

**STRESZCZENIE ROZPRAWY DOKTORSKIEJ W JĘZYKU
ANGIELSKIM**

**Mechanizm Zoosemii w Angielskim Słangu Więziennym: Diachroniczne
Studium Przypadku Synonimów Rzeczownika *Złodziej***

**The Phenomenon of Zoosemy in English Prison Slang: A Diachronic Study
of *Thief* Synonyms**

The main goal of the thesis is to analyse the phenomenon of zoosemic semantic changes in English prison slang, which form the core of the mechanism of metaphorisation in this particular language variety. The subject deserves closer scrutiny for several reasons, the first of which is the fact that prison slang, similarly to other language varieties, penetrates standard languages. Hence, it is necessary to account for the mechanisms which govern this language variety, and – in particular – those responsible for meaning alterations since ephemerality is one of the key features of prison slang. Secondly, the issue of metaphorisation, and – in particular – the problems of zoosemy tend to receive merely fragmentary treatment in linguistic research conducted in this language variety. Among the problems discussed in the thesis one finds the analysis of the phenomenon of slang and prison slang, with main emphasis being on their etymology and functions, anti-society of prisoners, meaning alterations and the methodology of their analysis, mechanism of metaphorisation, and the discussion of the main tenets of cognitive linguistics, being the framework for the analysis of the twelve animals-specific nouns functioning as synonyms for *thief*. Moreover, wherever it was possible, an attempt was made to analyse parallel semantic changes in Polish prison slang. Apart from the analysis of nominal senses of animals-specific lexical items, in the thesis an attempt was made to analyse several cases of verbal zoosemy, including merely the examples of animals verbs which developed their novel senses as a result of the combination of the mechanisms of metaphorisation and metonymy.

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