceptual metaphor theory

The developments in cognitive linguistics over recent decades have had a noticeable impact on the conceptual metaphor theory opening new perspectives for studies related to various aspects of that phenomenon. The important application of the theory has been in the areas of linguistics, literary theory, psychology, and politics etc. For instance, considerable body of research has been done on the metaphorical conceptualization of emotions (Omori 2008).

Cognitively-biased terminologists assume and build up their studies on the experientialist model of metaphorisation. The example here is the research carried out on a representative corpus of metaphorical terms designating material entities in the special domain of Mining. Besides, there are suggestions to construct a modern theory of terminology both on cognitive and terminological foundations (Alexiev 2004).

Cognitive approach to metaphor has received considerable attention of ESL practitioners, sociolinguists, psychologists, etc. Their studies have described various aspects of metaphor in economic discourse including contrastive cognitive analysis on the basis of different languages. A number of studies have drawn attention to the importance of metaphorical competence in relation to second language acquisition. Several researchers have found out that where students are explicitly taught metaphors, including contrasts between English metaphors and in their native language, they acquire vocabulary more effectively and with greater retention rates (Boers 2000).

Some researchers also propose to link research and pedagogy in Business English, whereby applied linguistic research findings are challenged to pedagogical practice. For

instance, the collaborative work of Janet Ho and Winnie Cheng (2016) critically investigates the use of emotion metaphors in a corpus of financial analysis reports of a bank produced during the credit crises from 2011 to 2012. The findings show that bank corporate culture is revealed by the use of emotion metaphors in their financial reports. The bank also uses varied metaphors to describe the emotions of investors. Important pedagogical implications for the bank, ESP teachers and members of the financial services professions are suggested as well. In the other relevant article (Skorczyńska-Sznajdar 2010) the contrastive analysis of metaphorical words and phrases from the business English textbook with the metaphors identified in a sample of corpus of business journal articles reveals only a slight overlap between textbook metaphors and those from the corpus sample. The author concludes that the corpus evidence, including frequency data, should be considered when selecting teachable metaphorical materials for Business English instruction.

Attention is also drawn to spoken economic discourse. The paper by MacArthur (2016) shows that metaphor plays a significant role in the way lecturers explain to visiting Erasmus students how exams or course contents should be approached and understood. Extracts from talks from academic conversations are examined with the aim of looking at different ways that ideas are expressed metaphorically. Another work by Dennis Tay (2016) explores deliberate metaphors across four contrasting discourse categories of psychotherapy talk, news articles, popular science articles, and political speeches. They demonstrate diverse strategic ways in which deliberateness is constructed across the four discourse categories.

Animal metaphors in economic discourse

The study is devoted to the analysis of English animal expressions that take the structure of a metaphor and refer to economics including business and finance sectors. English expressions containing animal names are selected from several dictionaries as *Speaking of Animals: A Dictionary of Animal Metaphors* by Palmatier (1995), *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms: American English Idiomatic Expressions & Phrases* by Christine Ammer (2013) and typical contexts of their use are provided. The contemporary illustrative material comes from a range of online sources from newspapers, news sites, magazines, journals, open-access dictionaries, and also from our specialized reading.

Every expression which is analysed consists of an animal name that is used metaphorically. The main question of the study is what information is presented in the

source domain (i.e. ANIMALS) that is contained in the target domain (i.e. TRAIT DESCRIBING ECONOMICS). More precisely, what the name of animal mentioned in the expression refers to.

One of the metaphorical words relating to animals is *brand* (n.). A hot burning wooden stake or torch has been called *brand*, *brond* since at least 950 AD. *Brand* (v.) means “to impress or burn a mark upon with a hot stake or iron” (Palmatier 1995, 35). This verb usage, which has been known since the Middle Ages, is derived from the earlier name in Old English “*biernan*, *beornan*”, which is meant “to be on fire, metathetic” (Neufeldt 1988, 187). That can be the reason that the livestock that were branded were those that had little or no hair, such as the cattle, horses. As follows, the word derives from the 16th century practice of marking both manufactured products and livestock with a hot iron that bore the symbol of producer or owner. It does have the same meaning as the early form. Accordingly, in marketing terms *brand* comes from the meaning of the word as “an identifying mark or label on the products of a particular company” (Neufeldt 1988, 169–170). Today, to differentiate a company or a product many businesses use *brand* identity which includes logos, typography, colours, packaging, and messaging. Furthermore, over time *brand* has become associated with a level of credibility, quality and satisfaction in customers’ minds: e.g. “The business submitted requests for a new logo and *brand* design, to enhance their appeal to the consumer both visually and conceptually” (Fr.D). It can be assumed that the source domain concept for *brand* is MARK and is used to talk metaphorically about the target domain concept, i.e. MARK and other similar abstract concepts such as quality, sort, kind, grade, unique design, sign, and symbol.

The most popular expression in the language of economics nowadays seems to be a *bear market* (can also be said *bearish*). It means “a high but declining stock market” and might be used in the sentences: “And small-company shares, which soared 17% over the year, nearly fell into a *bear market* early in 2016” (Fried 2017, 65); “They have a relatively brief track record, making it unknown how they will behave in a *bear market*”; “How will they behave in a similar crisis or even just a garden-variety *bear market*?” (Leonhardt 2017, 88, 91). A *bear market* is a market for *bears* – those who follow the stock broker’s creed of “buy low, sell high” by selling their stock while the prices are high. This metaphor originated in England in a proverb about a man who sold a bearskin before killing the bear. Because the stockbroker sold his stock before the market “died,” he was called a bearskin jobber later shortened to *bear*. When humans who play the stock market perceive that prices have reached their peak and are about to decline, they sell their stock and go into hibernation, like the bear because they are pessimistic about any

rise in price in the near future. Therefore, it can be stated that *a bear market* as a metaphorical concept denotes DOWNWARD TREND it means that the source domain concept *a bear market* most often is used to talk metaphorically about the target domain concept, i.e. DOWNWARD TREND and other similar abstract concepts such as sluggish (in function), gloomy, stagnant, or state of suspended animation.

On the other hand, *a bull market* (can also be said *bullish*) means “a low but rising stock market,” e.g. “Wednesday marked an important milestone for the stock market: *the bull market* turned 3,453 days old, making it the longest market in American history [...] The current *bull market* started nearly a decade ago on March 9, 2009, near the end of the Great Recession, which weakened havoc on the American economy from December to June 2009” (Burke 2018, n.p.). This is the time to buy before stock prices go much higher. The one theory of how a *bull market* originated stems from the word’s etymology. “Bovine male animal”, from Old English *bula* meant “a bull, a steer”, from Old North *boli* “bull, male of the domestic bovine”, both from Proto-Germanic “bullon”, perhaps also from a Germanic verbal stem “belle” meaning “to roar”, which survives in some German dialects. The other possibility is that the Germanic root is from Proto-Indo-European “bhln”, from the root “bhel” meant “to blow, inflate, [or] swell” – terms that figuratively describe a rising market. In stock market sense “one who seeks to cause a rise in the price of a stock” the term started to be used on Wall Street in the late 19th century (OED). Thus, *a bull market* as a metaphorical concept denotes UPWARD TREND and is used to talk metaphorically about the target domain concept, i.e. UPWARD TREND and other similar concepts such as optimistic about gradual shift from a falling market (*a bear market*) to a rising market (*a bull market*), charging forward fearlessly, actively and impulsively or anticipating that the large purchase will encourage price rise.

Another example adjacent to the above mentioned expressions is *a lame duck* meaning “an ineffectual person; a failing business” (Neufeldt 1988, 756). The original allusion to a duck with clipped wings or injured webbed feet seems to have been applied to someone who could not pay his debts on the Stock Exchange and it was a slang word for “defaulter” in the mid-18th century (Flavell 1992, 108). Later, from the mid-19th century it developed new senses and became attached especially to officeholders, US politicians, whose term of office was nearly over and whose power, therefore, was waning. The expression can be used as a noun and adjective, particularly in phrases like *a lame duck company* “ailing company” or “a firm in financial difficulties”, *a lame duck manager* “ineffectual or helpless person”, *a lame duck industry* “inefficient, ineffective industry”, *a lame duck budget* “pre-election budget” and *a lame duck presidency*. In the latter sense it

is now widespread in England as well. In recent years (as of 2006) both George W. Bush and Tony Blair unable to see out further electoral victories were faced with such muttering, for example: “Is Blair a ‘*lame duck*’ Prime Minister?”; “There is no small irony in the fact that on November 15, *American’s lame duck president*, George W. Bush is hosting” (Phr.F). Because of the similarity, the idiom combines with *a bull market* and *a bear market* referring accordingly to rising and falling market, but *a lame duck* in the specifically stock trading context is now little used.

The following example of an animal that metaphorically relates to economics is *to play ducks and drakes (with)* or *make ducks and drakes of*. This expression comes from the game played by throwing a flat stone across the surface of water in such a way as to make it skim and skip before it finally sinks. Why the name was chosen is not clear. The game was known by this name by the late 16th century, and it was already a metaphor to refer “idly throwing something away or squandering resources” in the early 17th century (Siefing 2004, 88). In economic context the adaptation of *to play ducks and drakes* meaning “to behave recklessly, to throw money away” seems to have come directly from the throwing stones in the waterside: e.g. “He lost his job for *playing ducks and drakes* with the fund of corporation”; “We can’t go on *playing ducks and drakes* with the Company’s prosperity”, “You have no right *to play ducks and drakes* with money that has been entrusted to you” (SDO). Therefore, it can be stated that PLAY DUCKS AND DRAKES as a metaphorical concept denotes WASTE (money) and other similar abstract concepts, such as useless profitless spending (money).

A further example of domestic animal used metaphorically in the economic context is the expression *to kill the goose that lays the golden egg(s)*; the other version has *a hen* instead of *a goose*. It means “to destroy a reliable and valuable source of income (through greed)” (EOLD). There are several explanations for this expression. In 1484 W. Caxton translated into English a fable by Aesop which tells the tale about a man who owned miraculous goose that laid eggs of gold. However, he grew dissatisfied with its production of just one egg a day and killed it in the deluded expectation of finding a large quantity of gold inside it. Not only were there none, but the farmer had deprived himself of all of the eggs that would be laid in the future (Palmatier 1995, 222). There exist quite a lot of minor variations possible in the form such as, *to cook one’s/someone’s goose* which means “to ruin one’s/someone’s plans or chances of success”. In economic context it is generally used to refer to short-sighted actions, various regulations and rulings that destroy a reliable and valuable source of income: e.g. “By outsourcing American jobs, American companies are *killing the goose that lays the golden eggs*, the American consumer”;

“Therefore, as McCorwick warns, we should take great care that regulations in the name of global warming “*not kill the goose that lays golden eggs*” (EOLD). An altered form of the expression *the goose that lays golden eggs* is also found to refer to a promising business, innovative products especially at present of mobile industry, an investment, a service or high tax rates: e.g. “Like a *goose that lays golden eggs*, tourism brings in the buck of families, communities, regions and the entire nation. To enjoy its *golden eggs* for a long time, we have to...” (Nepomuceno 2016). Compare the following example: “Like *golden-egg laying* making innovative products is a process, one that Apple worked out three decades ago” (Elmer-Dewitt 2013, n.p.). Thus the source domain concept for *to kill the goose that lays golden eggs* is DESTROY (a source that makes a lot of money), and is used to talk metaphorically about the target domain concept DESTROY and other similar concepts such as, complete loss of means, solvency, downfall, to ruin something profitable, and to make bankrupt. While the source domain concept for *the goose that lays golden eggs* is MONEY-MAKER and other concepts such as, valuable source of profit, income, a promising business proposition, and chance for success.

The next example of wild animal expression is *a lion's share* which refers to the largest or best part of an allotment. The phrase derives from the plot of a number of fables ascribed to Aesop. There are two main types of story, which exist in several different versions. In a fable by Aesop, a lion is assisted by two other animals in killing a deer. When it comes to dividing up the spoils, the lion reminds the others that he is the King of Beasts, and he claims the entire carcass (Flavell 1992, 124). However, its meaning has slightly changed opposite to the rather negative generic sense and the phrase has acquired a positive connotation and may account for the largest part of credit, sales, profits, revenues and trading activities etc.: “The *lion's share* of the credit must go to our development team, who have worked tirelessly to bring this product to market for the holiday season”; “This man was much impressed with Ajax with the result that he agreed to train him for a *lion's share* of the profits of exhibiting him...” (Fr.D). “That should generate *lion's share* (\$15,9 billion) of the \$22,1 billion in TV revenues, CTA estimates” (MWD). Consequently, the source domain concept of the phrase corresponds metaphorically to the target domain concept MAJOR and other similar abstract concepts as bulk, mass, abundance.

The expression *beehive of activity/hive of activity* means “a busy, noisy, overcrowded place or scene” (Palmatier 1995, 22). This is a place where there are a lot of things happening and everyone is very busy. Its origin is not known. The first mention of this phrase in the meaning of “habitation of bees” from bee+hive (n.) can be found in the Canterbury

Tales by J. Chaucer in the 14th century (OED) A hive is a colony of honeybees, and a beehive is a wooden box for containing them. Inside the box, the worker bees are abuzz with the activity as they build the wax comb, feed the eggs that queen bee lays in the hexagonal cells, clean the cells after the eggs hatch, receive nectar from the “foraging” bees, manufacture honey in the empty cells (Palmatier 1995, 22). Such a scene is used figuratively of “a busy place” and has extended to other senses. In management it resembles a collaborative activity, a team of dedicated people brought together for a particular project, hard at work to achieve a goal or set of goals that might be duplicated in a business organization or situation, i.e. on the floor of the stock exchange, a bank, a firm or an office. For instance, “The company headquarters, some 100 blocks north of Times Square, is *a beehive of activity*”; “The auction hall is a teeming *hive of activity* with barely time to take a breath” (CED). In addition to the traditional business organization, at present we increasingly find virtual organizations and virtual teams where team members may never actually meet face-to-face: e.g. “The company’s expansion in the *beehive state* comes after a patent revealed that Amazon wants to create *beehive drone delivery* centers” (McGee 2017).

The meaning of the phrase *beehive of activity* refers to the informal idiom *as busy as a bee* “to be moving about quickly doing many things”. The Old English *beo* “bee” (n.) comes from Proto-Germanic *bion*, from Proto-Indo-European root *bhei* –“bee”, a stringing insect, living in societies under a queen and producing wax. It is used metaphorically for ‘busy worker’ since 1530s. (OED). The meaning of this idiom probably comes from comparison to the combined labour and social activity of the insect living in societies under a queen and producing wax and honey. The honey bee is constantly engaged in tasks that benefit the hive rarely stopping to rest until a task is done. This same level of industry is often considered admirable in people, especially those who benefit most directly from the efforts of the individual who is so engaged: “Professionals who keep on top of tasks might be described as being” *as busy as a bee* (CED).

The idiom, due to the significance, combines with the other metaphorical expression *busy as a beaver (building a new dam)* denoting “to be extremely busy, working hard and fast.” The comparison to *beaver* dates from the late 1700s, the variant from the late 1300s but the precise origin of this expression is not known. Perhaps it comes from the image of the beaver’s life which is not an easy one. It must cut down many trees, some of them large, along the side of the stream; it must arrange them in the form of a dam; and it must build a large lounge, with underwater entrances, before winter comes (Ammer 2013, 64). The following sentences might be a good example: “As CEOs tell it, rewarding

executives and employees with stock options makes them all *busy beavers* bent solely on increasing their company's value"; "*Busy beaver* President Clinton have been working hard in his final days (EOLD).

It can, therefore, be argued that the source domain concept for *a beehive of activity* is GREAT ACTIVITY and other similar senses of the target domain such as engaged, cooperative, very industrious, intensive, and hard-working. The next idiom *a cash cow* is business slang for "a source of easy and continuous profit or income it generates" (OBD). Although this practice term dates only from about 1970, *a milch cow* was used in exactly the same way from 1600. It stems from milche + cow meaning "cow in milk or kept for her milk" in the Middle English. Hence, the term *a cash cow* is analogous to *a milch cow* (a dairy cow) used on farms to produce milk, offering a steady stream of income with little maintenance cost.

The term *a cash cow* has its origin in a matrix developed by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in 1970, in which enterprises are classified as having positions in either a growing or a shrinking market, and with either a growing or shrinking total market share. An operation with a large market share in a growing or shrinking market is called "a *cash cow*." Because the *cash cow* has a high market share in a slowly growing market, it is generally able to maintain a profitable position (OBD). A well-established brand, a company or division of a company, a product, an investment or a service that are described as "*a cash cow*," once acquired and paid off, consistently generates a large, regular, predictable and positive cash flow that can be used to invest in markets that offer higher growth rates. Consequently, according to the matrix the idiom likens the flow of money from a *cash cow* to the flow of milk from an actual cow. For example, "some of the Wall Street's biggest investor *cash cows* by decade over a course of years, corporate titans like Exxon, Apple, and Microsoft have put a lot of money into the pockets of shareholders. As publicly traded companies widely held by investors around the world, one of their major functions is to return value to shareholders" (David and Shetty 2018). In the following example "*a cash cow*" refers to Starbucks Corporation. The article "Starbucks is Simply a Cash Cow" shows how the company has grown into a giant with revenues in the billions of dollars, continued to generate higher and higher profits and managed to take its shares higher as well (Levitt and Aaron 2017).

This term is also used in the socio-economic and political context: e.g. "Home Office has been accused of using UK-born children of immigrants as '*cash cows*' by charging extortionate sums for them to obtain citizenship fees" (Bulman 2018, n.p.). Subsequently, it can be assumed, that the source domain concept for *a cash cow* is

MONEY-MAKER and other similar senses of the target domain such as, money-spinner, source of profit, (sales, investment) revenue.

To sum up, the examination of several selected animal expressions shows that the origin of some of them is difficult to identify, and for the other it is possible to detect even more than one suggested source, so it is not possible to determine which one of them is right. For instance, *a bear market* whether it derives from biological characteristic of a hibernating animal, dormant state or is associated with a fable. Nevertheless, different groups of animals like domestic, wild, birds and insects are widely used in the conceptualization of abstract notions pertaining to economics and as has been demonstrated is a productive source to create terminological metaphors.

Conclusion

Animals constitute a complex cognitive source, which, as such gives rise to extensive and intricate metaphorical expressions in economic discourse. Living creatures, especially those of noticeable size, leading active lives constitute very important and conspicuous stimuli, even if they hide from people's sight. They are, therefore, important elements of human perception of the world which are reflected in language. It should be noted that the study of animal terminology has always been popular with lexical semantics, and also those representing the formal attitude through the componential analysis studies; yet it seems that it is the theory of metaphorical concept that can help one to better understand how animals or animal expressions get their metaphorical meaning and find their way into the specialized language.

Animal expressions are open conceptual structures from which the language of economics can easily select any aspect, e.g., association with the combined labour and social activity of the insects (*a beehive of activity*); or industry and hard work of them (*busy as a bee*). In the case of some animal metaphors, their Proto-Indo-European or Old English source words disclose which particular characteristic was conceptualized, e.g., appearance, behaviour traits and biological features etc. There are animal metaphors whose source words do not disclose any concept that could have been singled out by the language of economics. However, some aspects held by them can be derived due to, e.g., their conspicuousness, relevance or associate with a myth or fable. The domestic animal expressions (*a cash cow, goose that lays golden egg*) are still quite relevant to the concept "source of living, income, profit, etc." in economic contexts as they focus on exactly the

same aspect of mental experience in the past. It is well known that animals have been bred since ancient times to mate them in order to produce offspring, which are then carefully raised, e.g., for food (a group of birds and fowl, e.g., the chicken, the duck, goose, turkey; the cattle, e.g., a cow, steer), for work (e.g., horses), and later for sale or for show (e.g. cats, dogs). It appears that the animal expressions under study are but a persuasive case why certain socio-economic processes are frequently understood in terms of some animal features.

Abbreviations

CED Collins English Dictionary

EOLD The English Oxford Living Dictionaries

Fr.D The Free Dictionary

MWD Merriam-Webster Dictionary

OBD Online Business Dictionary

OED Online Etymology Dictionary

Phr.F The Phrase Finder

SDO Sentence Dictionary Online

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