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DOI: 10.17951/et.2024.36.113

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Who is the pike in the Czech political pond? **Or the Conceptual Metaphor POLITICS IS A POND in Czech Political Discourse**

**Kto jest szczupakiem w czeskim stawie? Metafora pojęciowa
POLITYKA TO STAW w czeskim dyskursie politycznym**

Abstract: In this article, the author analyzes the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS A POND, A POLITICIAN IS A CARP and A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE in Czech political discourse. The investigation is based on the theory of conceptual metaphor and follows the principles of ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics. The author shows how the specific features of these conceptual metaphors relate to the Czech linguistic worldview and proposes metaphorical mapping that conveys salient features of the target domain (politics and politicians). The conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND helps the speaker to depict a problematic domestic political situation that needs to be changed. The metaphors A POLITICIAN IS A CARP and A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE are usually used to create the “friend-foe” opposition in political discourse. The conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP discloses the passivity and laziness of politicians and their inability or unwillingness to change the current situation. On the other hand, the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE can be used to indicate both the positive qualities of a politician (activity, energy, initiative) and the negative ones (greed, selfishness, cruelty). The use of culturally specific conceptual metaphors allows a politician to establish close contact with the audience to increase the number of loyal voters.

Keywords: ethnolinguistics; cognitive linguistics; political discourse; Czech politics; conceptual metaphor; metaphorical mapping; linguistic worldview; speech strategy; POLITICS; POND; CARP; PIKE

1. Introduction

Conceptual metaphor is considered a basic mental operation that accompanies our everyday life and affects the perception of the surrounding reality (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), including how we experience and perceive the world (Johnson 1987). Metaphorization is based on the interaction process between the knowledge structures of two conceptual domains: source and target. We use the source domain to explain the target domain (usually more abstract or less familiar) (Lakoff 1993; Nebeská 2005; Kövecses 2010), which provides the conceptual background in which the target domain is viewed and understood (Langacker 2008: 58). This conventional mapping across conceptual domains is embedded in one's bodily and everyday experience (Lakoff 1993). In other words, during metaphorical mapping, the elements of the source domain, arising from human experience or interaction with the world, structure the less comprehensible conceptual target domain. This transfer forms the essence of the cognitive potential of the metaphor, which is actively used in political discourse, as every politician tries to represent his view of reality and interpret abstract phenomena and current events using widely known images and simple terms that are familiar and understandable to voters (Rycheva 2022). On the one hand, politicians explain reality based on those conceptual metaphors¹ that are relevant and understandable to a specific audience within a certain linguistic worldview,² and on the other hand they modify it in certain ways.³ In political discourse, the speaker intentionally, but covertly and non-violently, distorts the recipient's understanding of reality (restructuring the picture of reality) to achieve their own goal (gaining power), therefore we can assume that the speeches of politicians often fulfill a manipulative function.

Metaphorical mappings vary in their degree of universality, which means that we can talk about culturally specific conceptual metaphors (Lakoff 1993; Gibbs 2019). In other words, together with "universal" conceptual metaphors (for example, *POLITICS IS A GAME*, *POLITICS IS WAR*, *POLITICS IS THEATER*,

¹ For example, the source domain *ILLNESS* is the basis for the conceptual metaphors *STATE OF THE POLITICAL SUBJECT IS HEALTH OF A BODY*, *MANIFESTATION OF CRISIS IS SYMPTOM*, etc. (Rycheva 2023).

² Linguistic worldview is an interpretation of the world fixed in language (including specific concepts in the thought system of a given community) (Vaňková 2017), or a supra-individual (social) interpretation of reality projected from the point of view of common sense, existing in the form of a conceptual structure and expressed at different levels of language (Rak 2010).

³ Linguistic worldview can change over time, i.e. it is developmentally dynamic (Vaňková 2007: 59).

etc.), politicians can use conceptual metaphors that have a special cultural and social meaning for the members of the given community (for example, from the field of culture, religion, history, landscape, climate, etc.). For instance, Charteris-Black notes that the use of the conceptual metaphor *POLITICS IS A GAME* in British political discourse presupposes, among other things, following the rules of a game and achieving a “prize” (Charteris-Black 2019: 157–158). Knowledge patterns and stereotypes are anchored in such metaphors, understandable to all representatives of a given linguistic culture.⁴ For example, Lakoff delineates the metaphorical models of “Strict Father” and “Nurturant Parent” in American political discourse, used by representatives of conservative and liberal ideologies, respectively. He shows that the dominance of conservatives in the political arena in the United States is closely connected with the use of the metaphorical model of the “Strict Father” who protects the family from danger, demanding obedience and discipline from his children (Lakoff 2016; Lakoff 2009). Budaev and Chudinov highlight the different metaphors of power and homeland in different cultures: for the West and Russia, power and homeland have traditionally been presented using metaphors related to the sun, in contrast to Eastern Muslim countries, where the metaphor of power is associated with the shadow (Budaev, Chudinov 2006). Charteris-Black (2019) pays attention to specific metaphors that have been used in British political discourse in connection with Brexit: “cherry picking”, “marriage of convenience”, etc. As a result, the use of culturally specific conceptual metaphors is not only an important means of knowing the established ideas of the nation about the surrounding reality but also an instrument for influencing the consciousness of the recipient. A politician’s knowledge and use of such metaphors result in their being automatically included in the “we-group” and in gaining loyalty from voters.

This article aims to determine the features of the functioning of the conceptual metaphors *POLITICS IS A POND* (*POLITIKA JE RYBNÍK*), *A POLITICIAN IS A CARP* (*POLITIK JE KAPR*), and *A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE* (*POLITIK JE ŠTIKA*) in Czech political discourse, which we can consider culturally specific to Czech linguistic worldview. The data for the study were obtained with the method of continuous sampling based on the speeches of Czech politicians published in mass media and on the official websites of Czech political parties and movements between 2010 and 2023.

⁴ National and cultural features of metaphors as important components of linguistic worldview are widely studied in ethnolinguistics (Bartmiński 2004) and linguoculturology (Maslova 2001).

2. Conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND

The conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND is based on the general idea of the pond as an important element of the landscape, economy, and cultural heritage of the Czech Republic.

A pond (*rybník*) is an artificial reservoir⁵ with stagnant (standing) water and distinct boundaries, intended primarily for fish farming. In stagnant water, an ecosystem with a closed circulation of nutrients is formed over time, therefore interaction with the surroundings is not of great importance to the creatures that live in the pond. The pond also fulfills an important function of retaining and supplying water to the surroundings.

Since the 15th–16th centuries, with the development of pond farming in Czech lands, ponds have represented symbols of power and prosperity due to the use of their economic potential (including artificial carp breeding). Since then, professional fishing slang has gradually emerged and has spread, now considered one of the oldest varieties (Jaklová 1996). Professional fishing slang enriched the Czech language with numerous expressions and phraseological units with a metaphorical meaning (for instance, *vypálit rybník* — verbatim “to burn the pond”, meaning ‘to steal a march’), which are used in everyday communication, political and mass media discourse. In Czech, we can find the idiom *český rybník* (the Czech pond), which has the meaning of a closed society, characterized by stagnation, low mobility, and reluctance to change. We can note various transformations of this phrase: *český politický rybník* (Czech political pond), *český telekomunikační rybník* (Czech telecommunication pond), etc., which are used to specify the social domain with the characteristics mentioned above.

The use of the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND in the speeches of politicians is based on such characteristics of the pond as clearly defined boundaries and the closed nature of the ecosystem (the closed nature and backwardness of politics), stagnant water (constancy of the system and absence of changes), its turbidity (opacity of political decision-making), and its unpleasant smell (a poorly functioning political system, corruption, dirty tricks).

In political discourse, the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND is mainly used to point out the closed nature of Czech politics and the non-transparency of political decision-making, which hinders the development of the state. The metaphor helps to show the negative effects of exclusionary

⁵ Slovník spisovného jazyka českého [on-line]. <<https://sjjc.ujc.cas.cz/search.php?hledej=Hledat&heslo=rybn%C3%ADk&sti=EMPTY&where=hesla&hsubstr=no>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

policies that can lead to economic and social problems. For example, in the following speech, a politician discusses the Czech Republic's provision of a loan to the International Monetary Fund and, using the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND, explains to the audience why the stabilization of the economic development of the entire European Union is very important for the country from the strategic point of view:

- (1) *Devadesát miliard je hodně peněz a nikdo z toho nemá radost, ale musíme si uvědomit širší souvislosti. Nemůžeme se dívat jenom k našemu rybníku, ale musíme zvednout oči dál.*⁶
 Ninety billion is a lot of money and nobody is happy about it, but we have to realize the wider context. We cannot look only at our pond, but we must take a wider view.

Thus, the speaker negatively assesses the reluctance of politicians making important political decisions to look at the political situation broadly, taking into account possible prospects.

An important characteristic of a pond is stagnant water in which the inhabitants of the pond live. Standing water is assessed negatively because of the lack of motion (metaphor of stagnation, degradation, deadlock), in contrast to flowing water, which is constantly in motion (metaphor of life, change, progress). Stagnant water in a pond can easily become dirty and opaque and therefore needs regular maintenance and renewal, similarly to a political system that has not changed for a long time and causes a lot of problems (mainly corruption). In addition, the clearly defined boundaries of the pond and the lack of a constant inflow of clean running water indicate a stalemate situation and the impossibility of changing it without outside intervention (remediation, cleaning). In political discourse, the speaker means by this intervention the implementation of radical changes in the existing political system:

- (2) *Tento rybník je už moc kalný, musíme ho vyčistit, aby se v něm dalo žít.*⁷
 This pond is already too murky, we need to clean it to make it livable.

The speaker indicates a poor state of the pond (unfavorable state of the political system) in which it faces irreversible consequences (degradation and destruction). The poor condition of the water in the pond may be the

⁶ Blažek: Půjčit, nepůjčit? Být či nebyt? [on-line]. <<https://www.top09.cz/co-delame/medialni-vystupy/blazek-pujcit-nepujcit-byt-ci-nebyt-8304.html>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

⁷ Langšádlová: Vyvineme tlak, kterému nepůjde uniknout [on-line]. <<https://www.top09.cz/co-delame/medialni-vystupy/langsadlova-vyvineme-tlak-kteremu-nepujde-uniknout-12429.html>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

reason that the pond has been abandoned (politicians don't care about the development of the political system), or the pond may have been deliberately brought to such a dirty state because muddy water (opacity of politics) suits some politicians who act dishonestly and for their own benefit (corruption, dirty political practices).

To strengthen the pragmatic impact on the audience's consciousness, a politician can appeal not only to the recipient's visual perception of dirty stagnant water in a pond (murky, impure, opaque) but also to unpleasant olfactory perception (stale, smelly, stinky water), which is caused by the poor state of the pond. So the current problematic situation can be solved by the restoration of the pond (the political system) or the addition of new clean water (the implementation of reforms, the creation of new laws), which can save it:

- (3) *Cesta k potřebným změnám totiž vede jen a pouze v **přlivu čisté vody do velmi zapáchajícího českého politického rybníku.***⁸

The path to the necessary changes leads only through the influx of clean water into the very smelly Czech political pond.

- (4) *Je mi svým způsobem sympatické, že jsou tu nové politické strany, které **zasmrádlý český rybník** možná proženou. Jestli to dokážou, nevím.*⁹

In a way, I like the fact that there are new political parties that might sweep the stinking Czech pond away. I don't know if they can do it.

An unpleasant odor emanating from the water indicates negative processes occurring in the pond. If there is no source of clean water in the pond, it will stagnate and degrade excessively, which in turn causes pond pollution and a strong unpleasant odor from the water. Thus, the use of this metaphor shows the speaker's negative attitude towards the problem. In this case, the politician acts as an expert who proposes a way to change the political system, leading to its renewal and saving it from destruction.

An important part of taking care of the pond is its timely desilting, which prevents cloudiness and deterioration of water quality. An excessively large amount of mud causes the reproduction of parasites and bacterial and viral diseases, which leads to the extinction of living organisms. In the following example, the speaker, using the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND, describes in detail the reasons for muddying the pond and points out that

⁸ Miroslav Lukeš: „Proč už nemohu být členem KDU-ČSL“ [on-line]. <<https://www.kdu.cz/aktualne/archiv/2010/miroslav-lukes-proc-uz-nemohu-byt-clenem-kdu-csl>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

⁹ Telička dostává za rady pro Bártu štědré odměny, vazby na VV odmítá. [on-line]. <https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/telicka-dostal-lukrativni-zakazku-od-ministra-barty.A110124_111042_domaci_jj> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

in Czech politics, rules and laws are sometimes deliberately broken so that some politicians can gain the greatest advantage for themselves. By creating a metaphorical scenario, the politician shows his negative attitude towards the current situation as a whole:

- (5) *V posledních letech ale také s úděsem a odporem musím přihlížet tomu, jak se tyto základní kameny naší státní a státoprávní existence **drolí na prach**. Z tohoto prachu pak vzniká **bláto**, kterým se celá naše společnost **brodí**. Existuje skupina lidí, kterým tato **bahenní lázeň** vyhovuje. Jsou to lidé, kteří neumějí nic jiného než **kalit vodu**, aby v ní potom mohli **lovit**. Těmto lidem musíme **vypustit rybník** dřív než všechno, co v naší společnosti zůstalo **zdravé, utopí v bahně**.¹⁰*
 In recent years, however, I have also had to watch with horror and disgust how these cornerstones of our state and state-law existence crumble to dust. This dust then creates the mud through which our entire society wades. There is a group of people who are comfortable with this mud bath. They are people who know nothing more than muddying the water so they can fish in it. We need to drain the pond for these people before everything that remains healthy in our society drowns in the mud.

In this statement, the politician uses several conceptual metaphors to enhance the pragmatic effect on the consciousness of the recipient (POLITICS IS A BUILDING, POLITICS IS DIRT, POLITICS IS A POND). The conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND is closely connected with the conceptual sphere of DIRT, which is one of the most important conceptual spheres for politics. Being clean in politics means being an honest, decent, and sincere politician who has nothing to hide and has a clear conscience. However, this quality in politics is traditionally considered to be very rare, which is fixed in the stereotype “politics is dirty” because usually the entire sphere of politics is equated with dirt (corruption, slander, rumors, fake news, etc.). A person can become dirty voluntarily (*get dirty in politics*) or as a result of dishonest actions (*dirty tricks*) of his political opponents (*throwing dirt at someone, dig up dirt on someone*, etc.). According to Faryno, dirt in culture is considered to be spontaneous, as a sign of inattention, dishonesty, and cleanliness is rational, it is deliberately observed and stored. It is associated with holiness, ethics, morality, culture, and civility (Faryno 1999, 60). Moreover, the conceptual sphere of DIRT is closely related to the conceptual sphere ILLNESS, and CLEANLINESS is closely related to HEALTH. Thus, according to the above-mentioned metaphorical scenario, dirty politics can become a source of infection for the entire political system, which can lead to irreversible consequences (destruction of the state, that is, its death).

¹⁰ Budeme rozhodovat, jestli se povede dovést odkaz listopadu 1989 do konce. [online]. <<https://www.top09.cz/co-delame/medialni-vystupy/budeme-rozhodovat-jestli-se-povede-dovest-odkaz-listopadu-1989-do-konce-27906.html>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

3. Conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP

In the Czech political discourse, the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS A POND and A POLITICIAN IS A CARP are often used in the same context because the image of a pond is inextricably linked with carp breeding in Czech language worldview.

A carp (*kapr*) is a utility freshwater fish,¹¹ which is one of the most popular species of freshwater fish for breeding in ponds due to its fast growth, undemanding breeding conditions, omnivorousness, and large amount of meat. Carp farming can also harm the pond's ecosystem. The carp is the most profitable type of fish to breed and sell, which can lead to ponds concentrating only on carp farming. Other negative impacts are the reduction of water transparency in ponds (carp look for food in the mud at the bottom, which can increase the turbidity of the water) and the elimination of small animals and aquatic plants (elimination of biodiversity). In suitable conditions, carp can live long (over 40 years), to a big size and weight (over 20 kg). The carp is the most important fish in Czech pond farming thanks to long-standing Czech cultural traditions (primarily Christmas traditions) and economic importance (breeding and selling carp is a key element in the income of fishing companies).

The conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP is based on such characteristics of the carp as its passivity, non-predation, and omnivorousness (the laziness and reluctance of politicians to change the political system), rapid weight gain (the desire of politicians to extract the greatest possible benefit from their position), and undemanding breeding conditions (maintaining places in the political system at any cost).

Czech politicians often use the proverb *kapři si sami svůj rybník nikdy nevyypustí* (carp never empty their pond) which means 'no one will act against his or her own interests' to discredit their political opponents. Sometimes Czech politicians use a variant of this proverb:

¹¹ Slovník spisovného jazyka českého [on-line]. <<https://ssjc.ujc.cas.cz/search.php?hledaj=Hledat&heslo=kapr&sti=EMPTY&where=hesla&hsubstr=no>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

- (6) *Ryby si přeci svůj rybník samy nevypustí, to by byly samy proti sobě.*¹²
After all, the fish don't empty their pond by themselves, that would be against themselves.
- (7) *Ryby si nikdy nebudou chtít vypustit rybník. Vždycky budou říkat, že je milion důvodů proto, proč by rybník měl existovat.*¹³
The fish will never want to drain the pond. They will always say that there are a million reasons why a pond should exist.

The image in this proverb is based on the fact that the water level can be regulated in a pond, including the possibility of draining the water and collecting the fish for consumption, sale, etc. In the Czech political discourse, this proverb is used to point out the efforts of criticized politicians to maintain the current political situation despite its poor condition:

- (8) *Jak se však s oblibou říká, kapři si svůj rybník nevypustí. K úspěšnému vypuštění rybníku tedy bude nejdříve nutné začít řešit ty kapry.*¹⁴
However, as they like to say, carp do not empty their pond. In order to successfully drain the pond, it will first be necessary to start dealing with the carp.
- (9) *Zrušení jednomyslnosti by totiž pomohlo například v boji proti daňovým rájům, protože státy jako Lucembursko nebo Irsko jejich omezení blokují, neboť kapři si svůj rybník pochopitelně nevypustí.*¹⁵
The abolition of unanimity would help, for example, in the fight against tax havens, because countries such as Luxembourg or Ireland block their restrictions – the carp understandably do not empty their pond.

The proverb *kapři si sami svůj rybník nikdy nevypustí* (carp never empty their pond) goes through various structural-semantic transformations in the speeches of politicians, mainly by the replacement of the verbal component and the expansion of the unit. For example, a politician may deliberately replace the component *kapř* (carp) in the proverb with a more relevant one

¹² Proč má drtivá většina politiků husí kůži ze švýcarské přímé demokracie? [on-line]. <<https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/profily/Radek-Rozvoral-22025/clanek/Proc-ma-drtiva-vetsina-politiku-husi-kuzi-ze-svycarske-prime-demokracie-80473>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

¹³ Tisková konference po jednání vlády. [on-line]. <<https://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/tiskove-konference/tiskova-konference-po-jednani-vlady-31-rijna-2012-100323/>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

¹⁴ Senát potřebuje levicové politiky jako sůl. [on-line]. <<https://www.kscm.cz/cs/aktualne/aktuality/senat-potrebuje-levicove-politiky-jako-sul/>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

¹⁵ Většinové hlasování v Radě EU? Pomohlo by v boji s daňovými ráji, oligarchy i lépe ochránilo peníze pro české občany, říkájí Piráti. [on-line]. <<https://www.pirati.cz/jak-pirati-pracuji/vetsinove-hlasovani-v-rade-eu-pomohlo-by-v-boji-s-danovymi-raji-oligarchy-i-lepe-ochranilo-penize-pro-ceske-obcany-rika-ji-pirati/>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

from their point of view (for example, *Soudní dvůr EU* [Court of Justice of the EU]). This kind of transformation is situational and motivated by context; in other words, it helps to semanticize the meaning of a proverb concerning a specific situation. Using this type of structural-semantic transformation, the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP is modified, which adds unique imagery and expressiveness to the politician's speech:

- (10) *Přece si Soudní dvůr EU nevypustí svůj vlastní rybník!*¹⁶
After all, the Court of Justice of the EU will not drain its pond!
- (11) *A proč by si jako budoucí vrcholný politik vypouštěl vlastní rybník?*¹⁷
And why would he drain his pond as a future top politician?
- (12) *Vím, že k tomu nikdy nedojde, protože si přece lobbisté a jiné spřátelené skupiny "nenechají vypustit vlastní rybník".*¹⁸
I know it will never happen because lobbyists and other friendly groups won't "drain their own pond".

However, in these transformed proverbs the recipient can easily recognize a language game due to the preservation of the second part of the proverb (*nevypustit svůj vlastní rybník* [not to drain its pond]). Lexical substitution further enhances the expressive potential of the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP, which allows the speaker to implement a discrediting communication strategy.

The proverb *kapři si sami svůj rybník nikdy nevypustí* (carp never empty their pond) can also be extended by adding lexical components, but nevertheless, it remains easily recognizable by native speakers due to its clear association with the original lexeme. The addition of lexical components also contributes to a stronger connection of the proverb with the context and actualization of the conceptual metaphor POLITICIAN IS A CARP, which emphasizes the speaker's position. For example, a politician can refine the meaning of a proverb by using specific attributes (*pražští kapři* [Prague carp], *byrokratičtí kapři* [bureaucratic carp], *bruselští kapři* [Brussels carp] etc.):

¹⁶ Radim Fiala: Premiér Andrej Babiš se sice chlubí tím, jak se mu podařilo zastavit unijní kvóty na imigranty, ale Evropská komise žaluje naši zemi... [on-line]. <<https://www.spd.cz/4897-radim-fiala-premier-andrej-babis-se-sice-chlubi-tim-jak-se-mu-podarilo-zastavit-unijni-kvoty-na-imigranty-ale-evropska-komise-zaluje-nasi-zemi-a-zada-soudni-dvur-evropske-unie/>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

¹⁷ Ods.cz 2013b: Tři důvody proč nevolit Andreje Babiše. [on-line]. <<https://www.ods.cz/clanek/5953-tri-duvody-proc-nevolit-andreje-babise>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

¹⁸ Milan Blahák: Být starostou není zaměstnání, ale poslání! [on-line]. <<https://www.starostove-nezavisli.cz/regiony/jihomoravsky-kraj/milan-blahak-byt-starostou-neni-zamestnani-ale-poslani>> [cit. 15-09-2023]

- (13) *Diktatura Bruselu je silně ukotvena, globalisté se moci jen tak nevzdají a byrokratičtí kapři si svůj rybník nevypustí, ale proč to nezkusit.*¹⁹
The dictatorship of Brussels is firmly entrenched, the globalists will not just give up power and the bureaucratic carp will not drain their pond, but why not try.
- (14) *Šance samozřejmě existuje, ale bude vyžadovat nemalou odvahu centrálních orgánů ke zrealizování podstatných změn v rámci financování krajů. A osobně pochybuji, že si pražští kapři vypustí v dohledné době rybník.*²⁰
Of course, there is a chance, but it will require considerable courage on the part of the central authorities to implement substantial changes in the financing of the regions. And I personally doubt that the Prague carp will drain the pond anytime soon.
- (15) *Vize toho, že si bruselští kapři vypustí rybník a vrátí se před Lisabonskou smlouvou, je dosti naivní.*²¹
The vision that the Brussels carp will drain the pond and return to the period before the Treaty of Lisbon is quite naive.

Thus, the inclusion of additional components to the proverb clarifies the characteristics of the politicians to intensify the pragmatic effect of the statement.

Sometimes in the speeches of politicians, several components are added to concretize the meaning of the proverb in the context. In the following example, the speaker describes in detail the characteristics of politicians (their number and their workplace), whose activities he evaluates negatively:

- (16) *Pokus naroubovat plastovou vládu na rozeklaný kmen dolní komory Parlamentu se asi neujme. Také najít 120 kaprů, kteří by si měli vypustit svůj rybník ve Sněmovní ulici, bude svízelné.*²²
An attempt to graft a plastic government onto the forked trunk of the lower house of Parliament probably won't work. Also, it will be difficult to find 120 carp that have to empty their pond in Parliament Street.

¹⁹ Radim Fiala: Někteří naši kritici a odpůrci říkají, že náš postoj k Evropské unie je nejasný a že jednou z ní chceme vystoupit, a podruhé ji chceme reformovat [on-line]. <<https://www.spd.cz/5931-radim-fiala-nekteri-nasi-kritici-a-odpurci-rikaji-ze-nas-postoj-k-evropske-unie-je-nejasny-a-ze-jednou-z-ni-chceme-vystoupit-a-podruhe-ji-chceme-reformovat>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

²⁰ Hejtman M. Novák: Kraj má s firmou společné průsečíky [on-line]. <<https://socdem.cz/aktualne/aktuality/hejtman-m-novak-kraj-ma-s-firmou-spolecne-pruseciky/>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

²¹ Radim Fiala: Autor zahraničního programu Trikolóry Václav Klaus řekl... [on-line]. <https://www.spd.cz/6913-radim-fiala-autor-zahranicniho-programu-trikolory-vaclav-klaus-rekl-ze-vystoupeni-cr-z-eu-je-detinsky-navrh-ktery-muze-prosazovat-pouze-nezodpovedny-clovek> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

²² Letní poselství. [on-line]. <<https://www.ods.cz/os.benesov/clanek/5169-letni-poselstvi>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

So, the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP is used by the speaker as part of a discrediting strategy to point out a set of negative characteristics inherent in his political opponents (passivity, laziness, self-interest), who do not want to change the current problematic situation, but use it to their advantage.

4. Conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE

In the Czech political discourse, the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP is realized in opposition to the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE.

A pike (*štika*) is a predatory freshwater fish with jagged jaws, figuratively a predatory, aggressive, or otherwise persuasive person. The phraseological units *být štikou v rybníce* (to be a pike in the pond) and *dělat štiku v rybníce* (to do pike in the pond) mean ‘to cause a stir, to drive someone away’.²³ The pike is a smart and fast predator that can hunt even in murky water. It differs from the carp not only in nature but also in appearance: it has a sharp, elongated mouth and a strong, muscular body. The pike plays a big role in pond farming, so it is deliberately added to ponds to increase carp production. Pikes usually catch mostly small fish in ponds, so the carp get more nutrients. Pikes also catch sick or injured fish and therefore affect the overall health of the fish in the pond.

The conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE is based on the general idea of the pike: it is a predator (aggressive behavior of politicians, lack of fear), it has sharp teeth (a dangerous and cruel politician), it is very fast (an active person, full of initiative), smart and cunning (a politician hides their intentions, they are not honest).

Politicians can simultaneously use the conceptual metaphors A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE and A POLITICIAN IS A CARP in the same context when creating the “friend-foe” opposition and implementing presentational and discrediting communication strategies. The opposition “friend-foe” takes on a special meaning during the adoption of important political decisions (elections, reforms, laws, etc.), crises (e.g. migration crisis), conflicts, wars, etc. By using the metaphors A POLITICIAN IS A CARP and A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE the speaker, on the one hand, points to the lesser importance of the activities of his or her political opponents, their weakness and passivity, and on the other hand, expresses his or her superiority and contempt.

²³ Slovník spisovného jazyka českého [on-line]. <<https://ssjc.ujc.cas.cz/search.php?hledej=Hledat&heslo=%C5%A1tika&sti=EMPTY&where=hesla&hsubstr=no>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

In the following examples, the speaker accuses his political opponents of inaction, distances himself from them, and in this way presents himself in a favorable light. The idiom *být štikou v rybníce* (to be a pike in the pond) can be simultaneously used with the proverb *kapři si sami svůj rybník nikdy nevypustí* (carp never empty their own pond) to increase the expressiveness and emotionality of the politician's speech:

- (17) *Přesto do Senátu kandiduji, a to proto, že „senátorští kapři“ si sami senátní rybník nevypustí. Než se tak stane, chci být v tom senátním rybníce štikou, která ty líné senátorské kapříky bude prohánět. A věřím, že se nám – zatím té mlčící většině – podaří senátní rybník vypustit.*²⁴
 Nevertheless, I am running for the Senate, and that is because the “senator carp” will not drain the senate pond themselves. Before that happens, I want to be the pike in that senate pond, chasing away those lazy senator carp. And I believe that we – for now, the silent majority – will manage to drain the Senate pond.

With the help of the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE, this politician distinguishes himself (active, initiative, modern) from other politicians (passive, outdated, backward). Thereby he points out that he is not one of them and condemns their opinions and behavior.

In the following example, the idiom *být štikou v rybníce* (to be a pike in a pond) is combined with the idiom *obrůstat mech* (to overgrow with moss), which has the meaning of growing old or being backward:²⁵ this leads to the intensification of both meanings in the politician's speech. The speaker focuses the recipient's attention to the positive features of his behavior compared to other politicians, while at the same time accusing them of passivity and inaction:

- (18) *Rozhodně nemíním v Senátu „obrůstat“ mech, ale chci být, pro leckoho možná nepohodlnou, štikou v politickém rybníce.*²⁶
 I definitely don't intend to be “overgrown” with moss in the Senate, but I want to be, perhaps uncomfortable for many people, a pike in the political pond.

During the implementation of the discrediting communication strategy, the speaker uses the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE to accuse the opponent of immoral (dishonest and overly aggressive) and illegal

²⁴ Bohatství našeho kraje pochází z poctivé práce. [on-line]. <<https://www.kscm.cz/cs/aktualne/aktuality/bohatstvi-naseho-kraje-pochazi-z-poctive-prace>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

²⁵ Slovník spisovného jazyka českého [on-line]. <<https://ssjc.ujc.cas.cz/search.php?hledaj=Hledat&heslo=mech&sti=EMPTY&where=hesla&hsubstr=no>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

²⁶ Kdu 2012: Senátorský volební speciál 2012. [on-line]. <<https://www.kdu.cz/aktualne/archiv/2012/senatorsky-volebni-special-2012>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

behavior (using “dirty practices” to achieve the goal), his posing threat to the political system. In the following example, the politician points out the dishonest behavior of his opponent (an insidious predator feeds his victim, luring him to attack him), which evokes various negative emotions, such as fear, indignation, and resentment. The speaker uses the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE (in this context A POLITICIAN IS A PREDATOR) to create an image of the enemy and actualize the “friend-foe” dichotomy, leading to intimidation of the addressee:

- (19) *Tak se nám v tom politickém rybníku usídlil pěkný dravec. Andrej Babiš se rozhodl, že to tady převálcuje – ať to stojí, co to stojí. Svoje politické krmivo dává s rozmyslem, aby se mu hejno nepřezralo, ale aby pěkně pomaličku nabývalo na váze.*²⁷

So a big predator settled in our political pond. Andrej Babiš has decided that he is going to rout – no matter what it costs. He carefully doses his political fodder so that his flock does not overgorge but slowly gains weight.

The speaker considers himself among the inhabitants of the pond, in which a “foreign element” has appeared (a predatory fish – a pike). In this metaphorical scenario, the image of a dangerous predator with specific human qualities (a well-thought-out strategy for fattening the prey) helps to create a clear negative assessment of the actions of one’s political opponent.

5. Conclusion

The analysis allows us to show the mapping of the POLITICS IS A POND metaphor in the Czech political discourse in the following way:

Source domain: POND	Target domain: POLITICS
1. Closed water reservoir boundaries	1. A closed political system
2. Stagnant (or standing) water	2. Stagnation of the political system, low mobility, unchanging situation
3. Muddy water	3. Opaqueness of political decisions
4. Smelly water	4. Bad state of politics, illegal behavior, corruption
5. Main inhabitants: 5.1 Carp 5.2 Pikes	5. Main actors: 5.1 Passive and lazy politicians who benefit from their position and do not want to implement any changes 5.2 Active, enterprising politicians who want to implement reforms but behave aggressively

²⁷ Korupce v přímém přenosu, nové směřování EU a posilování vzájemných vztahů. [online]. <<https://www.ods.cz/profil/478-stanislav-blaha/clanek/11112-korupce-v-primem-prenosu-nove-smerovani-eu-a-posilovani-vzajemnych-vztahu>> Accessed Oct 12, 2021.

The conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A POND is used in political speeches to describe a domestic situation that suffers from serious problems (mainly corruption) and needs to be changed. Using the conceptual metaphor A POLITICIAN IS A CARP, the speaker points out the passivity and laziness of his or her political opponents, their backwardness, and the desire to maintain their place in the political system at all costs. The use of the conceptual metaphors A POLITICIAN IS A PIKE and A POLITICIAN IS A CARP in the same context contributes to the creation of the “friend-foe” opposition, which helps politicians to inspire greater trust and sympathy among voters and stand out favorably against the background of their opponents.

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Streszczenie: W artykule poddano analizie metafory pojęciowe POLITYKA TO STAW, POLITYKA TO KARP i POLITYKA TO SZCZUPAK, obecne w czeskim dyskursie politycznym. Badanie przeprowadzono odwołując się do teorii metafory pojęciowej oraz zasad etnolingwistyki i lingwistyki kognitywnej. Pokazano, jak te metafory pojęciowe funkcjonują w czeskim językowym obrazie świata i jakie aspekty domen źródłowych wykorzystywane są w portretowaniu domen docelowych (polityki i polityków). Metafora POLITYKA TO STAW pomaga w przedstawieniu problematycznej i wymagającej zmian sytuacji w polityce krajowej. Metafor POLITYKA TO STAW, POLITYKA TO KARP i POLITYKA TO SZCZUPAK zazwyczaj używa się, by zbudować przydatną w dyskursie politycznym opozycję „przyjaciół-wróg”. Metafora POLITYKA TO KARP uwypukla bierność i lenistwo polityków, a także ich niechęć i niezdolność do wprowadzania zmian. Metafora POLITYKA TO SZCZUPAK może wskazywać zarówno na pozytywne cechy polityków (aktywność, energię, podejmowanie inicjatyw), jak i ich cechy negatywne (chciwość, egoizm, okrucieństwo). Stosowanie kulturowo uwarunkowanych metafor pozwala politykom ustanowić bliską relację z odbiorcami w celu poszerzenie kręgu swoich wyborców.

Słowa kluczowe: etnolingwistyka; lingwistyka kognitywna; dyskurs polityczny; polityka czeska; metafora pojęciowa; mapowanie metaforyczne; światopogląd językowy; strategia mowy; POLITYKA; STAW; KARP; SZCZUPAK