

RESEARCH ON PHRASEOLOGY  
IN EUROPE AND ASIA:  
**FOCAL ISSUES**  
**OF PHRASEOLOGICAL**  
**STUDIES**



INTERCONTINENTAL DIALOGUE ON PHRASEOLOGY  
University of Białystok, Poland & Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan

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## Preface

Even though there has been a significant increase in the interest in phraseology over the past years, there has been relatively little intercontinental cooperation in research in this field. In July 2009 thanks to the initiative of Professor Katsumasa Yagi the symposium *Phraseology 2009*, in which European and Asian phraseologists participated, took place at Kwansei Gakuin University in Nishinomiya, Japan. The symposium rendered it possible for them to exchange views on phraseology. The project, inspired by Professor Yagi's idea, was thought to be a continuation of the symposium. It was started in 2009 at the University of Białystok in Poland with the cooperation of the Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan. The present volume is a result of a two-year cooperation of phraseologists from Europe and Asia.

The volume is composed of three parts, which reflect the relations of phraseology with corpus linguistics and lexicography (Part One), contrastive linguistics and translation (Part Two), cultural studies and education (Part Three). They are preceded by the section *Dialogue on Phraseology*, composed of two papers by eminent scholars in the field of phraseology, whose contribution to the research on phraseology is exceptional. Professor Wojciech Chlebda works at the University of Opole in Poland and specializes in phraseology and phraseography, while Katsumasa Yagi is a professor at Kwansei Gakuin University in Japan and his research interests cover such areas, as phraseology, lexicography and corpus linguistics. Professor Chlebda's paper titled *The Identity of Phraseology* focuses on the need for an in-depth metaphraseological reflexion regarding the identity of phraseology as a discipline of science, while Professor Yagi's in his paper titled *Old and New Phraseo-*

*logical Units: Currency Assessment and Mechanism of Formation* discusses the currency of phraseological units, illustrating the presentation of the problem with some examples of both new and old idioms.

Part One, titled *Corpus Linguistics, Lexicography and Phraseology*, composed of eight articles, starts with the paper by Kaoru Akasu who presents *Eiwa Katsuyo Daijiten*, the first dictionary of English collocations in Japan. Anneli Baran discusses the issue of semantic ambiguity of phraseology, showing that certain changes in meaning and use of well-known Estonian phraseological units have occurred. Ai Inoue discusses similar functions of selected phraseological units, analyzing the cases of the patterns 'and + conjunctive adverb' and 'but + conjunctive adverb', illustrated with examples from corpora. Priscilla Ishida focuses on corpus data and the treatment of idioms in Japanese monolingual dictionaries, arguing that it is necessary to make use of existing theoretical framework and the results of corpus analysis combined with traditional methods of linguistic analysis, so that dictionaries could provide reliable descriptions of idioms. Bogusław Nowowiejski deals with modern Polish sports phraseology excerpted from various phraseological dictionaries of the Polish language. The focal issue Makoto Sumiyoshi's paper is irregular syntax in phraseology, mainly the author analyzes the case of *have until ... till to do*, drawing attention to the phraseological nature of the construction. Naohiro Takizawa discusses the phenomenon of the deletion of the appositive conjunction *that*, illustrating the analysis with corpus material. Haixia Wang presents the analysis of different textual functions performed by the phrase *the thing is ...* based on the analysis of corpora.

Part Two, *Contrastive Linguistics, Translation and Phraseology*, is composed of eight papers. Urszula Andrejewicz and Robert Wołosz analyze phraseological units containing a selected verbal constituent meaning 'to seat' in Polish (phrases with *siedzieć*) and Hungarian (phrases with *ül*) in a contrastive perspective. Elena Berthemet concentrates on cognitive, cultural and rhetorical motivation of idioms and proverbs discussed from a cross-linguistic point of view with a view to shedding light on the presence of cultural markers in the units, illustrating the problems with English, French, German and Russian examples. Sabine Fiedler discusses the influence of English on German phraseology, basing the discussion on the material from two German corpora. Anita Naciscione presents a cognitive approach to translating terminological phraseological units, which allows for recognizing metaphor as a technique of abstract reasoning in the formation of terminology, which means that its translation is a cognitive operation of the mind. Antonio Pamies-Bertrán analyzes some semantic mechanisms underlying phraseological units of figurative character, belonging to subcorpus of faunal phraseology in several



language, with a focus on their cultural motivation, contracted with the opposite one, i.e. the influence of phrasicon on culture. Agata Rozumko's paper is devoted to a contrastive presentation of proverb introducers in Polish and English: the forms and usage of proverb introducers are compared as well as their frequencies, with some references to English and Polish cultural history. Joanna Szerszunowicz focuses on equivalence of Polish, English and Italian pragmatic idioms with faunal constituents, aiming at proposing a typology of cross-linguistic equivalent. Ivana Vidović-Bolt writes on the newly coined Croatian unit *kamen razdora* and analyzes selected Croatian and Polish variants of the idiom.

Part Three, *Cultural Studies, Education and Phraseology*, contains four papers, the first of which, written by Elżbieta Awramiuk, sheds light on phraseology in Poles' linguo-cultural education, with a special focus on the changes which have occurred over the last twenty years – since the time when the statehood transformation took place. Shin'ichiro Ishikawa analyzes part of the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English, which is being currently compiled by the author, with a view to exploring the relation between the frequencies of particular words and phrases with the writer's L2 proficiency. Takaaki Kanzaki analyzes gender-related Japanese phraseological units, discussing the Japanese culture through idioms connected with man and woman and demonstrating that some of them are culture-bound. Kate O'Callaghan's paper contains an analysis of two self-contained Okinawan Karuta Corpora, conducted from a phraseological perspective, presenting the culture portrayed through the phrasemes found in the sets.

As the coordinator of the IDP project, I would like to express my thanks to all persons involved in the project, especially Professor Katsumasa Yagi, whose inspiration, knowledge, experience and help were vital for the project, without whose enthusiasm for intercontinental scientific cooperation and great passion this project would not have been possible, all contributors, who devoted their time to the project, the Dean of the University of Białystok, Bogusław Nowowiejski, who provided financial support and offered his advice, the Dean of the Kwansai Gakuin University, Professor Takaaki Kanzaki for his constant encouragement – with special thanks to the three persons for agreeing to co-edit the volume.

I feel very grateful to Professor Wojciech Chebda and Professor Katsumasa Yagi who agreed to write contributions to the section *Dialogue on Phraseology* irrespective of numerous duties and obligations performed. Their participation in the project is very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank the reviewers: Professor Jan Kida from the University of Rzeszów, Professor Tadeusz Piotrowski from the Philological

School of Higher Education in Wrocław, and Professor Dorota Szymaniuk from the University of Białystok.

Special thanks go to my colleagues from EUROPHRAS, the Japan Association for Phraseology and the International Association of Paremiology for their cooperation and moral support.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all persons who showed their kind interest in the initiative, hoping that they will take part in the second edition of the project *Intercontinental Dialogue on Phraseology*.

June 2011

Joanna Szerszunowicz  
IDP Coordinator  
Białystok

# **DIALOGUE ON PHRASEOLOGY**



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## **The Identity of Phraseology**

**Abstract.** There is a significant disproportion between the traditional description of the subject of phraseology (as a science about fixed combinations of words) and real objects of research done by phraseologists. It is not about the kinds and genres of verbal phenomena classified as belonging to phraseology (from idioms to cliché texts), but about defining the scope of activities, aims and tasks, which theoretical phraseology sets today and may set in the future. There is a need for an in-depth metaphraseological reflection regarding the identity of phraseology as a discipline of science. The author proposes to perceive phraseology first of all among human-oriented sciences, substantiating this proposal by means of the following statements: 1. phraseology is an active element of mental processes of a man; 2. phraseology participates in categorization and evaluation processes; 3. phraseology comes into existence as a result of onomasiological needs of a man and his community; 4. phraseology is a dialectical crossing point of opposing elements of human activity: limitation and freedom of a man as well as individualism of one and the pressure of his community. Thanks to this phraseology can be a speculum into hidden mechanisms of mental processes of the individual and into the essence of social relations of the individual with his environment, and the identity of phraseology as science is additionally enriched by philosophical, theoretical-cognitive and anthropological dimensions.

**Key words:** *paradigm, identity, theoretical phraseology, language phraseology, human sciences*

“Where do I come from? What am I? Where am I going?” – these Napoleon’s words from Saint Helena contains a personal autoreflexion program of its kind, inner self-recognition of a man, who is searching the essence of own identity. Such autoidentification consists not only in the sole introspection, but also, within its duration, in an inner split of a man into the subject conducting the self-viewing – and the one that is the object of viewing. One, who performs the act, has to achieve a distance to himself – to perceive his “I” from such a distance, which renders it possible to evaluate and determine

similarity of this "I" with one set of characteristics and values as well as its disjunction from another set or other sets. This evaluation and stating is the contents of self-awareness of his "I".

"Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" – this words in turn should move from the title of Paul Gauguin's picture to research workshops of the sciences, whose researchers want to develop their disciplines in a conscious manner – conscious of their roots and prospects, their objectives and tasks, their possibilities and limitations, their connections with other disciplines, but also their distinction from other disciplines, in a word – their scientific identity. "The question regarding the identity of scientific discipline – writes Teresa Hejnicka-Bezwińska (1989: 9) – usually appears in moments critical for its development. A critical state is the one, in which there is a tendency to change the scientific paradigm dominant at the moment". In fact, it is so, but the questions regarding the identity of a discipline, which is studied, should also, as I think, accompany the researcher every day, if only he wants his work to be a self-aware activity, not an inertly repeated one day by day. It requires the before mentioned self-viewing, autoreflexion and the evaluation of one's own research discipline – not only its achievements or shortcomings, but, first of all, the base: the object and subject of its research. It also concerns researchers dealing with theoretical phraseology.

Using these two words alone is marked with the character of self-aware value activity, since they are to clearly divide two fundamentally different meanings of the word *phraseology*. "Theoretical phraseology" is a scientific discipline having its research object and subject, its methodological apparatus and extremely complicated notional-terminological apparatuses (cf. Nowakowska 2005: 19–23). "Language phraseology" is a collection of particular fragments of verbal tissue (language matter, language substance) constituting the research object of theoretical phraseology. The relation of these two terms is approximately analogous to the relation between the terms "botany" and "plants" or "zoology" and "animals", but the fact that such disparate, in a way even contradictory contents are met in the word "phraseology", is a circumstance not fostering the precision of articulation. The reflection regards not mentioned "fragments of verbal tissue", usually called phraseologisms (thus not language phraseology), but the essence of the discipline called here theoretical phraseology; therefore, the reflection is of metaphraseological character.

The first question to be reflected on in this way is the question regarding what constitutes the object and subject of theoretical phraseology research. Since in Poland there is no monograph of general-phraseology character

(having a few monographs of “aspectual” character, to say so) – which is surprising – one consults encyclopedic works, whose definitions describe the object of phraseology briefly: “Phraseology. [...] 2. A collection of phraseological units constituting part of lexical store of a given language” (A. M. Lewicki in: EJO 162); “Phraseology: [...] 2. the set of multiword combinations characteristic of a given language of this type [i.e. fixed]” (R. Laskowski in: EJP 103). In the unchangeably valid work by Andrzej M. Lewicki from 1992 under the characteristic title “Zakres frazeologii” (lit. The Scope of Phraseology) one finds a detailed enumeration of types of phraseological units understood as “discontinuous word combinations, to some extent irregular and socially fixed” (Lewicki 2003: 158). In studies and sketches by Stanisław Bąba (2009) forming volume published under even more promising title “Frazologia polska” (lit. Polish Phrasology) the analysis enters immediately *in medias res*, which is also symptomatic, since many phraseologists do not feel the need to define separately the object of phraseological research, treating it as a kind of obviousness, a self-evident thing.

It seems that regarding the object of phraseological research, actually, there is no dispute between linguists: the difference of opinions concerns the parametres of the “fragments of language matter”, the criteria of distinguishing of these fragments, their boundaries and characteristics, that the research object for a phraseologist is the materia of language seems to be undeniable. The analysis of the contents of three issues of “Materiały do bibliografii frazeologii polskiej” (lit. Materials to Bibliography to Polish Phrasology) by Stanisław Bąba (1998–2008) makes one realize how many works remain in the sphere of the research object understood in this way and do not go beyond its borders. They constitute a trend, which I called “centripetal” (“linguocentric”).

My own metaphraseological reflection was developing in the orbit of research on oxymoron as a linguistic means of the cognition of non-lingual reality (Chlebda 1985), so within the scope of gnoseological research. Oxymorons – “discontinuous word combinations” of syntactically bound and semantically opposed components, combinations, which is worth adding, not infrequently fixed in given discourses, thus, fossilized (*żywa śmierć* (lit. alive death), *wesoły smutek* (lit. happy sadness), *czarne światło* (lit. black light), *czarna biel* (lit. black whiteness)) – were referred by me, on one side, to the plane of logical categories of human thinking, on the other – to the plane of phenomena of non-lingual reality. The result of these references is not important here: what is important was the direction of moving from language matter to mental matter and physical matter, i.e. the direction of “centrifugal” progression.

And it is in this trend, in which the language matter is material not only for human speaking, but also human thinking, and in further consequences – also a programmer of his actions, the meeting with Andrzej Bogusławski's language units theory (1976) took place – the conception, distinguishing two areas in the world of language activity of a man: the sphere of component system units which are already shaped in the nominative function (performing this function irrespective of their one or multiword structure) – as well as the sphere of stating about the world by means of the very single- and multiword units, configured with one another depending on the current situation of speaking. There is a sphere of various construction elements – and the sphere of production, constructing statements about reality from the material. The point of drawing the border by Bogusławski meant this “change of paradigm”, which Hejnicka-Bezwińska wrote about: in the paradigm valid up to that moment the border line separated words (given to lexicology) from phraseologisms (given to phraseology). In the new paradigm words, word groups and sentences were on one side of the border, gaining the status of language units, under the condition that they were characterized by fixedness and repeatedness. On the other side of the border the unlimited space of unit configuration opens, where they can be configured with one another into utterance strings (in texts). The paradigm shift of this border has immeasurable consequences for a number of disciplines of science.

In the year of 1989 Bogusławski, continuing the analyses conducted since mid 70s, explicitly related the notion of “language unit” to the term “phraseology”, stating at the same time that the relation “makes the problem of phraseology simply a central linguistic issue” (Bogusławski 1989: 18). The scholar explains that if a “preceding all the others” objective of linguistics is the registration of language units, then the task leading to it, “true, crucial research problem”, is the penetration of collection of word strings and separating strings which are language products (configurations, effects of on an ad hoc basis combined construction elements) from multiword combinations, already shaped and constituting the before mentioned construction material of language creation. The theoretical and practical linguistic task is to distinguish multiword units – since in terms of shape singleword units (words) get distinguished themselves (by means of two-sided spaces). As to the shape, multiword units do not get distinguished themselves; “that is why tracing multiword units is practically the main objective”.

Since “tracing multiword units” is an objective only, evaluating the size of their collection (and at the same time the scale of their participation in the code store of language) may be only intuitive today. Andrzej Bogusławski (1989: 19) evaluates that – contrary to common opinions and to what seems



to be suggested by dictionaries – single words are far fewer than multiword units in language store: words constitute a group of “hundreds of thousands”, while multiwords “go into blatantly big millions”. The notion of “big millions” exceeds our common imaginations, but the first works, whose material base is composed not so much of texts, but “masses of texts”, seem to confirm Bogusławski’s intuitions (see: e.g. Wierchoń 2000, 2005). The fact that the vast majority of language store at a man’s disposal is of phraseological, i.e. fixed, character, has significant and not described yet consequences for understanding human behaviour in his space of communication.

That is why in our reflection we follow the trace of Bogusławski’s thought further, answering the question why this issue so technical, as it may seem, as separating reproducible word strings from irreproducible ones was considered to be “central linguistic issue”. I think that the following reconstruction of Bogusławski’s standpoint: the superior of the process of language units registration is in fact establishing the borders of the system of a given ethnic language, thus its real contents, our language state of possession. Leaving aside whether it is feasible (for an abstract time point probably is), it concerns an at least approximate establishing a scale of what is given to a man in terms of language – both with respect to his cultural heritage and with respect to his starting position for activity in the discourse areas, public space of communication. The cognition of what “is given to a man in terms of language”, allows determining (of course in quantities which are far from mathematical ones) the proportion of what is repeated (thanks to being set by the system) regarding what is only to come into being and what will be created – so a proportion of reproduction and production, reproducibility and creativeness, subordination and crossing borders and overstepping rules. In order to get to know the dimension of the space of our freedom, Bogusławski seems to say, we should get to know the scale of our limitations in speech. I add myself: in our thoughts and in our deeds.

In this way phraseology – the sphere of what is “given in terms of language”, what is not combined freely, what is the domain of imposed schemata – is included in philosophical reflexion on human freedom determinants, more strictly speaking – in the anthropological reflexion on the man’s entanglement in social and cultural matrices, on the scale of submitting and yielding to the pression of schemata and canons, but also on the man’s ability to liberate himself from bounding him restrictions, on the possibility of expressing truly own “I” – a man as an individual and a man as a community. Therefore, theoretical phraseology cannot meet with silence such social systems, in which the setting of word strings into unbreakable language monoliths subjected to obligatory reproduction not only develops

the character of a process spreading through all public discourse of a given community, but it becomes a factor contributing to unreflectiveness of great masses of people, forming imitative-adaptive attitudes on a general social scale. Andrzej M. Lewicki (2003: 29) after André Martinet associates such an attitude with an individual's behaviour, writing:

With an imitative-adaptive attitude the sender of statement reacts to a given situation, imitating own or others' behaviour in situations somehow similar to the communicated one; sometimes even adopting a conventionally (or arbitrarily) established pattern of language behaviour in such situations. With the imitative-adaptive formally complex language sign starts to move closer to signs, which are not motivated by the structure. Phraseology, understood from this point of view, would be a science about transforming complex signs into simple signs, its subject would be all the formal constructions reproduced from memory in an automated way.

But the phenomenon is also of social process character, one of a bidirectional vector: a definite social system favours the transformation of "formally complex signs" into "simple signs" or the mass production of multiword simple signs; but, in feedback, obligatory nature of using such "simple signs" – "formulas from a distribution list", once called so by Michał Głowiński (1990: 13, 20), which are to "maximally limit or even make language choices impossible" – favours the transformation of an autonomous community into unreflexive human mass. Between the level of phraseological "language mass" and level of human behaviour on a social scale there are many in-between links, but there are links of one chain whose continuity can be verified empirically. Therefore, we can finally say that the object of the analyses of theoretical phraseology remains "fixed word units" (understood in one way or another); however, the subject of its research is the whole sphere of man's activity, what regards me "in my thoughts and in my words and in what I have done", to quote a known and useful formula.

The quotation makes us aware of the fact that the common prayer formula anticipates what the contemporary humanities emphasize so strongly: speaking, thinking, and acting constitutes a triuniform whole. As Jerome S. Bruner writes (1971: 180),

the gift of speech is the main factor ensuring a man common acting. What is more, a man starts to use it at the moment, in which common acting is for his immature organism an indispensable survival condition. (...). But learning the language is at the same time learning notions. The price, which we pay for the gift of using the language, consists in the fact that together with learning a language we also learn to act the categories of notions codified in language.

If – in addition – we quote from our native humanistic tradition already an old, but how foresighted thought expressed by Witold Doroszewski (1970: 165):

impulses to some actions, at least in embryonic form, are connected with what is thought and imagined. What people think, what they imagined, what and how they say, what and how they think under the influence, what and how they say; how they act under the influence of what they think and say – it is one complex of mutually penetrating, issues, which cannot be separated,

and we become cognizant of the fact that building blocks of “what and how is said” by people, is predominantly language phraseology, we must come to the conclusion that the object of observations, analyses and phraseological description of theoretical phraseology should be not only pure verbal matter of phraseology, but also active and modelling participation of phraseological language store in the sphere of communicative activity space and human interactions in general.

A phraseologist should also realize that “communicative actions” are not limited to “speaking” or “verbal” actions. I repeat my earlier thesis that the term “verbalization” used to describe the materialization of thoughts and communicative intentions of a man is a much advanced simplification, what is thought and intended by people is manifested in the process of multi-canonical coding in various sign matters: verbal, paraverbal and nonverbal; in actual fact, what we want to communicate, get semiotized, and not only verbalized (Chlebda 2004). The conceptualization of human experience spheres, their categorization, hierarchization and evaluation, as well as human statements, through which the conceptualization of the world is expressed, they are realized both in language matter and graphic matter as well as in architectural, musical, ritual and substance of hybrid character, mixed, in a word – with using all form, which semiosphere has. In other words, language phraseology, although it occupies such a large area among human means of expression, does not constitute an isolated enclave, but – in a way which has not been researched to the end – cooperates with some systems of signs serving to express human thoughts. In my opinion, for example, language phraseology and graphia (visual context in the broad sense of the world: drawing, painting, means of film language, etc.), heterogenic substantially, are however homogenic in the sense of being sign matter serving the materialization and the expression of human communicative intentions; thus, they can, and even – in given areas of discursive space – should be researched in close cooperation (see: Члєбдa 2001). In other words, natural environment of phraseology functioning is not only logosphere – the verbal

context in two varieties: spoken and written – but also iconosphere, whose space, still growing in today's culture, encompassing landscape, architecture, interior and exterior design, visual propaganda (and counter-propaganda), "small design" – stamps, postcards, book illustrations, graphic preparation of magazines and occasional texts, shop windows, satirical drawings, etc., at the same time this iconosphere undergoes processes of stereotypization in the same way as logosphere. But it should be added that it also submits to destereotipization processes.

A comparative observation of phenomena and processes occurring in logosphere and iconosphere show that these phenomena and processes have in both spheres their mutual analogues: "formally complex signs" transform themselves into "simple signs" irrespective of substance, which creates them – verbal (the process of phraseologization) or graphic (the process of iconization). Analogous are also reverse acts and processes: dephraseologisation and deiconisation. The organic relation of both spheres and phenomena of processes occurring in them could be followed easily if we had their proper documentation at our disposal – although to such an extent, in which the functioning of phraseology is documented by dictionaries. In this case, however, one should abandon the practice of illustrating the use of phraseologisms with non-authentic sentences (artificially created ones), which is common in dictionaries and demonstrate phraseologisms in original contexts – not only in the sense of accuracy of quotation of the fragment of the text, but and reproducing the phraseologism together with the graphic environment accompanying the context (e.g. reinterpreting the literal meaning of a given phraseologism). The photodocumenting method elaborated by Piotr Wierzchoń (2008) gives hope for the confirmation of the facts of cooperation of language phraseology and graphy. Today this method is mostly used for the purposes of linguochronologization, which does not exclude its possibility to fulfill other functions.

The importance of such documentation is hard to overestimate. Usually when one speaks about dephraseologization (about phraseological modifications, transformations of phraseologisms), one thinks about occasional examples of writers' or journalists' creations of this kind treated as incidental. I would like to perceive phraseologization/dephraseologization as well as iconization/deiconization also (and for some historical periods and/or types of discourse – first of all) as component processes of what I once called Great Stereotypization/Destereotypization all aspects of social life in longer segments of time (e.g. in Poland – the period of authoritarian period/period of building the democratic system). Phraseologization and dephraseologization of word groups are components of processes of a much higher rank,

spreading through the whole semiosphere, which in its essence our communication space is. If we want to know phraseology of a given place and time – the whole phraseology, at the height of its real intentions and meanings – the analysis should cover all the data coming from not only logosphere of this place and time, but also from their iconosphere, taking into consideration the overall context of semiosphere as our communication space. There are the first works analyzing the Polish semiosphere, but they have remained out of phraseological context so far (see: e.g.: Kloch 2006, Piekot 2006, Kosiński 2010). The documentation of these “phraseo-graphic” processes, and more strictly – if one takes into consideration the interpenetration of logosphere and iconosphere – their photodocumentation, today still only hypothetical, is of great importance for research on real dimensions of communicative space.

These are not the only research areas set by the new paradigm of phraseology. Proposing to perceive language phraseology in the context of man-oriented sciences, seeing the need of more frequent and more thorough references to the assumptions that phraseology is an active component of thinking processes of a man; that phraseology participates in the processes of categorisation and valuation of reality; that phraseology is called into being by onomasiological needs of a man and his community; that phraseology participates in the formation of individual and collective identity; but above all – that phraseology is a dialectical crossing point of two opposite elements of human activity: limitation and freedom of a man as well as his individualism and pressure of his community. Thanks to this language phraseology can be a speculum into hidden mechanisms of mental-language processes of an individual and into the essence of social relations of the individual with his environment, and the identity of theoretical phraseology is additionally enriched by the philosophical, theorio-cognitive and anthropological dimensions.

The scale of the research area drawn here can provoke objections regarding blurring of the identity of phraseology. However, the object of phraseology does not change: the collections of multiword language units remain the object. What is more, two perspectives of the perception of phraseology – “centrifugal” and “centripetal” (“linguocentric”) – not only do not exclude each other, but on the contrary: they complement each other. What is changed is the subject of theoretical phraseology: the scale of context, in which language phraseology occurs, and the kind of questions, which with reference to phraseology can (or should) be posed, and are posed too rarely, as I think, in fear of effacing or blurring the boundaries of phraseological nature. Meanwhile, the reflection, by means of which Dariusz Kosiński (2010: 19) defends

himself against the accusation of spreading the notion “theatre” onto rituals, rites, shows, manifestations, performances, can also be related to phraseology and phraseological research:

I realize that with the risk of “notion flood” and dissolution of the discipline in allism is connected with such broadening of the basic notion [“theatre”]. “When one researches all, nothing is researched” – remembering this warning and not disregarding it, I dare to think that that nowadays a bigger risk is self-limitation, which in the vast majority of cases leads teatralogy to deal only with what is within historically defined, today already strongly anachronic boundaries of theatre, set most frequently by the institution or a given kind of language practice.

Let us allow phraseology to become a real “central linguistic issue”. Let us allow it to become the philological keystone of man-oriented sciences.

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## Tożsamość frazeologii

### Streszczenie

Istnieje poważna dysproporcja między tradycyjnym określeniem przedmiotu frazeologii (jako nauki o stałych związkach wyrazowych) a realnymi obiektami badań podejmowanych przez frazeologów. Rzecz nie w rodzajach czy gatunkach fenomenów werbalnych zaliczanych do frazeologii językowej (od idiomów po teksty kliszowane), lecz w określeniu zakresu działań, celów i zadań, jakie frazeologia teoretyczna stawia dzisiaj i może stawiać przed sobą w przyszłości. Potrzebna jest poważna refleksja metafrazeologiczna nad tożsamością frazeologii jako dziedziny wiedzy. Autor proponuje postrzeganie frazeologii językowej przede wszystkim w szeregu nauk o człowieku, uzasadniając tę propozycję następującymi założeniami: 1. frazeologia jest aktywnym składnikiem procesów myślowych człowieka; 2. frazeologia uczestniczy w procesach kategoryzowania i wartościowania rzeczywistości; 3. frazeologię powołują do życia potrzeby onomazjologiczne człowieka i jego wspólnoty; 4. frazeologia jest dialektycznym punktem przecięcia się przeciwstawnych pierwiastków aktywności ludzkiej: ograniczoności i wolności człowieka oraz indywidualizmu jednostki i presji jego wspólnoty. Dzięki temu frazeologia językowa może być wizerunkiem w ukryte mechanizmy procesów myślowo-językowych jednostki i w istotę społecznych relacji jednostki z jej otoczeniem, a tożsamość frazeologii jako nauki wzbogaca się dodatkowo o wymiar filozoficzny, teoriopoznawczy i antropologiczny.



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## Old and New Phraseological Units: Currency Assessment and Mechanism of Formation

**Abstract.** Living languages change as time changes. New phraseological units (hence PUs) are being constantly created in English while we are not aware of them. *Comes at a cost* is one of the many examples of new PUs, while PUs like *How goes the enemy*, *as far as in me lies* and *I'm easy* are becoming old-fashioned or obsolescent. Following the Introduction (section 1), in section 2, we will discuss how to assess the currency of PUs which have long being recorded in dictionaries like *She came to complain about her husband and really bent my ear!* and others. In section 3, we will discuss the meaning of “comes at a cost” and how it was formed. In section 4, we will discuss “no sooner than” which seems to be taking over “as soon as”. In section 5, we will discuss a fairly new PU “be about” or “A is about B” construction as in “What is phraseology about?” with the generic subject and how it is different from a simple collocation [a discussion] + [about phraseology] as in “The discussion *was about* phraseology”. We will also discuss the interpretation of the idiomatic “be about” with the definite subject noun phrases.

**Key words:** *English phraseological units, currency, new emergence, process of formation*

### 1. Introduction

There are two reasons for dictionaries to become out of date: one, it takes time to collect materials of the changing language, to analyze them and edit them; two, it takes time even for patient and highly sensitive minds to become aware of changes in the language. Despite those difficulties, learner's dictionaries like MED<sup>2</sup>, COBUILD<sup>5</sup>, LDOCE<sup>5</sup>, OALD<sup>8</sup>, LAAD<sup>2</sup> and CALD<sup>3</sup> are constantly keeping track of the linguistic changes and updating their contents.

Let us take a look at the descriptions of the verb “commit” as an example. It was used as a central verb of a PU “to commit to the fire or the flames”.

(We will refer to any sequence of words with various degrees fixedness, including idioms, set phrases, proverbs, constructions, etc.) Here is a short list of dictionaries currently on the market which give the meaning of “assign for destruction” to “commit”.

- (1) OAD: (usu. foll. by **to**) entrust or consign for: a safe keeping (*I commit him to your care*). **b** (usu. foll. by **to**) treatment, usu. destruction (*committed the book to the flames*).
- (2) Web.3: to put into a place for disposal or safekeeping (*commit the papers to the fire*) (*commit his body to the earth*)
- (3) MWCD<sup>11</sup>: to put into a place for disposal or safekeeping.
- (4) CED<sup>5</sup>: to surrender, esp. for destruction: *she committed the letter to the fire*.
- (5) ECED: ASSIGN FOR DESTRUCTION to give something over for destruction or disposal
- (6) NODE: *committed to the flames*

If we look into the entry of “commit” in COD from the first edition to the latest 11<sup>th</sup> edition, we will find that it had the sense of “entrust or consign for treatment or safe keeping (to person, his care, to writing, MEMORY, *the earth, the waves, the flames*)” from the first edition (1911) to the seventh edition (1982), and the definition was simplified to “entrust or consign for: **b** treatment, usu. destruction (*committed the book to the flames*)” in the eighth (1990) and ninth (1995) editions. The tenth (1999) and eleventh (2004) editions eliminated this sense and example altogether.

It is interesting to note, however, that the changes of the meaning of “commit” did not occur at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the changes of the descriptions of the word in COD would suggest. OED<sup>2</sup> (sv.. COMMIT 2) defines this sense as follows: *To put into some place or receptacle to be kept safe or dealt with in some way; to consign. Obs. exc. in **commit to the earth, to the flames, etc., in which there is now a notion of deliver***. According to this definition, the word in the sense of “consign” is now obsolete and the sense remains only in the idioms “commit to the earth” and “commit to the flames”.

There is only one example of “commit to the flames” found in BNC.

- (7) In Covent Garden, Luttrell tells us, “the image of the French king was made and drawn in a chariot, and over his head in capital letters was wrott, Lewis the greatest tyrant of fourteen”, which they eventually *committed to the flames*.

As the use of the word “wrott” shows, this example is apparently written in an old-fashioned style. Since the data collected for BNC was before 1990, “commit to the flames” must have been already old-fashioned before then. Although it is hardly possible to definitely say when the phrase became out of use, it was already out of date when the eighth edition of COD came out.

The process of the changes in the treatment of this sense of “commit” in COD clearly reflects the change of currency in present-day English, but it seems to be way behind the actual change of the language.

This change of meaning is also reflected in the descriptions in the learner’s dictionaries and none of their latest editions give examples like “to commit the book to the flames”. LDOCE, for example, had this phrase until the third edition (1987) but not any more in the fourth edition (1995). CIDE (the first edition of CALD) (1995) does not have “to commit the book to the flames” nor any sense related to the special meaning of the word. COBUILD has not had this PU from the first edition (1987) to the latest fifth edition (2006). As to OALD, it had it till the fifth edition (1995) but no more since sixth edition (2000).

The different treatment of the sense of “commit” in question in different types of dictionaries is the natural consequence of the different aims of the dictionaries: the role of the learner’s dictionaries is first and foremost to record and describe the English which is currently in use, but general purpose dictionaries do not necessarily commit themselves to this task. According to their advertising jingles of learner’s dictionaries, they incorporate extensive lists of idioms or set phrases, but if a user should check the entries carefully, he or she will find that those lists are by no means exhaustive, because the language is changing too fast for the lexicographers to catch up.

If we compare two different types of dictionaries, i.e., learner’s dictionaries (hence LDs) and general-purpose dictionaries (hence GDPs), we will be able to find PUs passing into oblivion because GDPs have them but LDs do not, while we will be able to find newly recognized PUs because they are listed only in LDs but not in GDPs; and if we compare the descriptions of the same PUs which are both in GDPs and LDs, we may find PUs which have undergone or undergoing changes in their usage and meanings.

## **2. PUs in English passing into oblivion**

Let us consider, first of all, several old-fashioned PUs of interest. They are now almost out of use but many of GDPs keep them without any labels like old-fashioned or obsolete. It is my belief that one of the tasks of phraseologists is to identify old-fashioned and obsolescent PUs on one hand, and to find new PUs on the other. Here are some PUs which have completed their roles in current English and have long forgotten, but still lingering in English dictionaries currently on the market.

### 2.1. *How goes the enemy?*

In SOD<sup>6</sup> (sv. ENEMY), an idiomatic expression *How goes the enemy?* is given to illustrate the use of “enemy” in the sense of “time.” Since *How goes the enemy?* is the only phrase in which “enemy” is used in the sense of “time” and it is difficult to imagine a situation where “how goes” is collocated with “time”, if we follow the definition of the idiom as an expression where “the meanings of the individual words cannot be summed to produce the meaning of the idiomatic expression as a whole” (Crystal (2003: 226)), then the question *How goes the enemy?* is better treated as an idiom. It is of course the editors’ job to decide whether a combination of words is an idiom or simply a collocation of words in which compositional words have special metaphorical meanings even though those senses are not used in any other collocations.

Kirkpatrick (ed.) (2000) has *How goes the enemy?* as an idiom and explains it as follows: *What o’clock is it? Time is the enemy of man, especially to those who are behindhand.* Partridge (1977) explains that it was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but became out of use in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. English-Japanese dictionaries (EJDs) currently on the market, however, have *How goes the enemy?* as an idiom without giving any labels like “old-fashioned” or “obsolescent”.

### 2.2. *I’m easy.*

Here is another idiom which is passing into oblivion. OED<sup>2</sup> (sv. EASY 12c) has *I’m easy.* as a colloquial idiom, which is defined as *I’m ready to comply (with whatever is proposed), without having any strong feelings (about the proposal); I don’t mind one way or the other.* No LDs have this idiom, but most EJDs, which are well known for their conservatism, have this idiom as if they are currently in use. Learners are better advised to forget this idiom and leave it to unabridged dictionaries to keep it for the convenience of the readers of classics.

### 2.3. *As far as in me lies.*

*As far as in me lies*, which is defined as “to the best of my power” is another example which is listed in most of the English dictionaries published by Oxford University Press including ODE<sup>2</sup>, but not in any of LDs. It is almost impossible to find this idiom in any corpora of current English. The only example I found was from Plato’s Dialogue translated in 1900:

- (8) “Tell us, Socrates,” they say; “what are you about? are you going by an act of yours to overturn us – the laws and the whole State, *as far as in you lies?*”

This idiom is now completely out of use.

#### 2.4. “bend a person’s ears” and other idioms

There are many idioms worth investigating about their currency. Let us choose several of them with “ear” in them. See the following short list and think for a while if they are still widely used or not.

- (9) a. She came to complain about her husband and really *bent my ear!*  
 b. The incident *set us by the ears.*  
 c. I would *give my ears* for that.  
 d. *Lend an ear* to what the coach is saying.

Among these four examples, *bend an ear* (9a) is still current in colloquial American English (see DAS<sup>2</sup>, BEND SOMEONE’S EAR). OED<sup>2</sup> cites an example dated 1990 from *the Economist: The purpose was to bend Mr Major’s ear about the impact of the recession now hitting British industry.* This idiom is colloquial and rarely found in written materials.

“Set a person by the ears” is not given a dagger (†) in OED<sup>2</sup>, but it is hard to verify the currency of this idiom in corpora. COD<sup>11</sup> and ODE<sup>2</sup> do not carry this idiom under the heading of “ear”. It is reasonable to assume that this idiom is now old-fashioned or almost obsolete.

“Give one’s ears” (9c) is another idiom which is difficult to find in corpora of current English, though a quote from the psalm *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry.* found in large corpora. In OED<sup>2</sup>, “give ear” is often used to define old fashioned sense of words like “incline” as in *To bend or turn one’s ear(s) towards a speaker, to give ear, listen favourably, attend (to).* This idiom is rarely used except when a writer wants to sound old-fashioned.

“Lent an ear” (9d) is easy to understand because listeners can easily sum up the meanings of the compositional words. This idiom, if we may call it an idiom, is sometimes found in the corpora but no dictionaries of current English including COD<sup>11</sup> and ODE<sup>2</sup> do not list this as such.

All those PUs with the “ear” in them have origins in the first edition of OED and because of that very reason, EJDs published nearly a hundred years ago had those idioms in themselves and later EJDs faithfully inherited them until the present time. Currency of idioms may not a big issue for native speakers of English, but it is vitally important for learners of English to know if a PU is old-fashioned/obsolescent or current because there are already too many idioms to learn.

It is phraseologists' duty to pay closer attention to how PUs constantly are going out and coming into the language. Interestingly, the idiom *kick the bucket*, which is regarded as one of the most typical of its kind, is actually only rarely found in the actual use of the language other than in lexicographical works of idioms and dictionaries as well as papers on phraseology.

### 3. PUs now gaining currency – “comes at a cost” as an example

Now let us turn our eyes to one of many PUs which are finding its way into current English but is not yet properly treated in dictionaries.

Careful reading of English newspapers and journals enables us to learn new expressions we have never seen or heard before. There are many more PUs being formed in English than we expect. We will discuss here how “comes at a cost” is used and how it has come to be used as it is.

#### 3.1. The identification of “comes at a cost” as a PU

See the phrase *comes at a cost* in the quote below from the *Time* magazine.

(10) The food-court mentality – Johnny eats a burrito, Dad has a burger, and Mom picks pasta – *comes at a cost*. Little humans often resist new tastes; they need some nudging away from the salt and fat and toward the fruits and fiber. A study in the Archives of Family Medicine found that more family meals tends to mean less soda and fried food and far more fruits and vegetables. [Nancy Gibbs, “The Magic of the Family Meal”, *Time*, Jun 4, 2006]

This article stresses the importance of sharing the same food among all family members and this habit helps prevent the youngsters from acquiring bad eating habits of taking excessive soda and fried foods. In this context the phrase “comes at a cost” means “will eventually bring about bad effects”, which I have not found in any English dictionaries.

The main idiomatic uses of *cost* as a noun are illustrated as follows:

- (11) a. The bridge was constructed *at a cost of* \$400,000.  
 b. The profits were achieved *at the cost of* thousands of jobs.  
 c. This book is of such importance that it must be published *at any cost*.  
 d. Margaret wants to have justice *at all costs*.  
 e. Most of the materials were bought *at cost* from local suppliers.  
 f. He got the job, but *at a cost*. [MED<sup>2</sup>]

“At a cost of” in (11a) means “at the total amount of money paid”, “At the cost of” in (11b) “at the sacrifice of”, “At any cost/at all costs” (11c) and (11d) both means “whatever happens”, and “at cost” in (11e) is used in the sense of “without making a profit”.

It might be in order here to think how “at any cost” and “at all costs” (11c) and (11d) to be differentiated? COBUILD<sup>5</sup> has apt and simple explanations about the difference between them: *If you say something must be avoided **at all costs**, you are emphasizing that it must not be allowed to happen under any circumstances./ If you say something must be done **at any cost**, you are emphasizing that it must be done, even if this requires a lot of effort or money.* In short, “must be **avoided at all cost**” and “must be **done at any cost**” are the basic collocational contrast. We can verify the correctness of this explanation by informant elicitations and data analysis.

MED<sup>2</sup> defines the meaning of “at a cost” in (11f) as *used for saying that it may not have been worth doing something because so much has been lost or damaged as a result.* Although “at a cost” defined here in MED<sup>2</sup> is exactly the idiom we are going to discuss, it is often preceded by “comes”, the new set “comes at a cost” acquiring new meanings.

We have plenty of examples of “comes at a cost” in corpora as well as in the websites. There is an article with a title of “Quake protection *comes at a cost*” in 24 May 2003 issue of *NewScientist*, a local journal in Memphis, Tennessee, USA. The article starts with *Should buildings in seemingly stable Memphis be as resistant to earthquakes as those in wobbly California? The construction code proposed by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says they should, but some experts warn that it would be a waste of money and could leave buildings at greater risk from tornadoes.* Here, “comes at a cost” should be interpreted as “cause an excessively high cost”.

Here is another example of “comes at a cost” from an article “Cheap travel insurance *comes at a cost*” in the 15 May 2006 issue of the website *Travel Insurance Resources*.

(12) Travel insurance is now available for less than £10 for a two-week holiday, but such cheap cover can *come at a high price*.

The “comes at a cost” in the headline is rephrased as “comes at a high price” in this article.

There are other examples of “comes at a cost” differently used.

(13) This situation needs resolution, but to compare it with the rape of Kuwait hardly strengthens your argument against Saddam. Worse, the comparison gives the back of your hand to a country whose firm support of the principles you voice *comes at a cost of* real economic suffering and terrible danger. [BNC]

The “cost” here is used to refer to the “damage” or the “sacrifice”. The “cost” in the next example is used in the same sense.

- (14) The young lawyer is bowled off his feet by the offer of a brand new Mercedes, a great house and having his student loans wiped out. But all this *comes at a cost*, one which McDeere only realises as his new employers’ real work becomes increasingly clear. [BNC]

### 3.2. Where did “comes at a cost” come from?

We have identified the existence of the PU “comes at a cost” in current English in the preceding section. Here is a discussion on where it came from.

The phrase “at a cost of ...” no doubt exists as a basis of this PU. Two examples of “at a cost” are given below from learners’ dictionaries.

- (15) a. A new computer system has been installed *at a cost of* £80 000. [OALD8]  
 b. The plant closed down *at a cost of* over 1,000 jobs. [MED2]

(15a) refers to a financial cost and (15b) refers to a sacrifice. “Comes at a cost” has no *of*-phrase to follow to make clear what or how much the cost is. The absence of the *of*-clause after *cost* leaves the interpretation of the cost open in terms of a high/low financial cost or a sacrifice.

The “come” of “comes at a cost” is almost identical to “happen”. See the examples given below. Both of them are from CALD<sup>3</sup>.

- (16) a. The announcement *came* at bad time.  
 b. Her resignation *came* quite as a shock.

This “come” is used with an event or happening as its subject and is always followed by adverbial phrases of time or place to refer to where or when the happening comes about.

“Comes at a cost” with any “cost” incurred unspecified is neutral about the amount of the money to be paid or the seriousness of the situation

## 4. Changing PUs – “no sooner... than ...”

### 4.1. data about “no sooner ... than...”

Consider the following sentence.

- (17) a. *No sooner* had I walked in the door *than* the phone rang. [MED<sup>2</sup>]  
 b. *No sooner* had she said it *than* she burst into tears. [OALD<sup>8</sup>]

As those examples show, *No sooner ... than ...* is a well-known idiom which all learners of English have to learn sooner or later in the process of their



learning. They are taught to place *no sooner* at the head of the sentence and to place the auxiliary, if there is any, or the supporting verb *do*, immediately after it, if there isn't any. There is yet another rule: the tense (T1) of the verb in the *no sooner*-clause should be before the tense (T2) of the verb in the *than*-clause, i.e., if T2 is the past, then T1 must be the past participle.

Recently, however, it is not rare to find examples like (18a) and (18b), where all of the above mentioned grammatical rules are ignored.

- (18) a. While Western aid cutoffs and other penal actions began *no sooner than* the Burmese junta refused to honor the outcome of the 1990 elections, won by the detained Suu Kyi's party, Burma became the key target of U.S. sanctions policy only in the Bush years. [Brahma Chellaney, "Burma sanctions don't work", *The Japan Times*, Mar. 15, 2008, p. 17]
- b. The oversize Burmese military fancies itself as the builder of a united Burma. Given that ethnic warfare began *no sooner than* Japanese-trained General Aung San (Suu Kyi's father) persuaded the smaller nationalities to join the union, the military has used the threat of Balkanization to justify its hold on politics. [ibid.]

In these examples, the *no sooner than* is not discrete but consecutive word group, both T1 (refused) and T2 (began) are the past tense, and there is no inversion of word order. If the writer had strictly followed the rules, the structure would have been [*no sooner had the Burmese junta refused than Western aid cutoffs and other penal actions began*] and [*no sooner had Japanese-trained General Aung San persuaded the smaller nationalities to join the union than ethnic warfare began*], respectively.

There are plenty of examples of this use in large corpora. Here are some examples in the website:

- (19) a. *No sooner than* I post the review online, I found out why my benchmark scores were lower than others you see online.
- b. *No sooner than* Cathy says, "I don't think I ever wanted anything ..." to a newspaper reporter, she spots the man whose introduction will dramatically alter her life.

Are these "violation of grammatical rules" becoming common the present-day English? If so, why is it gaining ground in current English?

#### 4.2. How did the non-discrete "no sooner... than..." come to be?

Examples like (18) and (19) immediately remind us of the synonymic idiom "as soon as". The two examples in (17) would be written as follows by using "as soon as" without any major semantic changes.

- (17)' a. *As soon as* I walked in the door, the phone rang.  
 b. *As soon as* she said it, she burst into tears.

A simple mixing up of “as soon as” and “no sooner ... than” might have led to the “new” use of “no sooner than”. But, then, why do we need two expressions with an identical meaning? Out of 1,237 instances of “as soon as” in BNC, only 35 of them are used as a conjunction, i.e., as in (17)'. All the others are used as part of two larger idioms “as soon as possible” and “as soon as practicable”. This seems to point to the fact that “no sooner than” is in the process of taking over the role of “as soon as” as a conjunction, we will have to wait for a while what will happen to this trend because we have no examples of “no sooner than” used as a non-discreet conjunction in BNC.

## 5. An analysis of a comparatively new construction “A is (all) about B”

### 5.1. The meaning of “A is (all) about B” construction

(20) “*A meal is about sharing*”, says Doherty. “I see this trend where parents are preparing different meals for each kid, and it takes away from that. The sharing is the compromise. Not everyone gets their ideal menu every night”. [“The Magic of the Family Meal”, by Nancy Gibbs. *Time*, June 4, 2006]

(21) *The Internet is all about surrendering control to customers* – taking it out of the hands of the retailer and placing it in the hands of the buyer. [from a website in the Internet]

The italicized part may be paraphrased as *The essentially important thing about a meal is sharing*. This interpretation apparently is made possible by the phrase “be about”, which is by definition an idiom, if we follow the definition of the idiom quoted above.

Another possible formulation of this use of “be about” is to take “A is about B” as a PU which is semantically almost identical with “The true nature of A is in B”. Here I will adopt this formulation and I will refer to it as “A is about B” construction, although we will refer to “be about” when we discuss its ambiguity.

Examples of “A is (all) about B” construction abound in corpora. Examples in (22) are from BNC.

- (22) a. If anorexia *is about* identity in general, it *is* also specifically and most importantly *about* autonomy.

- b. He described journalism as *being about* comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.
- c. Dreaming *is about* using the information that you already know.
- d. Healthy eating *is about* much more than the kinds of food we eat.

There are examples of apparent “A is about B” construction in corpora. Some of them are given in (23).

- (23)
- a. This book *is about* how to be a successful schoolteacher in a time of uncertainty, change, increased pressures and conflicting demands.
  - b. ... the discussion *is about* investments which the group sees to be significant.
  - c. The debate *was mainly about* what should be provided
  - d. The argument *was partly about* nationalism.

The prepositional phrases led by *about* in these examples are predicates of *be*, the preposition *about* meaning “concerning”. There will be no significant changes in meaning if we insert indefinite forms of the subject noun phrase like *a book*, *a discussion* etc. before the preposition, as in *This book is a book about how to ... / the discussion is a discussion about investments ... / The debate was a debate about what ... / The argument was an argument about nationalism*. This is possible because all of the inserted nouns take the *about*-phrases in order to show what the topic of the book, etc. is, while we cannot do the same to the examples in (20), (21) and (22) because the nouns *meal*, *anorexia*, etc. don’t take *about*-clauses.

We will explain how the idiom *be about* has been formed and how it has come to acquire the meaning as it does now.

## 5.2. Data analysis

We assumed above that the “be about” in the examples (20), (21) and (22) is an idiom, but the majorities of learner’s dictionaries published in the UK and the US do not treat them as an idiom and, instead, define the meaning of “about” as follows: *if an organization, a job, an activity etc is about something, that is its basic purpose* [LDOCE<sup>5</sup>] or *used to describe the purpose or an aspect of sth* [OALD<sup>8</sup>]. The only exception is MED<sup>2</sup>, where “be about something” and “be all about something” are listed as what is categorized as “phrases” there.

Let us see the example sentences of “be about” in those dictionaries:

- (24)
- a. Movies *are all about* making money. [OALD<sup>8</sup>]
  - b. What *was all that about?* [OALD<sup>8</sup>]
  - c. Leadership *is all about* getting your team to co-operate. [LDOCE<sup>5</sup>]
  - d. Basically, the job’ *s all about* helping people get off welfare. [LAAD<sup>2</sup>]
  - e. A good marriage *is (all) about* trust. [MWALED]

- f. The job he does *is all about* helping young people. [MWALED]
- g. Loving and sharing – that’s what marriage *is about*. [MED<sup>2</sup>]
- h. Good management *is all about* motivating your staff. [MED<sup>2</sup>]

OED<sup>2</sup> (sv., ABOUT **B** (with object expressed) *prep.* I Position. 7.c) has the following description of “be (all) about”: *In colloq. phr. to be (all) about, (of an abstract subject) to be primarily concerned with; to have as a central theme or essential truth. Freq. used without a named subject, as what it’s all about, the reality of a situation.* Let us quote all the examples given there.

- (25) a. That’s what *love* is all about. (1937)
- b. This immense transition – from being a slave to being a friend – is what *Christianity* is all about. (1962)
- c. Poor blighter, he had no idea what *it* was all about... Sitting there every night hunched up over those watches. (1971)
- d. After all, this is what *the concept of a tolerant multi-cultural, multi-racial society* is all about. (1976)
- e. *Love and war* were about winning, not fair play. (1982)
- f. They like the feeling that they have had to fight other men for possession. That is what *it* is all about, really. (1984)

We should take note of two points: first, the definition of the phrase “be about” in OED<sup>2</sup> presupposes that it takes an “abstract subject” and all the examples given there have abstract, in other words, generic subjects, except (25c) and (25f), where there is no “named subject”. Second, “be about” means the “primary concern” or the “essential truth” of the subject.

Now let us go back to the examples in (24). All of them, except (b), (d) and (f), have generic noun phrases as their subjects. Generic meanings are expressed in four different ways: in article-less plural nouns as in (a), singular countable nouns with an indefinite article as in (e), singular uncountable nouns without any article as in (c), (g) and (h), and singular nouns with the definite article as in (21). Taking into account of the definition of OED<sup>2</sup>, the reasonable interpretation of the examples with generic nouns as subjects is “the primary concern of A is B” or “the essential truth of A is B”. The remaining problem is what to do with (24b), (24d) and (24f).

“The job” is the subject in both (24d) and (24f), but the interpretation of these examples should be “the primary concern of the job is ...” or the like. Here we have to consider what makes it possible for “be about” with the definite noun phrase subject to be interpreted like others with the generic noun subject.

The word “job” may be followed by *about*-phrases as the examples in (26) show. Both of them are from BNC.

- (26) a. I don't think any of these guys is doing a remarkably great *job about* energizing or connecting with young voters.  
 b. Israel wants to see this roadmap dissolved, disintegrate, and they've done a very good *job about* making sure the roadmap is destroyed in record time.

How (24d) and (24f) are different from (23)? Actually, the interpretation of (23) is endorsed by the adverbial "all".

The dictionary definition of "all" is "completely" in MED<sup>2</sup> and many other dictionaries. This sense of "all" is illustrated by examples like the following from MED<sup>2</sup>:

- (27) a. I'm *all* in favour of giving children more freedom.  
 b. Now we're going to be late, and it's *all* because of you.

Its function is similar to adverbials like "mainly", "mostly", "partly", and "basically". See examples in (28) below.

- (28) a. Hospital nursing *is mainly about* caring for the sick.  
 b. When Arsenal won the league again two years later, it didn't feel the same—partly because it was achieved in a less dramatic fashion, but mostly because I had nothing left. So being a fan *is mostly about* replenishment, and...  
 c. No-one can hope to have a command of all these things at a first audition. But they are guidelines to what acting *is basically about*.  
 d. Reading *is partly about* the enjoyment of language, the exciting and illuminating use of one's own language by people who are proficient in the use of written language.

Adverbials like "mainly", "mostly", "partly", and "basically" are all possible to be used with the non-idiomatic sense of "be about" as can be seen in the examples of (23), but "all" is special because it is used exclusively with the idiomatic sense of "be about".

Let us take a look at other examples with definite subjects.

- (29) a. But for the last twenty years, and increasingly so at the moment, quick profits are what the rainforests *are all about*.  
 b. The 80s had *been all about* obsessional lifestyles, body consciousness, diet fads, work-out videos, designer leotards, Reeboks and Aqua Libra.  
 c. But the City *is all about* greed and fear, and winners can be losers overnight.

"All" is used in all these examples and this endorses the interpretation of "be about" as idiomatic. Otherwise the proper interpretations of *The rain forests are about quick profits* / *The 80's had been about obsessional lifestyles* / *the City is about greed and fear* would be difficult to obtain.

Why does “all” endorse the idiomatic interpretation of “be about”? “All” is an emphatic adverbial meaning “completely”, which means it modifies only gradable elements. Let us go back to the examples in (23). The *about*-phrases of the non-idiomatic “be about” are the statements of simple facts, and are by no means gradable.

The idiomatic “be about” is usually represented as “be (all) about”, but this representation does not give us any clues when “all” is required and when it is not. The above discussion clearly indicates that “all” is used to signal that the “be about” is idiomatic. The idiomatic “be about” with a generic subject is already endorsed its interpretation simply by the very fact that it has a generic subject, but in the case of a definite subject the endorsement of idiomatic interpretation is given by the adverbial “all”.

### 5.3. Three types of “be about”

The discussion in this section has shown that there are three types of “be about”, the summary of which is given below. (30) are non-idiomatic, (31) are idiomatic with definite subjects, and (32) are idiomatic with generic subjects.

- (30) a. What is the story about?  
 – It’s about how to co-operate with others.  
 b. What is the book about?  
 – It’s about the French Revolution.
- (31) a. What is the City all about?  
 – The City is all about greed and fear, and winners can be losers overnight.  
 (= Greed and fear best characterize the City.)  
 b. What are the rainforests about?  
 – They are about quick profits.  
 (= Quick profits best characterize the rainforests.)
- (24) a. What is education about?  
 – It’s about doing, rather than about knowing.  
 (= The primary concern of education is doing rather than in knowing.)  
 b. What is politics about?  
 – It’s about power.  
 (= The primary concern of politics is power.)

### 5.4. Where did the idiomatic “be about” come from?

What is the difference between the “be about” in (30) on the one hand, and that in (31) and (32) on the other? Compare the following simplified

examples, where (33) corresponds to (30) and (34) does so to (32). (31) is basically the same with (32).

- (33) a. a story about color [attribution]  
 b. The story is about color. [predication]  
 c. What is the story about? [*wh*-question]  
 d. I don't know what the story is about. [indirect-*wh*-question]
- (34) a. #politics about power [attribution]  
 b. Politics is about power. [predication]  
 c. What is politics about? [*wh*-question]  
 d. I don't know what politics is about. [indirect-*wh*-question]

The only difference between (33) and (34) is the use of attribution: all the items in (33) have semantic correspondence, but "politics about power" (34a) challenges semantic interpretation and it does not semantically correspond to all the others in (34). The difference between (33) and (34) is a strong evidence to prove that "be about" in (34) is an inseparable unit as an idiom.

The meaning of (34b) is *the story is telling us about color*, which is, metaphorically, one step away from assigning interpretation of *politics is a thing that is concerned about power* to *politics is about power*.

My conclusion about the formation of the idiomatic "be about" is that it came from the reanalysis of "be about" in examples like (30), which is [the story [is [about color]]] i.e., the prepositional phrase [about color] is a predicate of "is", into [politics [[is about] power]], i.e., [be about] is now a predicate connecting the generic subject with the predicate which signifies the main characteristics of the subject. My assumption about why (31) has come into being is that it is the result of the extension of the idiomatic "be about" to definite subjects licensing by means of "all".

## 6. Conclusion

We identified PUs getting out of use like *I'm easy* / *How goes the enemy*, and PUs coming into current English like "comes as a cost", non-discrete "no sooner than" and "A is about B" construction. I hope this kind of study will open the new field in phraseology.

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## Stare i nowe jednostki frazeologiczne: ocena aktualności i mechanizmy powstawania

### Streszczenie

Z biegiem czasu język naturalny podlega przemianom – nowe frazeologizmy powstają cały czas, a użytkownicy języka nie są świadomi tego faktu. Przykładem nowej jednostki, która występuje w języku angielskim, jest związek *comes at a cost*. Frazeologizmy *How goes the enemy, as far as in me lies* i *I'm easy* stają się natomiast połączeniami o charakterze recesywnym lub wychodzą z użycia. Autor artykułu omawia, jak oceniać aktualność stałych połączeń wyrazowych, które przez długi czas włączane były do opracowań leksykograficznych. Ponadto, przedstawione zostały szczegółowe analizy wybranych angielskich idiomów. Autor analizuje znaczenie związku *comes at a cost* i mechanizm jego powstania oraz omawia kombinację wyrazową *no sooner than*, który wydaje się wypierać połączenie *as soon as*. Opisuje również relatywnie nową jednostkę *to be about*, używaną w postaci *A is about B* (np. *What is phraseology about?*), z generycznym podmiotem, pokazując różnice między omawianym związkiem a kolokacją [*a discussion*] + [*about phraseology*] (np. *The discussion was about phraseology*). W artykule przedstawione zostały również interpretacja idiomatycznego połączenia *to be about* z podmiotem określonym.



**PART I**

**CORPUS LINGUISTICS, LEXICOGRAPHY  
AND PHRASEOLOGY**



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## The First Dictionary of English Collocations in Japan

**Abstract.** *Eiwa Katsuyo Daijiten*, the English title of which is the *Kenkyusha's Dictionary of English Collocations* was published in Japan as early as 1939, being the very first of its kind dealing with the subject of collocations in English. This paper compares and contrasts the contents of the pre-corpus dictionary in question with those of the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English*, Second Edition, one of the present-day collocation dictionaries in the current corpus era, and makes an attempt to bring into sharp relief the kind of characteristic features of the *KDEC*. In so doing, this writer hopes that the *KDEC* will become better known and recognized in the rest of the world and will receive the due attention that it deserves. Special attention will be given to the foresight and ingenuity of the compiler/editor Senkichiro Katsumata.

**Key words:** *collocation, English, dictionary, Japan, English-Japanese*

### 1. Introduction

A dictionary of particular interest came out in 1939 in Japan. Entitled *Eiwa Katsuyo Daijiten* in Japanese, the English title of which is the (the first edition of) *Kenkyusha's Dictionary of English Collocations* (*KDEC1*, hereafter), a unique dictionary that both included "collocations" in its title as early as 1939 and claimed to contain, even in the pre-corpus era, as many as a hundred and twenty thousand actual-use collocations. Indeed, it is true the word "collocation" had been used earlier in the celebrated linguist and grammarian Harold E. Palmer's compilation *Second Interim Report on English Collocations* published in 1933, but his "collocations"<sup>1</sup> included such phrases and expres-

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<sup>1</sup> Palmer (1933)'s definition of collocation goes as follows: A collocation is a succession of two or more words that must be learnt as an integral whole and not pieced together from its component parts. See Imura (1997) and Ozasa (1995), for instance, for Harold E. Palmer and his work in Japan.

sions as a *by-pass*, *Chamber of Commerce*, *cross-eyed*, *How do you do?*, *so that*, and *to be or not to be*. Granted there is no universally accepted definition of collocation, do these linguistic chunks deserve to be called collocations? I think not. By contrast, the *KDEC1* does not carry those example phrases given above,<sup>2</sup> but instead gives word combinations such as *assemble a machine*, *automatic machines*, *manufactured by machines*, and so on under the headword **machine**, for instance, all of which may well be regarded as collocational in the generally accepted sense of the word.

The compiler of this dictionary was Senkichiro Katsumata (1872–1959), a former professor of English at Waseda University in Tokyo, who wrote in the preface that he had been collecting the materials for more than thirty years. An in-depth analysis of a selection of dictionary entries will be conducted in this article in order to find out what constitutes the salient features of the *KDEC1* in terms of coverage, structure, presentation, and the kind of information contained. That the dictionary has not yet enjoyed due attention and recognition that it deserves is regrettable, and it is my earnest hope, therefore, that this paper will be instrumental in helping the *KDEC1* to win far greater worldwide recognition. Moreover, in so doing, it is hoped that the entry description given in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for *collocation* will sooner or later be amended in some way or another.

## 2. Comparison

### 2.1. Sampling

I made a random selection of the following pages of the *KDEC1*: 100–102, 500–502, 900–902, 1300–1302, and 1700–1702, a total of fifteen pages equivalent to less than one percent of the whole book (0.774%, to be more specific). The main body of this dictionary consists of 1938 pages. There are 97 headwords on these particular pages, and in terms of parts of speech, there are 63 nouns, 24 verbs, 8 adjectives, and 2 adverbs (64.9%, 24.7%, 8.2%, and 2.1%, respectively). Accordingly, there are six or seven headwords on each page (6.46/page), and the total number of headwords in the dictionary is projected to be about 12, 500. The entries on these pages were compared with corresponding entries in the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English*, Second Edition (*OCD*, hereafter).

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<sup>2</sup> It is not true to say that the *KDEC1* gives no such phrases at all. Under certain, but not many, headwords such as **idea** *n.*, **joke** *v.*, and **more** *a. & adv.*, there are phrases entered, rather sporadically, like “The *idea!*”, “You are *joking*, sir!”, and “The *more* he has, the *more* he wants”.

The types of information included and the framework for presentation are basically the same for all categories of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in the *KDEC1*.<sup>3</sup> Noun entries typically consist of three sections, headed by V., Q., and P. Letter V represents verb, Q qualifiers, and P prepositions. Verb entries usually consist of two sections, headed by M. and P., with M. representing modifiers. Adjective and adverb entries are normally composed of one section headed by P.<sup>4</sup> The *OCD* provides more groupings, i.e. types of word combination, with more specific structure-based headings, such as VERB+PAGE and PAGE+VERB (both as in the entry for **page** *noun*) and FRUIT+NOUN (as in **fruit** *noun*). Minor differences like these will be disregarded in the present analysis, and the groupings made by the *KDEC1* will be the basis for comparison, however.

## 2.2. Comparison

### 2.2.1. Headwords

The headwords in the pages surveyed are given in Table 1:

**Table 1. Number of headwords surveyed**

Pages	headwords	<i>KDEC1</i>	<i>OCD</i>	common items
100–102	assortment <i>n.</i> – attack <i>v.</i>	25	23	17
500–502	drinking-shop <i>n.</i> – drum <i>v.</i>	17	14	9
900–901	join <i>v.</i> – journey <i>n.</i>	17	10	9
1300–1302	prick <i>v.</i> – print <i>n.</i>	13	6	5
1700–1702	swordsman <i>n.</i> – synopsis <i>n.</i>	25	16	14
		97	69	54

A glance will show that the *KDEC1* covers a wider vocabulary than does the *OCD*, though the variety of collocates dealt with in each entry may well be a different matter, which I will touch upon shortly.

The headwords that appear in either of the two dictionaries alone have been left out of consideration. Those words include *assuage v.*, *astir a.*, *atone v.*,

<sup>3</sup> There are some headwords in other categories found in the *KDEC1*, such as **because** *conj.* and **that** *pron.*, which are few and far between.

<sup>4</sup> Some adjective headwords contain the M. section, in addition to the P. section, as in **big**, **familiar**, **necessary**, and **thankful**.

*drivel n., drown v., drum v., jostle v., jolly a., jotting n., prick v., prime n., prince n., symbolize v., symptomatic a., synopsis n., etc.*, all of which are given in *KDEC1*, but not in *OCD*.

The headwords common to both works are the main target of this analysis. There are 54 words, including *assume v., astonishing a., attach v., driving n., drought n., drum n., joint n., journal n., journey n., pride n., priest n., principle n., syllable n., symbolic a., sympathy n.*, etc. I checked all the items given as collocates in these common entries in order to see which item or items appear in one dictionary alone and which item or items appear in both. Sometimes it is very difficult to make comparisons because it is often the case that the information that may be called practically equivalent is presented in different ways in each of the two dictionaries. For instance, the *KDEC1* does not give, as headwords, participial adjectives ending in *-ed* or *-en*, such as *interested* and *surprised* or *mistaken*, but rather these participial forms are treated under such verb forms as *interest v.* and *surprise v.* or *mistake v.*, which is not the case in the *OCD*. Besides, in the entry for *joke n.*, the *KDEC1* gives “a *joke on* Bismarck” under section P., whereas the *OCD* gives, under JOKE+VERB, **be on sb** with an example “..., but in the end the *joke was on me*”. Cases like these are accounted for in this paper. However, one might perhaps argue otherwise. In other words, content was given preference over form. There are also problems that involve semantics. The word *symphony* is attested to in both dictionaries: hence, a common headword. The meaning of the item in question, however, is totally different between the *KDEC1* and the *OCD*. The word is used for the sense of harmony in the former dictionary while in the latter it is given for the music related sense, which one might say is quite ordinary in our time. Again, putting content before form was the practice that I chose to follow. There are many other subtle differences of varying types, which I will refrain from going into any further.

### 2.2.2. Results

The results of the survey that I conducted are provided in Table 2.

From the table below, first, the number of collocates given in the *OCD* substantially exceeds that given in the *KDEC1*. Put another way, the *KDEC1* enters a far smaller number of collocates, as compared with the *OCD*. Secondly, about forty percent of the collocates given in the *KDEC1* are also covered in the *OCD*. Thirdly, a large number of collocates given in the *OCD* are not captured in the *KDEC1*. An inquiry would be in order into the cause(s) or factor(s) that are involved in these omissions.



Table 2. Number of collocates entered

Pages	common headwords	<i>KDEC1</i>	<i>OCD</i>
100–102	assortment <i>n.</i> – attack <i>v.</i>	94/198 (47.5%) <sup>5</sup>	74/478 (15.5%)
500–502	drive <i>n.</i> – drum <i>n.</i>	76/183 (41.5%)	21/434 (4.8%)
900–901	join <i>v.</i> – journey <i>n.</i>	81/241 (33.6%)	45/354 (12.7%)
1300–1302	pride <i>n.</i> – print <i>n.</i>	86/224 (38.4%)	69/159 (43.4%)
1700–1702	syllable <i>n.</i> – synonymous <i>a.</i>	75/168 (44.6%)	56/471 (18.9%)
		412/1014 (40.6%)	265/1896 (14.0%)

### 3. Specific entries

I will now take a look at some specific entries as found in the *KDEC1* in more detail and consider the adequacy or validity of the collocates entered, drawing on some corpus data. It is to be noted, however, that, by “corpus data”, I mean the data obtained from the Bank of English in this particular context. Four typical entries will be scrutinized, each representing a different part of speech. Observe, first, the following entry for *assumption*, representing a noun:

**assumption**, *n.*

V. *put on* an *assumption* of ignorance

Q. *hypothetical assumptions* ¶ It is *mere assumption*, resting on no authority whatever and contradicted by all the evidence. ¶ *probable assumption* ¶ it is a *safe assumption* that .. ¶ a *tacit assumption*

P. *on* the *assumption* that .. ¶ it is based *on* the *assumption* that .. ¶ the *assumption of* an office ¶ the *Assumption of* the Virgin into a heaven<sup>6</sup>

It is fairly easy to see from the above example that the *KDEC1* does not draw a distinction between different senses of this word because, obviously, the sense of *assumption* as used in the verb phrase “put on an assumption” and

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that occurrences of collocates were counted as tokens rather than as types. The figure 94 in this particular box indicates the number of collocates given in the *KDEC1* that also appear in the corresponding entries in the *OCD*, and the figure 198 denotes the total number of collocates in the *KDEC1* listed in the entries that the two dictionaries have in common. The other figures under *KDEC1* and *OCD* are to be interpreted accordingly.

<sup>6</sup> The *KDEC1* is basically an English-Japanese dictionary, so there are Japanese translations after each headword and after each illustrative phrase or sentence. For purposes of presentation, these are not represented in the example entries given here.

that of *assumption* as used in the noun phrase “hypothetical assumptions” above are not the same, but they are treated here as one entry.<sup>7</sup>

As far as the prepositions are concerned, there do not seem to be any problems because both the prepositions *on* and *of* are ranked high in corpus data. However, I found no matches of either *put on an assumption* or *probable assumption* in the Bank of English data. I got only one hit for *hypothetical assumptions* and just two hits for *mere assumption*, while there were 21 matches of *safe assumption* and 17 matches for *tacit assumption*. What the relevant data suggests is that the verb phrase “put on an assumption of ignorance” be replaced by “make an assumption”, though with a difference in meaning, and that, for adjectives, *basic*, *underlying*, *common*, *reasonable*, and *implicit* be added to the list. In fact, these five adjectives happen to be all given in the *OCD*, which may well reflect the drawing on of some corpus data. If more space was available, such adjectives as *fundamental*, *certain*, and *general* should follow. I might add that the prepositions *about* and *behind* are good candidates for P-section items here, and the *OCD* entry includes the former but not the latter preposition.

Look at the following collocate entry for *sympathize*, representing a verb: **sympathize, v.**

M. *sympathize deeply* with the cause of .. ¶ I *sympathize heartily* with you. ¶ *sympathize keenly* ¶ *profoundly* *sympathize* with ¶ *sincerely* *sympathize* ¶ *thoroughly* *sympathize*

P. *sympathize with* one’s anger ¶ *sympathize with* the object ¶ I *sympathize with* you *from* the bottom of my heart. ¶ *sympathize with* one *in* one’s sorrow or joy ¶ *sympathize with* a friend *upon* his bereavement

Attention should be drawn to the fact that, though not explicitly stated, the relative position of collocates are functional in their presentation. To be more specific, phrases are presented according to whether the modifying adverb comes before or after the keyword. Incidentally, this goes for entries of other types, too, such as noun entries in the V section: Phrases in the form of V + NOUN are placed first, and are then followed by phrases in the form of NOUN + V, if any.

Data relevant to adverbial modification is shown in Table 3.

The adverb *deeply* is OK, but the three adverbs *heartily*, *keenly*, and *profoundly* maintain a dubious status. The data suggests instead that *fully* be added here, as it appears in the top 50 collocate list ordered by t-score. In

<sup>7</sup> The *KDECI* does draw a line between senses of a word in its entries from time to time by giving numbers in parentheses. Examples are found in **attach v.**, **interest n.**, **journal n.**, and so on.

Table 3. The verb sympathize + modifying adverbs

V + Adv	number of hits	Adv + V	number of hits
sympathise deeply <sup>8</sup>	5	deeply sympathise	4
sympathise heartily	0	heartily sympathise	0
sympathise keenly	0	keenly sympathise	0
sympathise profoundly	0	profoundly sympathise	0
sympathise sincerely	0	sincerely sympathise	1
sympathise thoroughly	0	thoroughly sympathise	2

fact, *fully* ranks above *deeply*, and one might well add *entirely* and *really* to the list here. Incidentally, the *OCD* gives *deeply*, *fully*, and *really*, but not *entirely*.

As for prepositions, *with* is beyond dispute, and ordered by t-score and frequency, ranks first in the two top 50 collocate lists. The last phrase “sympathize with a friend upon his bereavement” may well be dispensed with because I found no matches for *sympathize with A upon B*. Instead, another type *sympathize (with A) over B* is an excellent candidate in this regard, as in “she sympathises with him over the death of his young wife”. This preposition *over* is not given in the *OCD*.

Let me move on to the case of the adjective *synonymous*:

**synonymous, a.**

M. *synonymous almost* with .. ¶ *closely* and *strictly synonymous*

P. *synonymous in* signification ¶ “Till” is *synonymous with* “until”. ¶ The term “management” is often used as *synonymous with* “administration”. ¶ Leisure is often erroneously considered *synonymous with* idleness.

The adverb *almost* is justifiable because it is in the two top 50 collocate lists, ordered by t-score and frequency, while the other two, *closely* and *strictly*, are not. I found only one match for *closely synonymous* and none for *strictly synonymous*. According to the corpus data on hand, the following adverbs are more promising candidates: *virtually*, *necessarily*, *practically*, *always*,<sup>9</sup> *largely*,

<sup>8</sup> In this particular analysis, I used the word form *sympathise* rather than *sympathize* because I found far more matching lines using the former. The number of all forms of *sympathise* was 1368; whereas that of all forms of *sympathize* numbered 667.

<sup>9</sup> It is worth mentioning that, in five out of the six matching lines that I found for *always synonymous*, they were preceded by the word *not*, as in “excitement is not always synonymous with truth”. We need to bear this sort of feature in mind when providing illustrative phrases or sentences.

*roughly, nearly, often*, etc. The *OCD* gives *almost, virtually, largely, and roughly*, but not the others. I might add that the modifying adverb *almost* would be better placed before, rather than after, the word *synonymous*.

There is nothing questionable with the preposition *with* as it appears in all of the three top 50 collocate lists, ordered by t-score, MI-score, and frequency. The other preposition *in* is less tenable because it is not in either of the two top 50 collocate lists, ordered by t-score and MI-score. However, it is the tenth item in the top 50 collocate list, as ordered by frequency.

Last but not least, consider the following example of *synchronously*, representing an adverb:

**synchronously**, *adv.*

P. Talkies produce sound *synchronously with* action.

I found thirteen hits for *synchronously*, out of which there was only one matching line of *synchronously with*, as in “run a tape-recorder synchronously with the camera microphone”. It would seem that more data is needed to make a call on this.

#### 4. Some residual problems

In his review of the *KDEC1*, Sasaki (1940) pointed out two problems with the way that the dictionary treated collocations, although his was, in general, a highly favorable review of the dictionary. The first point that he made is the *KDEC1*'s disadvantage of using alphabetical order in presenting collocations. While, indeed, alphabetical order has the advantage of making it easy to search for items, semantic relations such as synonymy and antonymy might be hard for the user to grasp, which is a major drawback for him or her in view of the increasing importance of encoding function within entries. Point well taken. I happened to make the same point in our review of the first edition of the *BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English: A Guide to Word Combinations* (Higashi et al. (1988: 112–113)).<sup>10</sup>

The second point that he made is that the dictionary does not carry what he called “coupled phrases”. Sasaki gave such examples as *conscious and deliberate, clear and convincing, nice and accurate, prude and prim, stilted and high-flown, coherence and unity, complaints and maladies, and versatility and range*. As I glanced through some of the pages of the *KDEC1*, I did find *clear*

<sup>10</sup> The *KDEC1* was revised in 1958, and the title changed to the *Kenkyusha's New Dictionary of English Collocations*. However, this policy of presenting items in alphabetical order was not challenged, but maintained.

*and convincing* used in one of the examples given in the Q section of the entry for *explanation n.*: “a **clear** and **convincing** explanation of the matter”.<sup>11</sup> Other analogous examples can be found in such entries as *account n.* and *rain v.*: “a *full* and *detailed* account of ..” and “rain *thick* and *fast*”. Although I should refrain from jumping to conclusions, I would suppose that Sasaki was undoubtedly correct, but not necessarily so in each and every little detail.

## 5. Miscellanea

I would like to take up some of the cases that would seem to call for some revision or improvement. First, in the P section of the entry for *astonish v.*, there is the following example:

You must have been *astonished on* seeing him.

This is a case of what Chomsky (1965) called “loose association”, and, therefore, this particular example using *on* is arguably open to question. Next, note the following example in the P section of the entry for *attack n.*:

They were alarmed **by** a sudden *attack*.

Would this “*by*” be collocationally significant in any way at all, in connection with the noun in question *attack*? I doubt it. Look at the following example in the P section of the entry for *journey n.*:

the time occupied **on** the *journey* between .. and .. is ..

There is nothing wrong with the example itself, but the fact is to be noted that the preposition *between* also is an obvious candidate. It happens that there is an example “a journey from Foochow to Wenchow through Central Fuchien” found later in the very same section, but no example is given using *between*. There should be one. In passing, it is KDECI’s policy or convention to put examples with post-positioned prepositions, i.e. in the form of NOUN + PREP, after those with pre-positioned prepositions, i.e. in the form of PREP + NOUN. Consider the next example, taken from the P section of the entry for *symptom n.*:

distinguish a disease **by** its *symptoms*

<sup>11</sup> One plausible way to show this connection might be to put the connective “and” in bold type in this particular case, with the phrase resulting in “a **clear and convincing** explanation of the matter”. As a matter of fact, there is such an example found in the M. section of the entry for *rain v.*: “It is raining **cats and dogs**”.

The “by” here is much more associated with the verb *distinguish* than the keyword.

Moreover, what follows are some errors I noticed that need to be corrected, as I looked into the *KDEC1*. First, there is the following example in the P section of the entry for *drop v.*:

I soon *dropt into* a profound sleep.

The verb “dropt” should be spelled *dropped*. In addition, observe the example that follows, in the Q section of the entry for *priest n.*:

Q. become a *priest*

Assuming that there is nothing wrong with this particular example, it should be delineated in the V section. Alternatively, it could also be that some adjective was somehow missing from this entry.<sup>12</sup>

## 6. Conclusions

In the above critique of the *KDEC1*, I may have created a negative impression with regard to the dictionary. However, I am actually a great admirer of this collocation dictionary. First, particular attention should be paid to the fact that the *KDEC1* came out in 1939, some 70 years ago. No such dictionary of collocations, comparable in size and scale, was in existence at that time, except for, perhaps, *A Dictionary of English Style (DES, hereafter)*.<sup>13</sup>

The *KDEC1* claimed to carry about a hundred and twenty thousand collocations, while the *OCD* contains some ‘250,000 word combinations’. However, 120 thousand is an overwhelming number, indeed, in view of the fact that the dictionary was compiled at a time when there were no available corpora in the current, ordinary sense of the word. As I mentioned earlier, the editor stated in *KDEC1*’s preface that it took over thirty years for him to amass all the collocational items, and thus, Editor Senkichiro Katsumata’s efforts are obviously both incredible and commendable. Not only was the number of collocations included amazing, but also the style or manner of presentation was groundbreaking as well as serviceable and instructive. Granted that this collocation prototype still left much room for improvement,

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<sup>12</sup> In the revised version of the *KDEC2* (1958), this particular example was found to be headed by the symbol O (= others).

<sup>13</sup> Higashi et al. (1988: 43–56) provide a concise overview of several dictionaries, published before the first edition of the *BBJ* (1986), which may be deemed “collocational”, including both the *DES* and the *KDEC1*.

the idea of classifying and presenting the collocations according to the collocate's part-of-speech or function was fundamentally correct, adequate, and user-friendly. It shows convincingly that the editor was keenly aware of what was organizationally crucial in presenting word combination information.

I hasten to add that the *KDEC1* was revised by the same editor in 1958, and that a completely new edition, compiled by a new group of editors, came out in 1995. Editor Katsumata wrote in the preface to the second "entirely new" edition that the number of collocations contained in it would approximate to two hundred thousand. Interestingly enough, the title of the *de facto* third edition is almost identical to that of the very first, namely, *The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Collocations*, and it claims to carry three hundred and eighty thousand collocations. An electronic version of it is also available. A most interesting future study might analyze and critically evaluate all three of these editions.

It is true, indeed, that the *KDEC1* may leave something to be desired in some minor respects, but the significance of its publication is immeasurable, and the dictionary itself was an epoch-making history-making one and a fine, monumental piece of work. In a phrase, it was Katsumata's masterpiece.

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## Pierwszy słownik angielskich kolokacji w Japonii

### Streszczenie

Artykuł poświęcony jest pierwszemu słownikowi angielskich kolokacji zatytułowanemu *Eiwa Katsuyo Daijiten* (*Kenkyusha's Dictionary of English Collocations*), który został opublikowany w Japonii w 1939 roku. Autor porównuje zawartość omawianego słownika, opracowanego bez wykorzystania korpusów, z materiałem zebrany w drugim wydaniu *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English*, pochodzącym z korpusów. W artykule przedstawiono charakterystykę słownika, ze szczególnym zwróceniem uwagi na zasługi redaktora słownika, którym był Senkichiro Katsumata.



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## On the Semantic Ambiguity of Phraseologisms

**Abstract.** While an important characteristic of phraseologisms is their stability, indicated already by terms like ‘set phrases’, ‘fixed expressions’, etc. – this is not a quality that would rule out any kind of change, either on the lexical or the semantic level. It is generally known that the two characteristic features of phraseologisms – idiomaticity and motivation – may be of varying significance depending on the nature of a phrase, and a language user may find utterances of high level of idiomaticity particularly challenging. Problems with understanding phraseologisms are mostly discussed in relation with non-ethnic speakers. However, a questionnaire on the knowledge of phraseologisms, distributed among the secondary level students in two Estonian(-language) schools, revealed that phrases presumed to be commonly known may not be so for the younger generation of language users. The analysis of results shows that there have been certain changes in meaning and use of well known phraseologisms.

**Key words:** *semantics, phraseology, expressions, questionnaire, Estonian language*

### 1. Introduction

Semantic ambiguity of phraseologisms is a phenomenon most fascinating for the researcher in the field. Rather than being the linguistic elements self-evidently known and acquired by everyone (cf. lexical versus phraseological competence), phraseologisms serve as a wonderful means for diversifying the language. Having lengthily dealt with the material consolidated in the database of Estonian phrases and phraseologisms,<sup>1</sup> one could easily presume that the subject matter is in active language use. Actually, it is more likely that the situation is more similar to the one quoted in one of the blogs discussing (Delfi.blog 2006) the translation of phraseologisms: “And of

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<sup>1</sup> These are materials received by the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, and the digitalised version is available to all interested persons at <http://www.folklore.ee/justkui/>.

course, there are cool Estonian counterparts too, for example, *nagu tuhat ja tuline* (lit. like a thousand and fervent) or *püksid sõelusid püüli* (lit. trousers sifted flour). Well, yes, it's a pity they have the flavour of the ancient tales of the Estonian people". Thus, there is a tendency to consider the old fixed expressions to be old-fashioned and avoid the use thereof.

Bearing in mind that phraseological linguistic units are subject to the so-called automatic identification and processing, i.e. in other words, they tend to hold a fixed position in the mental lexicon of the language user, Ken Farø (2006: 60) points to the fact that idiomatic expressions are not used for the purposes of speech strategy, but due to the fact that they are compatible with the context or because they are easily graspable for the knowledgeable speaker due to mnemotechnical reasons.

The most convenient way to ascertain the spread of certain phraseological expressions and their real-life actualisation is to use the Internet – the comments of online publications, websites, blogs and other relevant content. Although the research, regarding the knowledge of proverbs and phraseologisms among the speakers of different languages, is widespread, there are currently no proper (broad-based) questionnaires of the kind carried out in Estonia, and absolutely non-existent data of the surveys conducted by the phraseologists themselves.

I decided to conduct the questionnaire among the younger generation of language users – the students in the older classes of the upper secondary school. Such age-wise distinction was primarily conditioned by the fact that paremiologists – mainly of the German linguistic language space – have ascertained that by the age of 16–18, people have acquired the proverb-related knowledge,<sup>2</sup> proceeding from the aspect of linguistic and cognitive capability. It would be expedient to extend this thesis to phraseology, hence my attempt to also obtain data with regard to the validity of this thesis by way of the questionnaire, although I tended to be of the opinion that the relevant knowledge would probably take shape earlier, depending on the background of an individual language user. Likewise, the relevant research in different languages shows that even the children of kindergarten age are capable of understanding and using phraseologisms as these are linguistic units constantly acquired by the speaker, i.e. this process is dynamic rather than coming to a halt at a certain age level.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is clear that younger language

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<sup>2</sup> Hereby I rely on the standpoints of Rupprecht S. Baur and Christoph Chlosta (1994) in the field of empirical paremiology, based on the thorough questionnaires conducted among school students.

<sup>3</sup> For more details on age-factor see Jesenšek 2006.

users know significantly fewer phraseologisms than older students. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that the knowledge of phraseologisms has its specific features.<sup>4</sup>

Hereby, I would like to emphasise that the aim was not to conduct a large-scale questionnaire for making final conclusions but instead, to obtain an initial understanding and experience for further similar activities.

## 2. Questionnaire among Estonian schoolchildren

With an aim to ascertain the spread of the oldest phraseological expressions, regarded as of purely Estonian origin, I prevalingly included the old expressions in the list (see Table 1) – the ones recorded at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (with a couple of exceptions from the later period). However, the abundance of material in the database was an obstacle complicating the selection as it was not an easy task to screen 35 expressions from among the 170,000 texts. The main selection criterion was the popularity of the expression – this being evidenced by its prevalence in the database of Estonian phrases and phraseologisms and in the dictionary of Estonian phraseology, whereas in the case of the database material, the phrase needed to be written down on numerous occasions and be of wide geographical distribution, not only during the 18–19<sup>th</sup> centuries but also at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With regard to locality-based distribution, I included two expressions in the questionnaire, the prevalence of which is strictly limited to a particular region.

The majority of the earlier sources of the expressions in the questionnaire are represented in the database of Estonian phraseologisms and simultaneously the most important sources for researching the history of Estonian written language: S. H. Vestring's Estonian-German manuscript dictionary "*Lexikon Esthonicum Germanicum*" (1730s), A. Thor Helle's "*Kurtzgefasste Anweisung zur Ehstrnischen Sprache*" (1732), A. W. Hupel's "*Estnische Sprachlehre für beide Hauptdialekte*" (1780), J. F. Heller's manuscript dictionary of (Southern)Estonian-German languages (evidently compiled during 1823–1841), F. J. Wiedemann's compilation "*Aus dem inneren und äusseren*

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<sup>4</sup> An outstanding example of phraseology in a language with a small number of speakers, similarly to that of the Estonian language, is the monograph by Natalia Filatkina (2005) who conducted in-depth questionnaires, also among schoolchildren, while studying the phraseology of the Luxembourgish/Letzebuergesch, and has claimed that the knowing and actual usage of phraseologisms is not fully interrelated, i.e. the number of known phrases is conspicuously larger than the ones being customarily used.

Leben der Ehsten" (1876), and the periodic folk publication "Sannumetoja" I–VII (1848–1860), compiled by J. V. Jannsen.

The respondents comprised the older students of two upper secondary schools, aged between 16–18, altogether 147 persons: 86 (33 young men and 53 young women) from Kuressaare School in Western Estonia, and 61 (23 young men and 36 young women, 2 without personal data) from Miina Härma Gymnasium in Tartu, South Estonia. Why these schools and why such an age group? These two schools, located in different edges of Estonia (the students come from all over the particular county, or, as in the case of the South-Estonian school, from nearby counties) were selected with an aim to ascertain the actual differences with regard to the knowledge of phraseological subject matter, between the possibly varied speakers of the language concerning their dialectal background (insofar as such a factor plays a role in the current language situation). Thus, the questionnaire also comprised expressions with only a certain regional distribution, according to the database of phrases and phraseologisms.

Likewise, when devising the questionnaire, I considered it important not to be limited to merely closed questions (I know/don't know), but instead, in case of an affirmative response, to ask for a more detailed explanation with regard to the meaning and usage situation of the particular phraseologism. As time-wise the filling in of the questionnaire was restricted to one school lesson (45 minutes), the students tended to provide the explanations of meanings rather than the characteristics of the usage. On rare occasions, the respondents stated: *I don't use it myself, I use it seldom, I use it when...* Such meta-communicative comments primarily serve as reasoning for non-usage or rare usage.

An explanatory comment regarding the table: the number in the second column denotes the position of the phrase in the list "100 best-known Estonian phrases", compiled by Arvo Krikmann (1994: 181–185); the third column of the table shows the consolidated number of affirmative responses, i.e. the total number of respondents from both schools who knew the particular expression.

**Table 1. Phraseologisms, according to the level of respondents' knowledge**

<i>teeb sääsest elevandi</i> (lit. makes an elephant out of a mosquito)	52.	147
<i>ei lausu musta ega valget</i> (lit. doesn't say black or white)		137
<i>süda kukkus saapasäärde</i> (lit. the heart fell in the bootleg)	95.	131

<i>elavad nagu koer ja kass</i> (lit. they live like a cat and dog)	99.	127
<i>nüüd on vesi ahjus</i> (lit. now there is water in the stove)	13.	117
<i>vaatab läbi sõrmede</i> (lit. looks through the fingers)		114
<i>ei näe sõrmegi suhu pista</i> (lit. can't see enough to put a finger in the mouth)		109
<i>käib nagu kass ümber palava pudru</i> (lit. walks like a cat around hot porridge)	31.	102
<i>nagu juudi jõulupuu</i> (lit. like a Jew's Christmas tree)		102
<i>hunt lambanahas</i> (lit. a wolf in sheepskin)		100
<i>peenike peos</i> (lit. thin in the hand)	86.	99
<i>üks jalg hauas, teine haua äärel</i> (lit. one foot in the grave, the other one on the verge of the grave)	11.	96
<i>elab peost suhu</i> (lit. lives from hand to mouth)		91
<i>see on hoopis teine tubakas</i> (lit. this a totally different tobacco)		83
<i>vorst vorsti vastu</i> (lit. a sausage against a sausage)		81
<i>ega sa klaassepa poeg ole</i> (lit. you're not a son of a glass-smith, are you)	39.	73
<i>kõrvatagused alles märjad</i> (lit. still wet behind the ears)	84.	67
<i>must kass on vahelt läbi jooksnud</i> (lit. a black cat has run in-between someone)	83.	55
<i>pane või hambad varna</i> (lit. to hang one's teeth in the rack)	18.	52
<i>segi nagu Kört-Pärtli särk</i> (lit. mixed up as the shirt of Kört-Pärtli)		42
<i>püksid sõeluvad püüli</i> (lit. trousers sift flour)	33.	41
<i>üks silm vaatab tasku, teine taeva</i> (lit. one eye looks into the pocket, the other one at the sky)	38.	35
<i>mitu tuult jalge all</i> (lit. several winds under the feet)		32

<i>ega mu suu pole seinapragu</i> (lit. my mouth is not a crack in the wall)	60.	31
<i>tulid nagu tuld tooma</i> (lit. you came as to bring a light)	52.	21
<i>küll tema teab, kus kivi all vähid on</i> (lit. he would know the stone under which there are crayfish)		19
<i>koergi ei haugu takka</i> (lit. even a dog wouldn't bark at)		14
<i>suurte kõrvadega supilontrus</i> (‘a soup dolt with large ears’)		13
<i>lammas läheb vähi käest villa küsima</i> (lit. a sheep goes to ask wool from a crayfish)	21.	13
<i>mõni mõis või ahjutäis vorste</i> (lit. some manor or a stove-full of sausages)		12
<i>ei vea villast lõngagi katki</i> (lit. wouldn't break a woollen thread)		12
<i>nagu hobuse unenägu</i> (lit. like a horse's dream)		11
<i>nüüd on konn mäta otsas</i> (lit. now the frog is on top of the turf)	9.	11
<i>võta silm näppu</i> (lit. take your eye into your finger)		6
<i>kas oled näinud kellaga siga?</i> (lit. have you seen a pig with a bell?)		0

Attempting to summarise the questionnaire outcomes in advance, the chosen traditional expressions turned out to be totally “live” among today’s youth as the respondents were aware of all the presented phraseologisms (except for one). Undoubtedly, the results would have been different if I had presented the expressions in a context, however, this would have prompted the outcome, particularly as the aim was to ascertain whether the respondents understood the indirect meaning of the phraseologisms. First and foremost, the questionnaire aimed at ascertaining whether the fixed linguistic expressions have a place in the vocabulary (lexicon related knowledge) of today’s school-leavers, and how the use of such expressions has altered. This, in turn, provides evidence of the respondents’ general world-knowledge. In essence, phraseologisms are clearly multi-semantic. The issue, however, is not only in perceiving the transferability, i.e. the indirect meaning on the axis of non-figurative – figurative imagery. The continuum of fixed expressions

is gradational (or, rather a radial unit with a core and periphery), i.e. their motivation level is different and thus, the phrases are understood and interpreted in a different way as they are differently transparent for different language users.<sup>5</sup> Certain phraseological expressions (i.e. the ones known more widely) should presumably be more easily subject to intuitive interpretation than the others.

Both Eckard Roos (2001: 269ff) and Dmitri Dobrovolski (1997: 46ff) have referred to the fact that direct interpretation is ruled out in the case of expressions whereupon the direct meaning is in contradiction with the knowledge of the listener. Such phrases are strongly figurative, which is usually in contrast with the reality (or with our knowledge of this reality), and is coming close to absurdity. Consequently, they are not semantically multi-meaningful (as they do not allow for two different interpretations). However, as revealed by way of the questionnaire, direct (or verbatim) interpretation of the imagery within the expression would commence immediately once the respondent lacks knowledge with regard to the phraseologism, and although the outcome of such an interpretation is extremely improbable, i.e. not corresponding to the reality, it would not be discarded as an inappropriate one. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that there is no one and only proper verbatim interpretation, instead, there can be many of them. Harald Burger (2003: 56ff) has emphasised this standpoint, focusing on the concept of component-free meaning and conceptualising this as the polysemic free use of the words within the composition of a phraseologism.

During the recent times, the term frequently used in the phraseology related statements and articles is salience, or more precisely, graduated salience, particularly in connection with the semantics of the phraseologism,<sup>6</sup> denoting that besides the activation of the direct meaning of the non-fixed expressions, there is also a simultaneous analogous activity going on, i.e. the activation of the phraseological meaning in the mental context, but first, the known meaning of the expression is being activated (irrespective of the context). And if this meaning is not appropriate, the construction of other meanings would be initiated. Rachel Giora, known as the spokesperson of the graded salience theory, has underlined (2003: 19) the fact that the idiomatic meaning of the idioms is indeed their salient meaning and this is activated faster than other possible meanings.

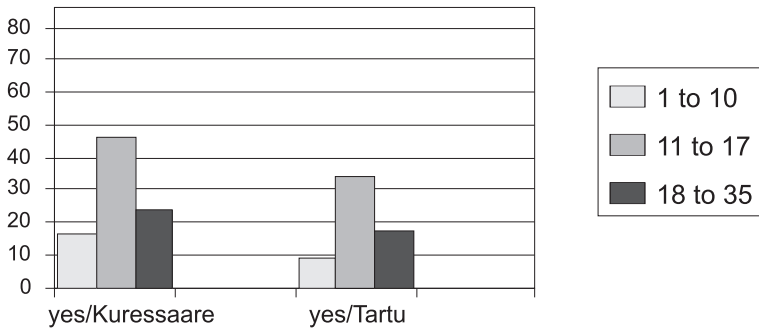
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<sup>5</sup> According to cognitivists, all the expressions are more or less transparent and there are no fully opaque utterances as the interpretation would stem from personal linguistic intuition.

<sup>6</sup> See Farø, Hallsteinsdóttir (2006).

There were no significant differences between the schools, incl. the expressions with a dialectal background, therefore, it is possible to talk about common features and trends. Still, it is necessary to take into account that this was an initial attempt in this field and the relevant conclusions should be regarded with concessions. Nevertheless, it is possible to point out certain numerical figures – the ratio of affirmative responses is presented comparatively in Table 2.

**Table 2. Comparative ratio of affirmative responses in both schools**



Out of the 86 students of Kuressaare School, more than half provided affirmative responses, i.e. 24 pupils in 18–35 cases; and 17 students out of the total of 61 in the Tartu-based Gymnasium. *Yes*-answers were given most of all in 11–17 cases (46–34). On an average, the respondents knew 14 (14.1–14.9) expressions, which is slightly less than half the phrases (out of the total of 35 expressions). The number of the most aware students (20–26 phraseologisms out of 35) was 15 in Kuressaare and 7 in Tartu, thus a mere third in the former school and even less in the latter.

In-between the affirmative and negative answers, there were the ones I marked with a question mark as the explanations somewhat deviated from the common meaning of the phraseologism, the relevant cases are analysed below. The total number of such dissimilar explanations of the meaning is not too large: 102 out of the 2,135 answers given by the pupils of the Tartu school and 113 cases out of the 3,010 answers of Kuressaare schoolchildren. With regard to both schools, the relevant average would be 2.9–3.2 expressions out of 35. These are actually the answers that are particularly interesting for a phraseologist as they indicate how an unknown expression is being conceptualised. There is only one coinciding expression in the first three dissimilar interpretations – *must kass on vahelt läbi jooksnud* (lit. black cat has run in-between someone), the others are different in the two schools. Indeed,



it is an interesting factor that such answers were mostly given by young men who were in the minority among the respondents.

In the following, I will observe the semantic explanations which are somewhat deviant from the conventional meaning of the phraseologism. The main meaning of the phraseologism is the one presented in the dictionary of Estonian phraseology (FS) or, if the phrase is not existent therein or has a slightly different incidence, it is the meaning given in the database of Estonian phrases and phraseologisms (EKFA).

### 3. Explanation of the meaning of phraseologisms

#### 3.1. Explication of the phrase with another expression

It is conspicuous in the case of several phraseologisms that another expression or figurative utterance is used when explaining the particular phrase. Psycho-linguistically, this is an interesting situation – a relevant expression is associated with another expression with the same or similar meaning, or with a vivid single word. From a cognitivistic viewpoint, such distinctive co-existence could be referred to as a mental network associated with one and the same conceptual domain (or instead – an expression acts as a factor, eliciting or activating other phenomena associated with this factor and defined in the memory as *scripts*<sup>7</sup>). There is also a conspicuous structural similarity noted at this point, i.e. the expressions are similar in their form. This being the phenomenon which has been referred to in connection with questionnaires, particularly during the recent years – the cognitive processing of an expression is not conditioned by the obtained knowledge but instead, by certain in-depth structures:<sup>8</sup>

- (1) *segi nagu Kört-Pärtli särk* (lit. mixed up as the shirt of Kört-Pärtli) '*kõik on pilla-palla laiali*' (lit. everything is scattered around), '*suur segapudru*' (lit. a big mess), '*tohuvaohu*' (lit. shambles) (FS '*segamini, sassis*' (lit. scattered, messy));

<sup>7</sup> The notion of *script*, taken from cognitive theory, (e.g. Anna Wierzbicka 1999) is focal in the theory of humour (Victor Raskin's script theory of humour). In Estonia, the relevant (stimulus)word and the surrounding semantic information has been thoroughly discussed by Arvo Krikmann in his monograph (2004).

<sup>8</sup> Hereby, Dobrovolski refers to the variation based on analogy, rather than observing the norm (Dobrovolski 1997: 36).

- (2) *ei lausu musta ega valget* (lit. doesn't say black or white) '*vait kui sukk'* (lit. quiet as a stocking), '*ei ütle head ega halba'* (lit. doesn't say good or bad), '*ei ütle ei nii ega naa'* (lit. doesn't say this way or that way) (FS '*mitte ühtegi sõna, mitte midagi ütlema'* (lit. not to say a word, to say nothing));
- (3) *ei näe sõrmegi suhu pista* (lit. can't see enough to put a finger in the mouth) '*kottpime'* (lit. pitch-dark), '*pilkane pime'* (lit. impenetrably dark), '*pime kui öö'* (lit. dark as night) (FS '*väga pime'* (lit. very dark)).

### 3.2. Understanding the expression only in its direct meaning

Still, as a phraseologist I consider the so-called wrong answers as the most interesting ones. It is necessary to bear in mind in case of such responses that the respondent, when not knowing the phrase, could have attempted to interpret or re-motivate this, either directly or on the basis of certain associations. The semantic aspect is of greatest relevance in the case of a phraseologism, more precisely, the ratio of the phraseological meaning and direct meaning. The discrepancy, non-compatibility and contradiction of these two meanings condition the (semantic) idiomaticity of the expression. However, it turns out that this idiomaticity might not be perceived or recognised any more, i.e. the expressions could still be opaque for the language user, and the rendering sense to the phrase is done analytically, thus, in the case of such an expression, the salient meaning is the direct one:

- (4) *vaatab läbi sõrmede* (lit. looks through the fingers) '*doesn't really want to have a look'*, '*fearful, fear'*, '*peeks'*, '*timid'* (FS '*millelegi taunitavale reageerimata jätma'* (lit. not to react to something condemnable));
- (5) *püksid sõeluoad püüli* (lit. trousers sift flour) '*worn trousers'*, '*so many holes in the trousers, broken'*, '*torn trousers'* (FS '*kartma'* (lit. to be afraid));
- (6) *ega sa klaassepa poeg ole* (lit. you're not a son of a glass-smith, are you) '*you're not that fragile'*, '*does everything in a very tender and careful manner'*, '*break'*, '*softy, pussy'* (FS '*öeldakse valguse ees seisjale'* (lit. the phrase is said to a person standing in front of the light));
- (7) *kõrvatagused alles märjad* (lit. still wet behind the ears) '*has been swimming'*, '*just born'*, '*rushing'* (FS '*noor ja kogematu'* (lit. young and inexperienced));
- (8) *ei näe sõrmegi suhu pista* (lit. can't even see to put a finger in the mouth) '*he is blind'* (FS '*väga pime'* (lit. very dark));
- (9) *peenike peos* (lit. thin in the hand) '*something is in the hand'* (FS '*raskes olukorras'* (lit. in a difficult situation)).

### 3.3. Altered meaning of the expression

The abundance of similar answers given with regard to the following fourteen expressions clearly revealed a semantic change having taken place in the meaning. These are the phrases the meaning of which so-to-say glows through (partially or fully motivated), and therefore, the interpretation is based on the salient direct meaning or associating connections. The expressions in this current group, differently from the previous one, are the phrases with a slightly deviant variation from the conventional meaning (whereas some of them are closer to the common meaning than others, however, assessing the relevant distance is largely subjective).

Where possible, the examples showing the use of the particular phrase on the Internet are also included in the group below, indicating the expressions used in the same or similar meaning as the phrase given to the respondents in the questionnaire, aiming at referring to the topicality of such expressions in order to make the language more expressional also today. As is evidenced from the examples, phraseologisms may be treated relatively freely. At the same time, the skill to playfully treat and manage a cliché-type phraseologism can be seen as an example of exquisite language acquisition.

(10) *ei vea villast lõngagi katki* (lit. wouldn't break a woollen thread) '*laisk*' (lit. lazy) (EKFA)

The explanations given by respondents are clearly based on pure physical strength, i.e. someone is thought to be so powerless to be unable to break such an easy thing as woollen thread: 'weak', 'no strength', 'not strong', 'fragile/tender', 'is not capable of causing harm to anyone', 'inapt'.

(11) *must kass on vahelt läbi jooksnud* (lit. a black cat has run in-between two people) '*kellegi vahel on lahkkelid, keegi on omavahel tülli või pahuksisse läinud*' (lit. disagreements between someone, people having a conflict or bearing a grudge against each other) (FS)

However, the semantic explication given by the schoolchildren is rather relying on a belief, which by now is a common belief. A mishap would happen if a black cat crosses the street: 'many people think that a black cat would bring bad luck, it is used when people are quarrelling', 'everything is going badly', 'an accident has happened', 'everything goes wrong due to some reason', 'misery and quarrelling'.<sup>9</sup>

*Tüli võibolla ei tulegi, aga must kass jookseb meie vahelt läbi küll.* (lit. Maybe there will be no fight, but a black cat is indeed running between us.) (P&K 2007)

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ger. *da ist die schwarze Katze zwischen gekommen* 'will eine Sache gar nicht gedeihen, so sagt man deshalb' (Röhrich 1973). [lit. Is used when things do not go well].

- (12) *ega mu suu pole seinapragu* (lit. my mouth is not a crack in the wall) *'keegi tahab ka midagi maitsta, keegi tunneb ka millestki maitsvast rõõmu'* (lit. someone else also wants to taste something, someone is also enjoying something tasty) (FS)

In the semantic explanations, the focus is on the mouth as the speech organ. Proceeding from this visualisation, the respondents have derived dual meanings: in comparison with the mouth, the crack in the wall is something which is constantly open as in a human being who cannot keep his/her mouth shut, or, vice versa, something from which the sound cannot come out:

- a) 'chatterbox', 'I have a lot to say, 'dares to talk', 'pole vastusega kitsi', 'is not scanty in the reply', 'there is no need to babble after things have gone wrong, when nothing can be saved anymore';
- b) 's/he wouldn't tell on someone, reliable', 's/he's not talkative', 'I would not do idle talk', 'not everything is spoken out, stupidities, for instance'.

*Korterite teema kohapealt peaks Atoneni suu küll seinapragu olema.* (lit. Concerning the topic of flats, Atonen's mouth should indeed be a crack in the wall) (PM 2004)

*Imbetsill postita vähem, sinu suu on siin foorumis seinapragu, saa sellest lõpuks aru, sa seletad liiiga palju.* (lit. You imbecile, you should not comment as much, your mouth in this forum is a crack in the wall, you should finally understand this, you talk too much.) (Freetime 2007)

- (13) *pane või hambad varna* (lit. to hang one's teeth in the rack) *'nälga jääma, nälgima'* (lit. to be hungry, starve) (FS)

The expression is understood as a situation whereupon someone starts to rest, or as giving up something which is essential for the existence; in the latter case, the outcome goes beyond the traditional meaning, denoting the inevitable end: 'can't help but die', 'to finish a job, to remain something unfinished, to die', 'maybe to end the action, it's a comparison with an end or death', 'a sick person is going to die', 'a plan to rest', 'väga vana', 'very old, nothing to eat any more, so there is nothing else to do for the teeth than to rest (in a rack)', 'or finish what you are doing (comparison with the end or death)')

*Kui teha paar visiiti kihvatohtri juurde, ongi kõik. Millest siis aga elada? Ega jää muud üle, kui hambad varna ja otse hauda!!!* (lit. When you visit the dentist for a couple of times, that's it. What can you live on after this? Nothing else to do but to hang the teeth in the rack and straight into the grave!!!) (KN 2007)

- (14) *nagu hobuse unenägu* (lit. like a horse's dream) *'mõttetus, absurdus'* (lit. senselessness, absurdity) (FS); *'vilets asi; rumal või inetu või pikaldane in-*

*imene; segane asi'* (lit. a lousy thing; a stupid or ugly or tardy person; a vague thing) (EKFA)

With regard to this expression, it is conspicuous that the meaning given in the dictionary is much more generalised than the one presented in the database. Still, the interpretations by the school students and the Internet-based cases of using the phrase indicate that the meaning tends to be analogous with the definition in the database texts:

- (a) 'a big sleep';
- (b) 'you can say this about a person who is constantly following you', 'something which is very long, boring and sluggish', 'something very long'.

*Paratamatult tekib aga küsimus, milleks siis haridus üldse on, kui ametite loomulik hierarhia on segi nagu hobuse unenägu.* (lit. Inevitably, a question arises as to what is the purpose of education if the natural hierarchy of agencies is mixed up like a horse's dream.) (Delfi 2007)

*Ja õhu teekond mootoriruumis pikk nagu hobuse unenägu.* (lit. And the movement of air in the engine room is long like a horse's dream.) (Saabnet 2006)

- (15) *tulid nagu tuld tooma* (lit. you came as if to bring a light) 'korraks, lühikeseks ajaks kellegi poolt läbi astuma, kedagi väga põgusalt külastama' (lit. to drop by at someone's place for a moment, for a short time, to visit someone very briefly) (FS)

Indeed, the explanations are based on the fire associated with light, and the act of bringing light is understood as setting fire, i.e. dangerous actions by someone (a). Quite surprisingly, there were also interpretations with a totally opposite, i.e. positive meaning (fire as light) (b):

- a) 'to pick a quarrel', 'you came to quarrel', 'to squabble', 'you came as if to bring trouble/mishap', 'you came angrily',

*Heameelt teeb seegi, et minister ei tulnud vaid tuld tooma ja poliitloengut pidama, vaid leidis aega paar tundi kohalikku elu vaadata.* (lit. It is also very gratifying that the minister did not only come to bring the light but also found a couple of hours to look at the local life.) (EPL 2007)

- b) 'you came to bring good', 'you saved from the bad'.

- (16) *süda kukkus saapasäärde* (lit. the heart fell in the bootleg) 'keegi hakkab kartma, lööb araks, kellelgi kaob julgus' (lit. to become afraid, to become frightened, to lose courage) (FS)

This is an example of how an efficient figurative expression can obtain meanings wherein conceptually, the respondents move to totally different domains (yet not too distant ones). Thus, the explanations mainly describe the spiritual states of a human being. Likewise, the example from the Internet vividly

shows that the heart can move downwards only because of certain difficulties or burdens; whereas the difficult, downhearted attitude is rather associated with sadness. According Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 15–16), this can be referred to as orientation metaphor HAPPY IS UPWARDS, UNHAPPY IS DOWNWARDS.

*Järjekordset massiivset ja argumenteerimata linnavaramüüki põhjendades ütles abilinnapea Aaviksoo, et toetas seda raske südamega. Uskuge mind, kõigile on näha, et süda on juba nii raske, et on vajunud saapasäärde.* (lit. When justifying another mass-scale and unreasonable sale of the city's property, Aaviksoo, the vice mayor, said that he supported this with a heavy heart. Believe me, everyone can see that the heart is already that much heavy that it has fallen in the bootleg.) (Palts 2005)

(17) *suurte kõrvadega supilontrus* (lit. a soup dolt with large ears) '*poisikeste omavaheline tögamissõna*' (lit. a mocking phrase between boys) (EKFA)

Meaning-related explanations proceed from the appearance, without further generalisation, i.e. the next phase of conceptualisation:

- (a) 'this is an extremely big jerk', 'well, simply ugly', 'so stupid that is similar to a soup bowl', 'ears have become loose', 'when the ears are very big so that to eat soup';
- (b) 'listens in on everything, also the things that shouldn't be', 'is eavesdropping all the time, can spread the rumours'.

Differently from the explanations given by the school students, the examples from the Internet are not focused on the human being but rather on the animal, more precisely, the dog.

*Supilontrus 'supisõbralik peni (eriti asjakohane ütlus, kui isend juhtub olema sündinud suurte laperdavate kõrvadega, mis iseenesest mõista alatasa supi sees tolgendavad)*' (lit. Soup dolt 'a soup-friendly dog (a particularly appropriate expression when the animal happens to be born with large flapping ears which would inevitably dangle in the soup ever so often') (EESS)

*Üks supilontrus loivab sulle padja peale (muideks nad just hommikul õppisid kõndimise ära!) ning sikutab end küünte abiga su otsaesisele magama. Nii me siis magasime terve öö otsa.* (lit. A soup dolt would swagger onto your pillow (by the way, they learnt to walk this morning!) and, with its claws, would pull itself up to sleep on your forehead. This is how we slept all night.) (Ussipesa 2005)

*Isiklikult kassid ei sümpatiseeri aga koeri armastan küll – endalgi üks spanjelist supilontrus.* (lit. Personally, I don't sympathise with cats but I do love dogs – and have a spaniel soup dolt myself.) (Keskmaa 2004)

(18) *hunt lambanahas* (lit. a wolf in sheepskin) '*malbusega oma kurje kavatsusi varjav inimene, vagurust teesklev kuri inimene*' (lit. a person disguising

his/her bad intentions with meekness, an evil person pretending to be humble) (FS)

Several explanations indeed rely on the symbol-centred concept of the sheep as a shy animal (a), whereas courageousness is attributed to the wolf, although this is not the main characteristic of this animal (instead, it would be impertinence or impudent boldness which is also the basis of the given expression); in addition, the respondents, when knowing the phrase well, developed the conventional meaning in an original manner (b), the same refers to the examples on the Internet:

- a) 'fear', 'timid', 'actually, it is a courageous person but shows the opposite', 'weak outside, strong inside', 'shows that s/he is strong, but actually is cowardly', 'brave, but nothing to boast about';
- b) 'an extremely strong or tough guy would become frightened', 'appearance is modest, but the inside is tough', 'looks nice but with shitty character'.

*Saatuslikuks saab hunt lambanahas, kus kiskja iseloom lõpuks peale jääb. Kui koalitsioonilepe ka vormistatakse, saab sellele saatuslikuks ikkagi Laari leppimatus temale antud positsiooniga.* (lit. The wolf in sheepskin is going to be fatal, whereby the predator's nature is going to prevail. Even if the coalition treaty be finalised, the fact that Laar would not come to terms with the position given to him would be fatal for it.) (PM 2007)

*Itaallastest rääkides pakuks sellist hunt lambanahas valemite – võtad mittemidagiütleva kerega alfetta põhjale ehitatud sedaani ning varustada selle Alfa 24V 3,0 V6-ga (tulemus – imehea kaalujaotusega võimas ning üsna tuima välimusega isend).* (lit. When talking about the Italians, I would offer the following wolf in sheepskin formula – you take the sedan built on the basis of the alfetta's inexpressive body and equip this with Alfa 24V 3.0 V6 (the outcome – a car with a powerful weight distribution and relatively dull exterior).) (Auto24 2006)

*Eriti tore on see, et neile paigaldatakse ls1(corvette) mootorit, mõnus hunt lambanahas.* (lit. What's particularly nice is that the ls1(corvette) engine is going to be installed on them, a nice wolf in sheepskin.) (Stretrace 2007)

- (19) *nüüd on konn mäta otsas* (lit. now the frog is on top of the turf) 'oma positsiooniga uhkeldav, suurustav inimene' (lit. a person boasting with his/her position, a bragging person) (FS)

As such, the relevant expression is not presented in the dictionary of phraseology, and is used more likely as a comparison (also in the Internet examples of using the expression). This could be the probable reason why the phrase is not well known among schoolchildren. As becomes evident from some of the explanations given by the pupils, the expression is also perceived as

having a positive meaning – reaching a higher place (position) as a sign of enhancement, a change in a situation towards the better) (a). In such a case, there is a recognisable orientation metaphor behind it GOOD IS UP, BAD IS DOWN. On the other hand, however, the respondents also gave totally contradictory explanations, with a negative marking, similarly to the dictionary of phraseology, yet referring to circumstances rather than a person (b):

- a) ‘a person who feels good and safe’, ‘everything is alright, ready’, ‘the aim has been achieved’;

*Peale väheste visionääride, kes oma ambitsioone liigselt ei reklaami, on suurel osal meist kombeks elada omi asju ajades nagu konnad mättal, kes, tundes küll hästi oma lompi, on kogu maastiku suhtes üsna ükskõiksed.* (lit. Besides a few visionary people who do not excessively advertise their ambitions, there are many of us who are accustomed to live and do our things like frogs on top of the turf, who know their puddle well but are relatively indifferent about the entire landscape.) (Diplomaatia 2005)

*On tavaline, et see, kes oma raha rahandusministrilt või Riigikogult on välja võidelnud, istub nagu konn mäta otsas ja peab seda raha enda omaks.* (lit. It is customary that those who have fought for their money and obtained it from the minister of finance or the parliament, would sit like a frog on top the turf and regard this money as their own.) (KN 2002)

- b) ‘a frog out of water’, ‘trouble in the house’.

(20) *mitu tuult jalge all* (lit. several winds under the feet) ‘*kellelgi on palju tegemisi, ettevõtmisi, sündmusi ees*’ (lit. someone who has a lot of undertakings and events to come) (FS)

Many of the relevant interpretations were based on an imagination of aimless and rapid movement (cf. *kadus kui tuul* (lit. disappeared like the wind)) (a). Some of the transferred meanings (b) seem to rely on associational links with other expressions, e.g. *kust tuul, sealt meel* (lit. the mind changes according to the direction of the wind). In addition, I differentiated a separate semantic explanation whereby the phrase *uute tuulte* (lit. new winds), denoting changes, is developed further into *paremad tuuled* (lit. better winds) (c). The phrase *mitu tuult* (lit. several winds) has most probably been the guidance in explanations associated with the expression *mitu rauda tules* (lit. several irons in the fire) ‘*mitut võimalust alal hoidma*’ (lit. to hold on to several opportunities) (d):

- a) ‘to escape’, ‘is running very quickly’, ‘very quick’, ‘is not capable of staying in place, has to be in constant movement’, ‘travels all the time’, ‘travelling constantly’;
- b) ‘goes everywhere depending on the mood’, ‘has several ideas what to do but has not yet made a decision’, ‘many thoughts in one’s head’;



- c) 'goes where the winds are better';
- d) 'has a hand on in many places', 'is involved in several things, e.g. a man is dating two at the time', 'is dating with several hags.

(21) *koergi ei haugu takka* (lit. even a dog would not bark at) '*kellelgi pole juhtunuga asja, keegi ei päri juhtunu kohta, juhtunu ei lähe kellelegi korda*' (lit. no one has anything to do with the case, no one would ask about what happened, no one cares about what has happened) (FS)

Differently from the common meaning, the semantic explanations of the schoolchildren tend to bear in mind a living object, i.e. that there is no interest in someone, or that no one could care less about someone so that even the dog would bark at this person: 'someone who is not being missed, 'an especially pointless guy'. The examples found on the Internet usually refer to the events that have taken place in real life.

*Prükkari surma üle ei haugu ka koer.* (lit. Even a dog would not bark at the death of a dropout.) (TOM 2002)

*Kas too vald on omaette riik riigis, teevad, mis ise heaks arvavad, koergi ei haugu (politseist rääkimata).* (lit. Is that rural municipality a separate state within the state, they do whatever they want, even a dog would not bark (not to speak of the police).) (VT 2005)

(22) *elab peost suhu* (lit. lives from hand to mouth) '*vaeselt, tagavaradeta, saadut kohe ära kasutades elama*' (lit. to live poorly, without anything in stock, immediately using what has been received) (FS)

The semantics of the expression is again revealed by the respondents in a direct sense, i.e. the focus is on food which is either self-procured (a) or obtained from others (i.e. from the hands of other people) (b). A certain philosophical approach (today-tomorrow, present-past) can be noted in the explanations given with regard to this particular expression (c), not so conspicuous in the case of other phraseologisms. Surprisingly, the expression can also have a positive connotation – denoting someone who would save rather than spend (d):

- a) 'what's in the hand would be immediately eaten, 'lives poorly, there is money only for food';
- b) 'a poor person with no property, eats when other people give him food', 'lives very poorly, thanks to the offerings of other people, 'everything is done [for this person]', 'lives at the expense of others, 'lives on the offerings of other people';
- c) 'lives one day at a time and doesn't care about tomorrow', 'the person does not plan his future, and does, e.g. odd jobs to survive)', 'from payday to payday';

d) 'not much money to waste', 'lives sparingly'.

*Mis on vahepeal toimunud? Suurt midagi, elu nagu ikka: mitte peost suhu, aga peost peoni (soolaleivoad, EV aastapäev, kokakursuste lõpetamine jne).* (lit. What has happened in the meantime? Not much, life as usual: not from hand to mouth but from hand to party (housewarming parties, anniversary of the Republic of Estonia, graduation from cookery courses, etc.)) (Wordpress 2007)

(23) *Kas kellaga siga nägid?* (lit. Have you seen a pig with a bell?)

As mentioned in the introduction, the list presented in the questionnaire was presumably comprised of generally known expressions, however, with one exception – a rhetoric question, targeted at people who are unable to greet. The heyday of this expression was indeed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to the database of Estonian phrases and phraseologisms, yet the most recent usage instances date from 1990. At least the archival material allows us to conclude that the expression was mainly used in mainland Estonia (except for some district on the islands, with the form of the expression as *Oled sa siga näind?* (lit. Have you seen a pig?)). However, the background of the phraseological imagery has remained somewhat obscure. Being aware that the expression was popular in the bygone times, I had still included it in the list with a hope to get proof to the supposition that the phrase would indeed be unknown at present.

Therefore, the results were not at all surprising as the expression was indeed categorised as an unfamiliar one. Still, with an interesting particular feature – there were respondents among the Tartu schoolchildren who offered their interpretation. These semantic versions stemmed from the verbatim interpretation of the unusual imagery, i.e. a pig with a watch as something unusual: 'sarcastic offence of someone who has seen something unbelievable', 'about something impossible', 'have you ever seen anything like that, have you seen such a wonder?', 'maybe a parallel with like a saddle on a pig, meaning inappropriate?' The use of the another expression *nagu sadul sea seljas* (lit. like a saddle on a pig) as a semantic explanation refers to associative links – a saddle on a pig as something inappropriate or unthinkable, similarly to the pig with a bell.

#### 4. Conclusion

Although the primary intrinsic feature of phraseologisms is fixity – evident in designations as fixed expression, fixed phrase, etc. – this is not the

property that would totally exclude any kind of change, lexical or semantic. Idiomaticity and motivation – the two characteristic features of phraseologisms can be of different weight in different expressions, and it is particularly the ones with intensive idiomaticity that tend to be really difficult for language users. The questionnaire, an attempt to obtain relevant data from among the Estonian upper secondary school students, revealed that in a situation where the respondents were unaware of the phraseologism, they might still try to solve it, and depending on the motivation level of the particular expression, the outcome need not be too distant from the so-called conventional meaning.

As a general conclusion regarding the questionnaire, it can be said that the selected expressions, considered to be traditional, turned out to be fully alive also among the today's youth as the respondents knew all the presented phrases (though with one exception). The outcome would have definitely been different if I had presented the expressions in the relevant context, however, this would have been prompting instead, especially when the desired aim was to ascertain the understanding of the indirect meaning of the phrase.

Semantic changes denoted in a number of expressions – interestingly, in the case of the same phrases in both schools – create a lot of questions. Namely, could we conclude that there has been a semantic modification in the course of time? And can this tendency be generalised to the entire phraseology-related knowledge? Relying on the results of the given questionnaire, I would claim that this knowledge does indeed exist but it has altered to a certain extent. Maybe it is hereby appropriate to use the term from social psychology, “tolerance of ambiguity”<sup>10</sup> and to adapt this also in understanding and conceptualising phraseologisms. As became evident from the questionnaire, the respondents, when not knowing the phrase, would commence with direct (or verbatim) interpretation of the figurative image therein, and although the outcome of this process is (extremely) unlikely and does not correspond with reality, such a version is not discarded as inappropriate. Hereby, it is important to bear in mind that there is no one and only so-called correct interpretation, instead, there can be several of them.

Possibly, it is reasonable to treat the semantics of the phraseologism in a wider sense than the common meaning fixed in a dictionary or database. Such an approach would provide a basis for a tolerant attitude towards the playful use of phraseological expressions. At the moment, there are actually

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<sup>10</sup> The term is used to denote the ability to accept something different, contradictory; this property is also considered to be the pre-requisite of an individual's cultural competence (Wikipedia).

more questions than unambiguous answers, yet an introduction has been made for further research.

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## O semantycznej dwuznaczności frazeologizmów

### Streszczenie

Ważną cechą frazeologizmów jest ich stabilność, co potwierdzają takie terminy, jak: *stałe połączenia wyrazowe*, *ustalone kombinacje wyrazowe*, itp. – jednak ta cecha nie wyklucza różnorodnych zmian, zarówno na płaszczyźnie leksykalnej, jak i semantycznej. Powszechnie wiadomo, że dwie charakterystyczne cechy frazeologizmów – idiomatyczność i motywacja – mogą mieć różne znaczenie w zależności od typu danego związku, a wysoki stopień idiomatyczności może sprawiać dużą trudność użytkownikowi języka. Problemy związane z rozumieniem związków frazeologicznych są zazwyczaj omawiane w kontekście badań nierodzimych użytkowników języka. Należy podkreślić, że zagadnienie to dotyczy również rodzimych użytkowników poszczególnych języków. Przykładowo, ankieta dotycząca znajomości stałych połączeń wyrazowych przeprowadzona wśród uczniów szkół średnich w dwóch estońskich szkołach pokazała, że znane powszechnie jednostki używane są przez młodsze pokolenie w nieco innym znaczeniu.

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## Similar Functions of Phraseological Units: Cases of the Patterns '*And + Conjunctive Adverb*' and '*But + Conjunctive Adverb*'

**Abstract.** Phraseological units that consist of '*and + conjunctive adverb*' or '*but + conjunctive adverb*' – such as *and nevertheless*, *but nevertheless*, *and still*, *but still*, *and yet*, and *but yet* – are found in various corpora. On the basis of a syntactic and semantic investigation of such examples collected from the corpora, this paper concludes that phraseological units consisting of '*and + conjunctive adverb*' have two functions: (1) to serve as a copulative emphatic form of the conjunction *and* when it connects the present statement to the preceding one and (2) to perform the original function of a conjunctive adverb. Phraseological units that consist of '*but + conjunctive adverb*' behave as an adversative or a rousing emphatic form of the conjunction *but* and the conjunctive adverb. Thus, the same principle applies to the formation of the phraseological unit '*and + conjunctive adverb*' and '*but + conjunctive adverb*'.

**Key words:** *semantic identification, emphatic copulative conjunction, adversative conjunction, linguistic economy, analogy*

### 1. Introduction

This paper reports on a corpus-based investigation of the functions of phraseological units (which are defined as multi-word units that have various meanings in line with each context) consisting of '*and + conjunctive adverb*' and '*but + conjunctive adverb*', such as *and besides*, *but besides*, *and then*, and *but then* developing the arguments presented in Inoue (2009a, b).

Inoue (2009a, b) expounds on the different functions of *yet*, *and yet*, and *but yet*. The phraseological unit *and yet* has two functions: it behaves as an adversary conjunction or, when connecting the present statement with the preceding one, it works as an emphatic form of the conjunction *and*. On the other hand, *but yet* emphasizes the contrast between the previous and the present

statements. Finally, *yet* can function as an adversary or copulative conjunction, similar to *and yet*.

On the basis of the above observations, we can draw the following conclusions. Please see Figure 1.

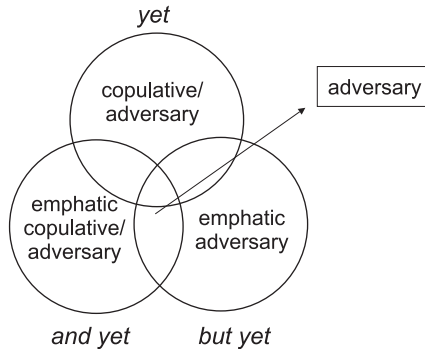


Figure 1. The correlation between *and yet*, *but yet*, and *yet* [modified in Inoue 2009a]

Figure 1 illustrates two points: first, *yet* operates somewhere between *and yet* and *but yet*, which suggests that it determines the functions of the other two phraseological units (i.e. *yet* is an unmarked phraseological unit between them). Second, the adversary function that constitutes the core function of *and yet*, *but yet*, and *yet* leads to the conclusion that the root function of *yet* as an adversary exists even when it is functioning as a conjunctive adverb.

According to Quirk *et al.* (1985: 645), the conjunctive adverbs following *and* and *but* are thought to be limited to those indicated in (1)

- (1) *and/but + besides/then (again)/still/yet/nevertheless*

In addition, the conjunctive adverbs in (1) fall into the following subtypes based on the explanation in Quirk *et al.* (1985: 634).

- (2) a. *besides* belongs to the reinforcing subtype of the additive conjunct  
 b. *then* belongs to summative  
 c. *yet, still, nevertheless, and besides* belong to the concessive of contrastive conjunct

Please note that *besides* is categorized into both reinforcing and concessive.

This research scrutinises that the results concerning *and yet*, *but yet*, and *yet* obtained in Inoue (2009a, b) are supported in the case of ‘*and + conjunctive adverb*’, ‘*but + conjunctive adverb*’, and ‘*conjunctive adverb*’, such as *and/but besides*, *and/but then*, *and/but still*, and *and/but nevertheless* tackling the following questions in (3).

- (3) a. What are the functions of ‘*and + conjunctive adverb*’, ‘*but + conjunctive adverb*’, and ‘*conjunctive adverb*’?



- b. What is the relationship between 'and + conjunctive adverb', 'but + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb'?
- c. What grammatical structures include the use of 'and/but + conjunctive adverb'?
- d. What is the underlying principle of the phraseological units 'and/but + conjunctive adverb'?

**2. Question (3a): What are the functions of 'and + conjunctive adverb', 'but + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb'? and Question (3b): What is the relationship between 'and + conjunctive adverb', 'but + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb'?**

**2.1. The case of *and besides*, *but besides*, and *besides***

According to the previous research on *besides*, *and besides*, and *but besides*, *besides* functions to add new information to something that a speaker is mentioning. Generally, it follows sentences (e.g. *I don't want to go shopping. Besides, I haven't got any money.* (MED<sup>2</sup>)). LDCE<sup>5</sup> treats *besides* in the same way as *and besides* (e.g. *I need money. And besides, when I agree to do something, I do it.*). Also, *besides* is used synonymously as *in addition to* and *also*. However, very little has been written on the functions of *and besides* and *but besides* in previous research.

First, let us begin with looking at examples (4) to (6) of *besides* (underlined by the author).

(4) "Of course you must come with us, Henry, dear. I insist. Besides Margot will be so pleased." "I really don't see why any hostess should be pleased to see a total stranger arrive at her dinner party" [BNC]

(5) KING: The drummer's importance in the band or the group, would be explained how? Krupa once – Buddy Rich said – Buddy Rich told me once it's the driving force of any group.

STARR: Besides it's the driving force, sometimes it's you're holding the reins so that others don't like race off, you know, 'cause...

[LKL, June., 1998]

(6) After dining with the Dixons, he comments that Mrs. Dixon is a respectable piano-player and beautiful singer, and her husband an excellent violinist. After attending Mr. Earl's ball in November 1816 he wrote simply, "Earl a bad fiddler." There were many other entertainments besides music. [BNC]

In examples (4) to (6), *besides* introduces new information to something pre-

viously mentioned. (4) and (5) reveal that *besides* follows a *that*-clause, but the *that* of the *that*-clause tends to have been elided. *Besides* in (6) behaves like *in addition to* or *also*, which means that it works as a copulative.

Next, let us observe the examples of *and besides*.

- (7) .... So I was – I had a major hazing. But finally, when I figured out what was going on – it took me a while to even get it – I went to Jody, and I said: “This is unfair. And besides, you’re **only** cutting off the CBS audience from hearing what you have to say.” And we had the biggest audience in those days.... [LKL, Jan., 1999]
- (8) MADONNA: Well, she sees my naked body almost every day. I don’t think she’s going to be freaked out about it. I..  
KING: You don’t – you don’t think it will bother her.  
MADONNA: No, not at all. And besides, if you really read and you know me and you know my sense of humor.... [LKL, Jan., 1999]
- (9) RON HOWARD, DIRECTOR: But I know a lot of you are thinking that I’m just following some liberal Hollywood trend. That’s not me. And besides, if I was anything less than sincere, would I do this? .... [LKL, Oct., 2008]
- (10) .... Last year, I took some English. I couldn’t teach it. I was nervous, and besides not being able to do it as well, you need a different approach to what you take in art. [BNC]

Words such as *if* or *only* in bold type in (7) to (9), which imply the speaker’s emphasis that something must happen before something else can happen, are observed as a syntactic peculiarity of *and besides*. *And besides* in (7) to (10) functions to add new information to the previous statement or to explain, using words such as *if* or *only*, a meaning that limits a situation in order to make the new information specific. Hence, we are able to describe *and besides* as a reinforcing copulative conjunction because the original functions of *and* (copulative) and *besides* (copulative) seem to have been retained and sometimes words such as *if* or *only* behaving like determiners are observed.

Lastly, let us look at examples (11) to (13) of *but besides*:

- (11) FLAVIA COLGAN, COLUMNIST, “PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS,” SUPPORTS OBAMA: Right. Well, listen, first of all, I would say a good day is a little bit of an understatement. I think, obviously, the endorsement of the voters is the most important. But besides Al Gore, I don’t think that the timing or the place he chose to do it – Michigan, I lived in for 10 years – is obviously very poignant.... [LKL, May, 2008]
- (12) CALLER: Not yet. I’m just curious what to do if it ever did.  
KING: Good question.

EDEN: You walk away from it. If you're out and other people are using drugs and they're trying to make you use it you, of course, say no. But besides that, always have a little money in your pocket so you can call a cab and go home. Don't stay there. Don't stay around it.

[LKL, July., 2002]

- (13) Some advertisements for adult products, such as sporting shoes, basketball heroes for promotion, and the Social Commission has also expressed concern at the increasing foreign content in advertisements. But besides this concern, such advertisements are often directed at children...

[WB]

We can see from examples (11) to (13) of *but besides* that (i) occasionally, the pattern *but besides that* is found more often than *besides* in the corpora and (ii) *but besides* is followed by new information concerning the previous proposition. *But* in *but besides* works not as an adversary (which is its original function) but to call for attention. In (12), a marker in bold type (*always*) that implies attention is observed. Consequently, *but besides* is used to call for attention. Thus, it can be called a rousing copulative.

As I have already remarked, *besides* functions as a copulative, and *besides* as a reinforcing copulative, and *but besides* as a rousing copulative. On the basis of the observations, the relationship between the three phraseological units may roughly be diagrammed as in Figure 2:

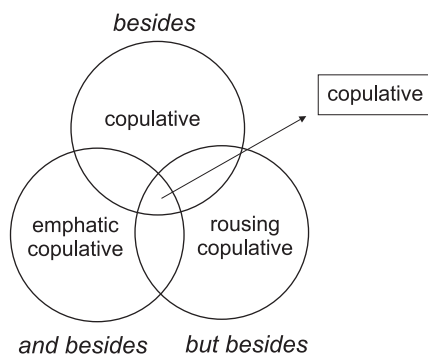


Figure 2. The relationship between *besides*, *and besides*, and *but besides*

Like Figure 1, which concerns *yet*, *and yet*, and *but yet*, Figure 2 illustrates two points: first, *besides* is an unmarked phraseological unit located between *and besides* and *but besides*. Also, *and besides* and *but besides* have acquired their own functions centred on the function of *besides*. Second, the copulative function constitutes the core function of *and besides*, *but besides*, and *besides*.

## 2.2. The case of *and nevertheless, but nevertheless, and nevertheless*

This section is devoted to the characteristics of *nevertheless, and nevertheless, and but nevertheless*. Dictionaries define *nevertheless* as “despite a fact or idea that you have just mentioned” (MED<sup>2</sup>) and treat it the same as *nonetheless* and *but*. There is no mention of *and nevertheless* or *but nevertheless* in previous studies.

As examples (14) and (15) show, *nevertheless* functions as an adversary.

- (14) GRUNWALD: Well, it came about, first of all, because I was editor – managing editor of “Time” when he was elected president. We were – I mean he was a controversial figure even then. **We were somewhat suspicious of him. Nevertheless,** when he was elected. I remember, running a special act which was called “To Heal A Nation,” because we were hopeful about his presidency. [LKL, June., 1997]
- (15) The recent series of disasters from The Herald of Free Enterprise onwards, has led us to believe that Britain is particularly unsafe. **Certainly our industrial safety inspectorate is nowhere near large enough, and there are black spots (sic.) – such as construction – where the casualty rate is far too high. Nevertheless,** as the table shows, we rank among the safest countries in the world.... [BNC]

The contents followed by *nevertheless* are connected with the propositions in bold type and show new different information from them.

Next, let us observe the examples of *and nevertheless*.

- (16) She articulates a theory of compromise between fate and free will once more at least a millennium old: in the Solomon and Saturn poem Saturn asks which will be the stronger, *wyrd óe warnung*, “fated events or foresight”, and Solomon tells him that “**Fate is hard to alter ... And nevertheless** an intelligent man can moderate all the things that fate causes, as long as he is clear in his mind” [BNC]
- (17) **The number of peoples in the world who knew of these advantages and nevertheless** persisted in rejecting them were few: to do so required a tenacity of purpose, an indifference to wealth and comfort which were not given to many. [BNC]
- (18) This masterpiece of Qutb Shahi architecture was built in 1591, two years after Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah founded the city and thirteen years after a still-surviving bridge, the Purana Pul, first spanned the Musi. “**Nothing in this town seems so lovely as the outside of that building,**” wrote De Thevenot in 1656, “and nevertheless it is surrounded with ugly shops made of wood, and covered with straw, where they sell fruit”.

[WB]

*And nevertheless* in examples (16) to (18) above behaves as an emphatic adversative conjunction. Unlike *nevertheless*, the new information following *and nevertheless*, as seen in the examples, is not predictable from the proposition in bold type but is copulatively connected to it. For example, in (18), it is quite difficult to predict the new information (*it is surrounded with ugly shops made of wood, and covered with straw, where they sell fruit*) from the proposition (*Nothing in this town seems so lovely as the outside of that building*). However, the new information concerns the masterpiece of Qutb Shahi architecture, so the two functions of *and* (copulative) and *nevertheless* (adversary) are intermingled. In other words, *and nevertheless* functions as a copulative adversary.

*But nevertheless* is used as an emphatic adversary. Let us observe examples (19) and (20).

(19) SHIKE: Lifestyle has to do with diet, smoking, exercise. These are the main things. It's mostly smoking.

KING: **Well we already know smoking. You have to be an idiot to smoke anything, right?**

SHIKE: Right, but nevertheless, you know there is a rise in smoking amongst teenagers?.... [LKL, Sep., 1999]

(20) KING: Would you have difficulty discussing this now as a press counselor?

FITZWATER: **I think it would be very tough to discuss it today** – and but nevertheless, as Ron pointed out, the legal process has led us into this kind of morass, where it becomes legitimate and where we have to talk about it. [LKL, Mar., 1998]

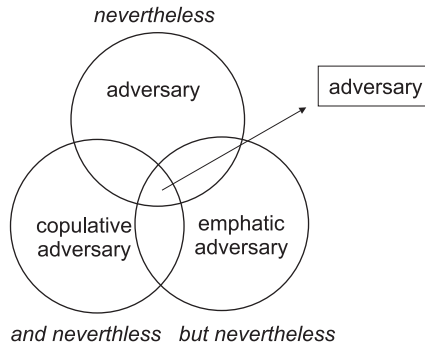
From the above examples, it is easy to find words or phrases representing emphasis such as *you know* in (19) and *as Ron pointed out* in (20) or intensifiers like *very*. Also, the contexts followed by *but nevertheless* are difficult to have been conjectured from the propositions in bold type. Hence, *but nevertheless* puts together the function of *but* (adversary) and *nevertheless* (adversary).

The relationship between *and nevertheless*, *but nevertheless*, and *nevertheless* is clarified as follows in Figure 3.

Figure 3 suggests that *nevertheless* is an unmarked phraseological unit between *and nevertheless*, *but nevertheless*, and *nevertheless* and that the adversary is their core function.

### 2.3 The case of *and then*, *but then* and *then*

*Then* is defined as introducing additional information and being used synonymously as *and then* (e.g. *Byron travelled to Italy and then to Greece*, LDCE<sup>5</sup>) in dictionaries. This means that both *then* and *and then* function as a copula-



**Figure 3. The relationship between *and nevertheless*, *but nevertheless*, and *nevertheless***

tive to the propositions in the contexts. According to LDCE<sup>5</sup> and LAAD<sup>2</sup>, *but then* appears in contexts in the pattern *but then again*, and both *but then* and *but then again* are “used to say that although something is true, something else is also true which makes the first thing seem less important” (LDCE<sup>5</sup>) and function as an adversative copulative.

First, let us look at the examples of *then* and *and then*.

- (21) TRUMP: .... When I was in department stores for appearances, they were coming to me, asking me the questions. **So that gave me the idea for my book.** Then the “Globe” magazine came to me and said, Ivana, would you do an advice column for us? And I am doing it now for five years,....  
[LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (22) TRUMP: .... I go and I see designers’ collections in France, in London, in Milan. Designers, they know me, they know my size, and I just call them and say size – let’s say style number – that one, that one, that one, that one, and I just shop like that, and it arrives, and **if I have to have certain alteration done, then** I do so. [LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (23) KING: **We’ve got lot of things to talk about, so we’ll spend this first portion on him and then** many other things. Trust me, I mean, we’re not going to dwell on him. Are you embarrassed a little by Donald and all the women? [LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (24) KING: What can an artist do about bootlegging?  
THE ARTIST: What – **the best thing you can do is go back and get those mixes again and fix them up the way you always saw them completed, and then,** you know, reissue them. [LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (25) KING: Does the director – do you know right away if you’re looking at something – yes, I want to do this?  
SPIELBERG: Yes, I do until the next morning, you know. Sometimes I’ll

**read something and say, yes, that's great, I want to do this.** And then, you know, you let the sobriety of a 24-hour cycle pass, and you read it again, you say, well, wait a second, there's some flaws here....

[LKL, Jan., 2008]

*Then* in (21) and (22) and *and then* in (23) are used to add new information to the proposition printed in bold type in the contexts, where *then* and *and then* are used as dictionaries describe. However, *and then* in (24) and (25) function as a reinforcing copulative because markers such as *you know*, which are used to show that much attention is paid to what a speaker is going to say, appear in the contexts.

Next, let us observe the examples of *but then*.

(26) VAN SUSTEREN: .... Do you think she enjoyed being, you know, Princess Diana?

BURRELL: .... **I think she would be very happy being a mother and living in ordinary surroundings,** but then she wasn't born into ordinary surroundings; she was born into a very aristocratic society.

[LKL, Feb., 2008]

(27) IVANA: .... The second question was, did Kathy Lee – **Kathy Lee is a friend of mine. And I really never thought of it when I went on the show.** But then it just hit me. And she wrote me a wonderful letter. And she said: Ivana, you are my friend. I adore you.... [LKL, Jan., 2008]

We can see in examples (26) and (27) that *but then* behaves as an adversative copulative because new information is related to the propositions in bold type but it shows contents adversative to them. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between *then*, *and then*, and *but then*.

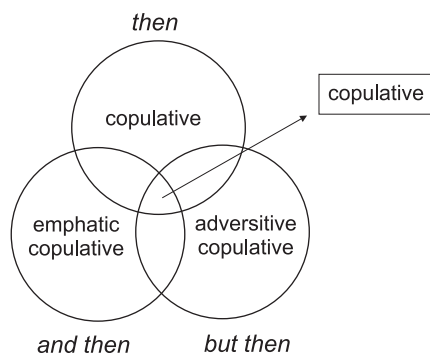


Figure 4. The relationship between *then*, *and then*, and *but then*

Two points should be made about Figure 4: first, *then* is an unmarked phraseological unit between *then*, *and then*, and *but then*. Second, the phra-

seological units containing *then* have a copulative as their core function and each phraseological unit is developing on its own function based on the core function or a copulative.

#### 2.4. The case of *and still*, *but still*, and *still*

*Still* has mainly two usages: (a) “used for saying that a situation continues to exist up to now when this seems surprising” and (b) “used for saying that something remains true despite what you have just said or done” (MED<sup>2</sup>). LAAD<sup>2</sup> describes that *still* can be alternant to *nonetheless*, *nevertheless*, or *however* when it functions as in (b). There is no reference to the functions of *and still* or *but still*.

The instances of *still*, *and still*, and *but still* are shown in (28) to (30):

- (28) THE ARTIST: I like to say that I live in the world but I am not of it. I travel a lot. I call Spain home now. I also have a home in Minnesota.  
KING: Still in Minnesota?  
THE ARTIST: Yes. [LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (29) KING: Do you get back to Czechoslovakia much?  
TRUMP: I go back home. You know, my mom, she still lives there. I have some properties there. [LKL, Dec., 1999]
- (30) Just for a moment Michele looked disconcerted, then said easily, “Signor Candiano must have mentioned it when I saw him this afternoon”. Had the agent known? Luce couldn’t recall referring to the Trevi by name...  
Still, she must have done... [BNC]

*Still* in (28) and (29) functions to show continuity because the artist has a home now in Minnesota in the case of (28), and Mr. Trump’s mother is living in Czechoslovakia now in the case of (29). Compared to the examples of *and still* in (31) and (32), the degree of surprise is not as high. In (30), *still* behaves like *but* as dictionaries describe.

*And still* used in (31) and (32) shows emphatic continuity because intensifiers like *really* or *wanted to* in bold type appear around it. The new information located after it is hard to have been predicted from the proposition (*I can I can love George, and I do*) in the case of (33), thus *and still* also functions as an adversary.

- (31) R. CARTER: ....We went to the U.S. tennis open – U.S. Open Tennis Tournament. We ran four miles in the morning in New York. We played tennis ourselves. We climb mountains. We go downhill skiing. So far, we’ve been **really** blessed with good health and still feel young. [LKL, Sep., 1999]



- (32) ROLLINS: No, no he would be like Richard Nixon. Ronald Reagan can go off to his ranch and be very happy. Richard Nixon sat in New York for years and still wanted to be president. Bill Clinton will want to be president, and clearly if his wife is on the horizon,... [LKL, June, 1999]
- (33) KING: Are you angry at George?  
BEGALA: No no, he's a good person. I mean, in a to pick up on the priest metaphor that Jack mentioned: in the Catholic tradition we love the sinner and hate the sin. I can I can love George, and I do, and still disagree with a principle decision that he made to tell his story...  
[LKL, Mar., 1999]
- (34) WOLFSON: .... I know that both Congressman Rangel and Congressman Lazio are on the show tonight. And there's a lot of commuting between Washington and New York, and I expect that she'll be spending the vast majority of her time in New York but still returning to Washington from time to time.  
[LKL, Nov., 1999]
- (35) ROONEY: But you could say that about Jon-Benet Ramsey, that people read about that as entertainment. It's an awful thought. But still, murder, I suppose, people read about murder. That's why "The Daily News" features murders so prominently. People read about it as a diversion.  
[LKL, Nov., 1999]
- (36) KING: Is the end result always pretty much suicide?  
JAMISON: No, no. Often it is, but no.  
KING: You mean there are people who are depressed all of their lives, but never think of killing themselves, but still have major periods of mental depressions?  
JAMISON: Yes, very definitely. [LKL, May, 1999]

*But still* observed in (34) and (35) is used as an emphatic adversary. In (34), the new information (*returning to Washington from time to time*) is completely opposite to the proposition (*she'll be spending the vast majority of her time in New York*). The new opposite information from the proposition is made very clear by the use of *but still*. Similarly, *but still* in (35) works to lead to the completely new opposite information about the JonBenet Ramsey case (*murder*) from the proposition (*people read about that as entertainment*). *But still* in (36) has the functions of both continuity and an adversary because people who are suffering from depression never think of killing themselves, but they sometimes have a period of depression. This means that the function of *still* (continuity) seems to have been retained. Hence, *but still* functions as either an emphatic adversary or as continuous adversary.

To summarize the above discussions of *still*, *and still*, and *but still*, the relationship between them can be represented graphically as in Figure 5:

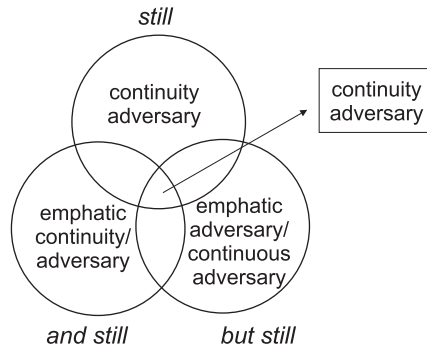


Figure 5. The relationship between *still*, *and still*, and *but still*

As repeatedly mentioned, *still* is an unmarked phraseological unit between *still*, *and still*, and *but still*. Also, the functions of continuity and an adversary play a core role in them. Each phraseological unit develops on its own function centred on the two functions.

## 2.5. Summary of the functions of '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb' and of the relationship between them

On the basis of the above observations of phraseological units that consist of the pattern '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', or the 'conjunctive adverb', the functional features are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The functional features of phraseological units consisting of the pattern '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb'

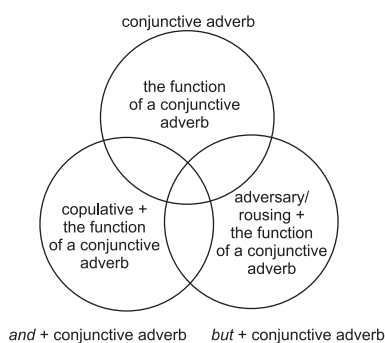
	The function of a conjunctive adverb	<i>And</i> + conjunctive adverb	<i>But</i> + conjunctive adverb
<i>yet</i>	copulative, adversary	emphatic copulative, adversary	emphatic adversary
<i>besides</i>	copulative	emphatic copulative	rousing copulative
<i>nevertheless</i>	adversary	copulative adversary	emphatic adversary
<i>then</i>	copulative	emphatic copulative	adversative copulative
<i>still</i>	continuity, adversary	emphatic continuity, adversary	emphatic adversary, continuous adversary

From an examination of Table 1, the following facts emerge: the function of the 'conjunct adverb' plays a core role between '*and* + conjunctive adverb'

and '*but* + conjunctive adverb'. The function of '*and* + conjunctive adverb' comes to develop based on and intermingling with the functions of both *and* (copulative) and each conjunctive adverb. Hence, '*and* + conjunctive adverb' functions as an emphatic copulative conjunction.

The same is true of '*but* + conjunctive adverb'. Its function consists of the functions of *but* (adversary, rousing) and a conjunctive adverb and develops on its own. That is, '*but* + conjunctive adverb' works as a rousing or an emphatic adversative conjunction.

Figure 6 shows the relationship between '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', and the 'conjunctive adverb'.



**Figure 6. The relationship between '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', and 'conjunctive adverb'**

As represented in Figure 6, the phraseological units which have the structure of '*and* + conjunctive adverb', '*but* + conjunctive adverb', and the 'conjunctive adverb' are closely related and have their own functions based on those of both *and/but* and a conjunctive adverb.

Why do the phraseological units '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' have similar functions as Table 1 suggests? The concept of 'analogy' helps clarify the question. According to Yagi (1999: 74ff.), the meaning of a word is closely related to its function. Semantically similar expressions have a great influence on the functions of one another and are able to develop a new function. This phenomenon is referred to as 'analogy'. In the case of '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb', they have similar functions, an emphatic copulative conjunction and a rousing or an emphatic adversative conjunction, respectively. As a result, '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' function as conjunctions to expand on the information that has already been given.

### 3. Question (3c): What grammatical structures include the use of ‘*and/but* + conjunctive adverb’?

‘Concept categorization’ helps account for how the structures ‘*and/but* + conjunctive adverb’ have come to be established. According to Yagi (1999: 105), concept categorization is a process in which various concepts in various syntactic units are interpreted as one syntactic unit.

Consider *and still* and *but still*, for example. It is difficult to tell which of the two functions of *still* (continuity, adversary) is working when it is used in a context. *And* co-occurs with *still* in order to make it clear that something has been continuing up to now. Also, *and* works as a copulative and is the simplest and most appropriate word to show that new information is continuously or adversatively related to propositions. Originally, *and still* comprises the structure [[and][still]], but the structure is changing into [and still] through its repeated use and the working of concept categorization.

A similar phenomenon can be said of *but still*. *But* is added to *still* to make the working of the function (adversary) explicit because *but* functions as an adversary and is the simplest and most appropriate word to show that the new information followed by *but still* is adversatively or continuously concerned with the propositions. Initially, the structure [[but][still]] is used, but gradually the new structure [but still] comes into use due to concept categorization.

This applies to the explanation for the establishment of *and/but nevertheless*, *and/but then*, *and/but besides*, and of course *and/but yet*. Either *and* or *but* is attached to a ‘conjunctive adverb’ to make its functions clearer copulatively or rousingly and adversatively, respectively. As a result, the functions of *and/but* and the conjunctive adverb are put together. To summarize up the structure of ‘*and/but* + conjunctive adverb’ once again, we can say that, originally, they are formed from the structure [[and/but] + [conjunctive adverb]], but this is turning into [and/but + conjunctive adverb] due to concept categorization and finally the structure [and/but + conjunctive adverb] is established as a phraseological unit.

### 4. Question (3d): What is the underlying principle of the phraseological units ‘*and/but* + conjunctive adverb’?

This section discusses what kind of principle works to form the units ‘*and/but* + conjunctive adverb’ and the ‘conjunctive adverb’. My opinion is that the principle of linguistic economy, ‘least effort’ (in which words tend to

be excluded if they fall within a scope which might give a false impression), and 'redundancy' (where similar words are used unnecessarily such as *until to next Friday*) underlie the formation of the phraseological units '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' and 'conjunctive adverb'.

For example, let us take the examples of *and besides*, *but besides*, and *besides*. *And* is attached to *besides* because, as mentioned in the Section 3, *and* is the simplest and most appropriate word to clarify the core function (copulative). This is due to the working of redundancy. Also, *but* is accompanied with *besides* to make a copulative explicit rousingly, which means that redundancy heavily influences the formation of *but besides*. On the other hand, the principle of least effort works only when *and* or *but* functions as a copulative and *besides* is the accompanying word, which does not cause a false impression to show a copulative. Consequently, the principles of least effort and redundancy strike the proper balance between each phraseological unit that consist of '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' and the 'conjunctive adverb'.

## 5. The differences between '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' and *and/but*

According to Quirk *et al.* (1985), 'an event A + *and* + an event B' can be substituted as 'an event B + *and* + an event A', as exemplified in (37).

(37) Mary studies at a university *and* John works at a factory.

= John works at a factory *and* Mary studies at a university.

[Quirk *et al.* 1985: 920]

The same is true of 'an event A + *but* + an event B'. Observe example (38) from LDCE<sup>5</sup>:

(38) It's an old car, *but* it's very reliable. = It's very reliable, *but* it's an old car.

However, it is impossible that an event A alternates with an event B in the case of '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb'. The reason that 'an event A + *and/but* + conjunctive adverb + an event B' does not equal 'an event B + *and/but* + conjunctive adverb + an event A' is that new information B derives from proposition A, and an event B follows an event A.

## 6. Informant Elicitations

I asked six native speakers of English (two Canadians, three Americans, and a British) which of '*and/but* + conjunctive adverb' or 'conjunctive adverb' is appropriate for filling in the blanks in (39) to (59) in order to examine

whether or not the results for ‘*and* + conjunctive adverb’, ‘*but* + conjunctive adverb’, and the ‘conjunctive adverb’ in this paper are supported. The results of the elicitations are shown in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Questionnaires: Could you fill in the blanks choosing the most suitable phrases from the following phrases: *besides*, *and besides*, and *but besides*?

(39) KING: The drummer’s importance in the band or the group, would be explained how? Krupa once – Buddy Rich said – Buddy Rich told me once it’s the driving force of any group.

STARR: (      ) it’s the driving force, sometimes it’s you’re holding the reins so that others don’t like race off, you know, ‘cause...

(40) After dining with the Dixons, he comments that Mrs. Dixon is a respectable piano-player and beautiful singer, and her husband an excellent violinist. After attending Mr. Earl’s ball in November 1816 he wrote simply, “Earl a bad fiddler.” There were many other entertainments (      ) music.

(41) RON HOWARD, DIRECTOR: But I know a lot of you are thinking that I’m just following some liberal Hollywood trend. That’s not me. (      ), if I was anything less than sincere, would I do this?

(42) Some advertisements for adult products, such as sporting shoes, basketball heroes for promotion, and the Social Commission has also expressed concern at the increasing foreign content in advertisements. (      ) this concern, such advertisements are often directed at children, and put pressure on parents to conform and purchase products which they may not be able to afford.

Could you fill in the blanks choosing the most suitable phrases from the following phrases: *nevertheless*, *and nevertheless*, and *but nevertheless*?

(43) The recent series of disasters from The Herald of Free Enterprise onwards, has led us to believe that Britain is particularly unsafe. Certainly our industrial safety inspectorate is nowhere near large enough, and there are blackspots – such as construction – where the casualty rate is far too high. (      ), as the table shows, we rank among the safest countries in the world....

(44) This masterpiece of Qutb Shahi architecture was built in 1591, two years after Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah founded the city and thirteen years after a still-surviving bridge, the Purana Pul, first spanned the Musi. “Nothing in this town seems so lovely as the outside of that building,” wrote De Thevenot in 1656, “(      ) it is surrounded with ugly shops made of wood, and covered with straw, where they sell fruit”.

(45) SHIKE: Lifestyle has to do with diet, smoking, exercise. These are the main things. It’s mostly smoking.

KING: Well we already know smoking. You have to be an idiot to smoke anything, right?

SHIKE: Right, (      ), you know there is a rise in smoking amongst teenagers?....

Could you fill in the blanks choosing the most suitable phrases from the following phrases: *then*, *and then*, and *but then*?

- (46) TRUMP: .... When I was in department stores for appearances, they were coming to me, asking me the questions. So that gave me the idea for my book. ( ) the "Globe" magazine came to me and said, Ivana, would you do an advice column for us? And I am doing it now for five years,....
- (47) KING: We've got lot of things to talk about, so we'll spend this first portion on him ( ) many other things. Trust me, I mean, we're not going to dwell on him. Are you embarrassed a little by Donald and all the women?
- (48) KING: What can an artist do about bootlegging?  
THE ARTIST: What – the best thing you can do is go back and get those mixes again and fix them up the way you always saw them completed, ( ), you know, reissue them.
- (49) VAN SUSTEREN: .... Do you think she enjoyed being, you know, Princess Diana?  
BURRELL: I don't think the title is one which you could enjoy. It brings too many other complications. I think she would be very happy being a mother and living in ordinary surroundings, ( ) she wasn't born into ordinary surroundings; she was born into a very aristocratic society.  
Could you fill in the blanks choosing the most suitable phrases from the following phrases: *still*, *and still*, and *but still*?
- (50) KING: Do you get back to Czechoslovakia much?  
TRUMP: I go back home. You know, my mom, she ( ) lives there. I have some properties there.
- (51) Just for a moment Michele looked disconcerted, then said easily, "Signor Candiano must have mentioned it when I saw him this afternoon". Had the agent known? Luce couldn't recall referring to the Trevi by name... ( ), she must have done....
- (52) R. CARTER: ....We went to the U.S. tennis open – U.S. Open Tennis Tournament. We ran four miles in the morning in New York. We played tennis ourselves. We climb mountains. We go downhill skiing. So far, we've been really blessed with good health ( ) feel young.
- (53) KING: Are you angry at George?  
BEGALA: No no, he's a good person. I mean, in a to pick up on the priest metaphor that Jack mentioned: in the Catholic tradition we love the sinner and hate the sin. I can I can love George, and I do, ( ) disagree with a principle decision that he made to tell his story....
- (54) WOLFSON: .... I know that both Congressman Rangel and Congressman Lazio are on the show tonight. And there's a lot of commuting between Washington and New York, and I expect that she'll be spending the vast majority of her time in New York ( ) returning to Washington from time to time.  
Could you fill in the blanks choosing the most suitable phrases from the following phrases: *yet*, *and yet*, and *but yet*?
- (55) Apart from three months as Nigeria's Foreign Minister, in 1983, Chief Anyaoku has worked at the Commonwealth Secretariat since it was set up in 1966. ( ) he wasn't everyone's first choice.

- (56) The article was by Percy Hoskins, the greatest Commissioners of Police and thieves and villains, who drank champagne at the Caprice, had an apartment in park lane, was an intimate of Lord Beaverbrook, ( ) kept the common touch.
- (57) In contrast, the restaurant manager is far less easy to define. I would argue that they are as charismatic as chefs ( ) their skills are less tangible and harder to gauge.
- (58) I am thunderstruck by this verse on a number of counts: first, that I can read it and understand it at all; second, by the sheer lyric of it. The rhyme of 'know' and 'grow' is so obvious ( ) so surprising.
- (59) ... True, I know the grammar and the words, ( ) I know not how to speak them.

The answers in the corpora are given in bold type in Table 2–6. There are two matters in common worth noting in these tables. First, it seems difficult to distinguish the difference between the 'conjunctive adverb' and 'and + conjunctive adverb', even though words or phrases that imply emphasis are found. Second, all informants chose 'but + conjunctive adverb' without hesitation when it was a possible answer in the questions. Hence, it is safe to conclude that 'but + conjunctive adverb' functions as a rousing or an emphatic adversative conjunction. The comments following each table discuss the exceptional answers.

**Table 2. The results of informant elicitations for (39) to (42)**

	<i>besides</i>	<i>and besides</i>	<i>but besides</i>	others	sum
(39)	<b>2</b>	3	0	1 (no answer)	6
(40)	<b>6</b>	0	0	0	6
(41)	4	<b>2</b>	0	0	6
(42)	2	1	<b>3</b>	0	6

**Table 3. The results of informant elicitations for (43) to (45)**

	<i>nevertheless</i>	<i>and nevertheless</i>	<i>but nevertheless</i>	others	sum
(43)	<b>3</b>	0	2	1 (no answer)	6
(44)	2	<b>1</b>	2	1 (no answer)	6
(45)	0	1	<b>5</b>	0	6

In (45), *and nevertheless* or *but nevertheless* tend to be chosen in examples where new information is completely opposite to the propositions.



**Table 4. The results of informant elicitations for (46) to (49)**

	<i>then</i>	<i>and then</i>	<i>but then</i>	sum
(46)	<b>2</b>	3	1	6
(47)	2	<b>2</b>	2	6
(48)	1	<b>5</b>	0	6
(49)	0	0	<b>6</b>	6

**Table 5. The results of informant elicitations for (50) to (54)**

	<i>still</i>	<i>and still</i>	<i>but still</i>	sum
(50)	<b>6</b>	0	0	6
(51)	<b>2</b>	0	4	6
(52)	0	<b>6</b>	0	6
(53)	0	<b>2</b>	4	6
(54)	0	1	<b>5</b>	6

*Still* in (51) functions as *but*, but *but still* tends to be chosen when new information is completely opposite to propositions. The same holds true in (53).

**Table 6. The results of informants' elicitations from (55) to (59)**

	<i>yet</i>	<i>and yet</i>	<i>but yet</i>	sum
(55)	<b>4</b>	2	0	6
(56)	<b>3</b>	3	0	6
(57)	2	<b>4</b>	0	6
(58)	1	<b>5</b>	0	6
(59)	0	0	<b>6</b>	6

Judging from the results of the informant elicitations, the observations concerning 'and/but + conjunctive adverb' and the 'conjunctive adverb' obtained in the research are almost endorsed.

## 7. Conclusion

Full consideration of the features of 'and/but + conjunctive adverb' and 'conjunctive adverb' can lead to the conclusion that each of them is established as a phraseological unit functioning to expand the information that

has already been given. Also, they are semantically and functionally closely related due to analogy. The principles of linguistic economy of least effort and redundancy heavily influence the formation of 'and/but + conjunctive adverb' and 'conjunctive adverb'.

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### Corpora

British National Corpus (BNC)

WordBanks Online (WB)

*Larry King Live Corpus* (LKL) (In this study, I used a corpora of about 30,000,000 running words from February 1994 to August 2009.)

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### **Podobne funkcje połączeń wielowyrazowych: analiza schematów 'and + przysłówek' i 'but + przysłówek'**

#### **Streszczenie**

Przedmiotem analizy są połączenia wielowyrazowe, które składają się z 'and + przysłówka' lub 'but + przysłówka': *and nevertheless, but nevertheless, and still, but still, and yet* oraz *but yet*. Materiał badawczy został wyekscerpowany z rozmaitych korpusów współczesnego języka angielskiego. Na podstawie syntaktyczno-semantycznej analizy autorka stwierdza, że połączenia typu 'and + przysłówek' używane są w dwóch funkcjach, tj. jako kopulatywna emfatyczna forma spójnika *and*, kiedy łączy wypowiedzenie z poprzedzającym je, oraz pełniąc swoją pierwotną funkcję, czyli jako wyrażenie łączące.



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## Corpus Data and the Treatment of Idioms in Japanese Monolingual Dictionaries

**Abstract.** Most Japanese idiom dictionaries provide scant information about the meaning and use of individual idioms and rely on invented examples or manually-collected examples from novels and newspapers. However, it is possible that a large-scale corpus comprising a variety of texts and genres may reveal patterns of meaning and use that have previously been difficult to detect and/or fully describe. This paper uses the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (2009 Monitor Data) to compare two Japanese idioms of surprise in terms of their sentence patterns, verb forms, collocates, and semantic features. Analysis shows that the target idioms have distinct patterns of use linked to specific semantic features. This paper argues that in order for dictionaries to provide reliable accounts of idioms, it is necessary to make use of existing theoretical frameworks and the results of corpus analysis in combination with traditional methods of linguistic analysis.

**Key words:** *idioms, monolingual idiom dictionaries, Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), sentence patterns, verb forms, semantic features*

### 1. Introduction

Idioms have long been considered to be units of the lexicon and worthy of treatment in dictionaries, because of their status as fixed or semi-fixed expressions with meanings that cannot be distributed over their parts. Past research has addressed several issues of theoretical and practical importance with respect to the lexicography of Japanese idioms. Kunihiro (1997, 1998) emphasizes the need to distinguish between idioms and collocations, using structural and semantic criteria. Satō (2007a, 2007b) analyzes inconsistencies in the lexico-grammatical forms of phrasal entries in five idiom dictionaries/general-purpose dictionaries and links such inconsistencies to the phenomena of variation and indeterminate idiom borders.

Itō (1998) suggests a number of features for the description of idioms in Japanese/German bilingual idiom dictionaries, including meaning, syntactic structure, sentence patterns, grammatical function, pragmatic constraints, and the metaphorical meanings of idiom constituents.

One question that has so far remained unaddressed is that of the interface between research and lexicographical practice: to what extent do Japanese idiom dictionaries draw upon the body of available research in order to provide reliable accounts of idioms? Another question has to do with the role of corpus data in the development of Japanese idiom dictionaries. Descriptions of idioms in such dictionaries have typically made use of invented examples or examples collected manually from novels and/or newspapers, as well as lexicographers' intuition. This is partly because, until recently, there was no electronic corpus available for data collection and analysis. However, it is possible that a large-scale corpus comprising a variety of texts and genres may reveal patterns of idiom use that have hitherto been difficult to detect or fully describe.

The aim of this paper is to explore how corpus data can be used for the description of idioms in monolingual Japanese idiom dictionaries. This paper considers what previous research has revealed about the structural, syntactic, and semantic characteristics of idioms and uses data from the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), a large-scale corpus currently under construction, to analyze two Japanese idioms of surprise, namely *akke ni torareru* (lit. be taken by [shock<sup>1</sup>]) and *shita o maku* (lit. wind/twist one's tongue). The analysis compares the target idioms in terms of their sentence patterns, verb forms, collocates, and semantic features (<abstract>, <expressive>, etc.). This paper also argues that in order to provide a reliable account of idioms and their individual patterns of meaning and use, dictionaries should draw upon the results of corpus analysis in combination with traditional methods of linguistic analysis.

In past studies of Japanese idioms, some scholars have taken a broad view of "idiom," using this as an umbrella term for not only metaphorical expressions such as *abura o uru* (lit. sell oil, 'loaf about; dawdle') and *atama ni kuru* (lit. [it] comes to one's head, 'get angry'), but also proverbs and maxims,

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<sup>1</sup> The *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten [Unabridged Dictionary of the Japanese Language]* (Shōgakusan, 1979) defines *akke* as 'a state of amazement/shock.' However, many single-volume dictionaries (e.g. *Meikyō Kokugo Jiten*, Taishūkan, 2010) do not provide a definition for this word in isolation, and most native speakers are not able to identify its meaning. It is an unusual element used only in the expressions *akke ni torareru* ('be taken by surprise; be taken aback') and *akke nai* (lit. there is no *akke*, 'be disappointingly unsatisfactory'). For the sake of convenience, in this paper *akke* is glossed as 'shock.'

greetings and responses, restricted collocations, compounds, onomatopoeia, and/or other conventionalized multi-word expressions (Morita 1966; Shiraishi 1969, 1977).<sup>2</sup> Miyaji (1982a: 238) defines idioms as “strings of two or more words that have comparatively strong internal bonding and fixed, holistic meanings (*tango no futatsu ijō no renketsutai de atte, sono musubitsuki ga hikaku-teki kataku, zentai de kimatta imi o motsu kotoba*).” This class includes “figurative idioms” (*hiyu-teki kan’yōku*), such as *atama ni kuru* and *hara ga kuroi* (lit. have a black belly, ‘be evil-minded’), and “collocational idioms” (*rengo-teki kan’yōku*), such as *guchi o kobosu* (lit. spill [a] complaint[s], ‘grumble, complain’) and *denpō o utsu* (lit. strike a telegram, ‘send a telegram’); however, proverbs, maxims, greetings, responses, and compounds are explicitly excluded (Miyaji 1982a, 1985, 1986). Other scholars (Kunihiro 1985, 1997; Momiyama 1997) take a still narrower view, defining idioms proper as a class of fixed, fully non-compositional expressions that excludes Miyaji’s “collocational idioms” as well as other expressions deemed to be compositional and thus non-idiomatic (e.g. *me ga takai* lit. one’s eyes are high, ‘have a good eye for s.t.’).

The question of how to define “idiom” is important for the lexicographical treatment of idioms, because idiom dictionaries should be compiled on the basis of a clear understanding of what constitutes an idiom and how idioms differ from other phraseological expressions (Kunihiro 1997, 1998; cf. Satō 2007a, 2007b). A lengthy discussion of the problem of definition, however, is beyond the scope of this paper. This paper will adopt Miyaji’s (1982a) definition and deal with expressions that fall within its purview, partly because this definition is one of the few that serves as the basis for an accumulated body of research on Japanese idioms.<sup>3</sup> For detailed discussions of the structural, syntactic, and semantic characteristics of Japanese idioms, see Asuka (1982), Miyaji (1982b, 1985, 1986, 1991), Morita (1985, 1994), Itō (1989, 1997, 1999), Ishida (1998, 2000, 2004), Satō (2007a, 2007b), and others.

<sup>2</sup> Morita (1966) uses two terms for “idiom” (*kan’yōku*, *idiomu*) as well as the term “idiomatic expression” (*kan’yō-teki na hyōgen*); however, no explicit distinction is made among these terms. For critical views of Shiraishi’s definition (1969, 1977), see Takaki (1974: 12ff.) and Miyaji (1985: 62).

<sup>3</sup> Miyaji’s (1982a) definition remains consistent in his later work, including Miyaji (1985, 1986, 1991, 1999); it has also been widely quoted in other studies of Japanese idioms (e.g. Lim 2002; Ishida 1998, 2000, 2004; Satō 2007a, 2007b) and was used as the basis for idiom selection in the *Nihongo Kan’yōku Jiten [Dictionary of Japanese Idioms]* (2005). For a critical view of Miyaji’s definition, see Momiyama (1997).

## 2. What do idiom dictionaries show about Japanese idioms?

In order to find out what kind of information Japanese monolingual idiom dictionaries typically provide about idioms, an informal survey was carried out on seven widely-used dictionaries published between 1982 and 2010, as listed below:<sup>4</sup>

- 1) *Kan'yōku no Imi to Yōhō [The Meaning and Usage of Idioms]* (1982): 245 entries
- 2) *Nihongo Kan'yōku Jiten [Dictionary of Japanese Idioms]* (2005): 1,563 entries
- 3) *Hyōjun Kotowaza Kan'yōku Jiten [Dictionary of Standard Proverbs and Idioms]* (1988): 3,500 entries
- 4) *Yōrei de Wakaru Kan'yōku Jiten [Dictionary for Understanding Idioms by Example]* (2007): 3,000 entries
- 5) *Sanseidō Koji Kotowaza Kan'yōku Jiten [The Sanseidō Dictionary of Sayings, Proverbs, and Idioms]* (2010 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]): 6,550 entries, including 3,600 idioms and 2,950 proverbs/sayings
- 6) *Reikai Kan'yōku Jiten [Illustrative Dictionary of Idioms]* (1992): 3,700 entries
- 7) *Imi kara Hikeru Kan'yōku Jiten [Thesaural Dictionary of Idioms]* (1998): 1,100 entries

Dictionaries 1)–5) are semasiological and 6)–7) are onomasiological. Dictionary 3) is aimed at junior high school students, who need to learn idioms and proverbs for entrance examinations; the others specify that their main intended users are adult native speakers of Japanese. Dictionary 1) states additionally that it is meant to be used by scholars, teachers, and learners of Japanese, and 2) also targets Japanese learners and high school students. The selection of entries in 1) and 2) is based on Miyaji's (1982a) definition of "idiom" (see Section 1), and proverbs, maxims, and other multi-word expressions are excluded. All of the other dictionaries contain proverbs, maxims, old sayings originating from classical Chinese texts, fixed collocations, and so on; they either specify in the title and/or introduction that these are included in addition to idioms proper (3, 5, 6, 7) or employ a broad definition of "idiom" that allows them to be included within its scope (4).

The entries in dictionaries 3) to 6) are two to three lines in length and consist of a brief idiom definition and one example of usage. Dictionary 7) provides a somewhat longer example for each idiom, often in dialogue form. All examples in 3) to 7) are invented. Some of these dictionaries also list the source text of idioms, when known (3, 5, 6, 7), other Japanese idioms with

<sup>4</sup> Bibliographic details and a list of abbreviations are given in the References at the end of this paper.



related meaning (4, 6, 7), and/or transitive/intransitive variants (5). Figure 1 shows the entries for *akke ni torareru* in dictionaries 5) and 6). The original Japanese entries have been transliterated into Roman letters and translated into English for the purposes of this paper.

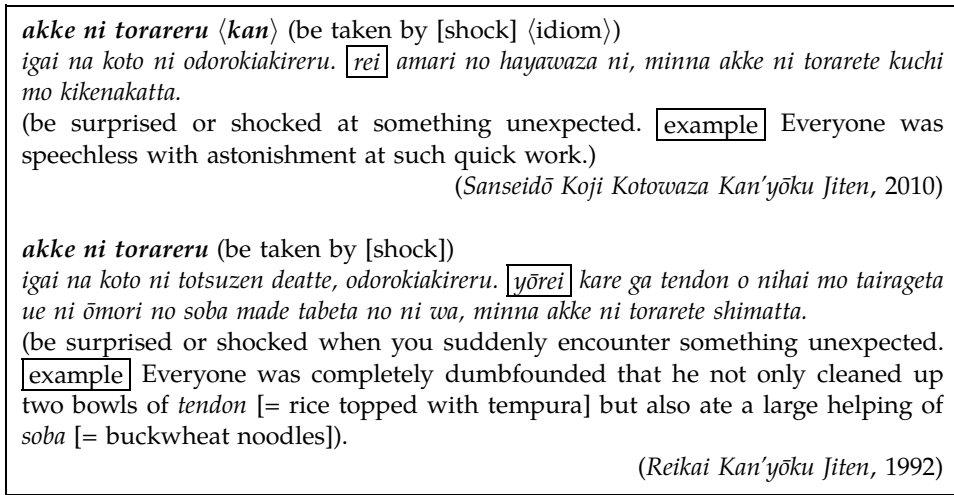


Figure 1. *akke ni torareru* in two Japanese idiom dictionaries

As Figure 1 suggests, most of the idiom dictionaries provide limited information about the meaning and use of individual idioms. However, dictionaries 1) and 2) contain an abundant variety of examples gathered from newspapers and novels, and descriptions are based on the analysis of these examples. Sentence patterns, commonly-used syntactic forms, and syntactic restrictions are specified for each idiom, with reference to individual examples. Similar and related idioms in Japanese and other languages are also listed (1, 2), and some of the semantic distinctions between idioms with similar meaning are described (1 only). Another feature of these dictionaries is that they draw upon the theoretical foundation offered by the existing body of idiom research and contain lengthy scholarly commentaries addressing issues such as the definition and scope of the term “idiom” and the lexical, syntactic, and semantic characteristics of idioms.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Miyaji's (1982a) views are based in part on Miyaji (1974, 1977, 1982b) and are further developed in Miyaji (1985, 1986, 1991). Yonekawa (2005) draws heavily on Miyaji's body of work and also refers to Ishida (2000, 2004). Limitations of space do not permit the inclusion of entries from these two dictionaries in this paper.

However, several questions remain for further research. Although dictionary 1) provides rich descriptions of individual idioms, it contains only 245 entries. Both of these dictionaries include examples from Meiji (1868–1912) and Taishō (1912–1926) era novels; while such examples are informative with respect to provenance, they may not be representative of idiom use in modern Japanese. A more important issue, however, is that the examples in these dictionaries were collected manually and almost exclusively from newspapers and novels. Recent studies argue that since many idioms are low-frequency, adequate and reliable descriptions require the use of large-scale corpora comprised of a variety of texts and genres (Moon 1998; Liu 2003; Fellbaum et al. 2006; Heid 2008; also see Liu 2008).

This paper takes the view that evidence from a large-scale corpus of modern Japanese may reveal patterns of idiom meaning and use that have been difficult to capture with a limited data set and introspection alone. The following sections will explore how corpus data can be used to provide reliable accounts of idioms in monolingual idiom dictionaries.

### 3. What do corpus data show about Japanese idioms?

#### 3.1. Method of analysis

An effective way to clarify the meaning and use of individual idioms is to compare a small number of idioms with similar meaning (Ishida 2003a, 2003b, 2008). To select the target idioms for this paper, first a list was compiled of 37 Japanese idioms of surprise found in previous studies and/or idiom dictionaries. Searches for all 37 idioms were carried out using the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (see below), and the frequency of occurrence for each idiom was calculated. Two idioms were selected from the top eleven for a detailed analysis: *akke ni torareru* (lit. be taken by [shock], 129 occurrences) and *shita o maku* (lit. wind/twist one's tongue, 43).<sup>6</sup> In addition, four other idioms were selected for a comparative analysis of commonly-used verb forms (Section 3.2.3): *me o miharu* (lit. open one's eyes wide, 250), *iki*

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<sup>6</sup> All figures include orthographic variants and conjugated forms. The highest frequency idioms were *me o miharu* (lit. open one's eyes wide), with 250 occurrences, and *me o maruku suru* (lit. make one's eyes round), with 181. Low-frequency idioms included *ikigimo o nuku* (lit. pull out s.o.'s still-warm liver) and *tomune o tsukareru* (lit. be pierced right in the chest), both with zero occurrences.

*o nomu* (lit. swallow / drink one's breath, 180), *koshi o nukasu* (lit. collapse one's hips, 50), and *koshi ga nukeru* (lit. one's hips collapse, 26).<sup>7</sup>

Data for the target idioms was collected from the 2009 Monitor Data of the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), a large-scale corpus currently under construction as part of a five-year project of the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics. When completed, the BCCWJ will be approximately the size of the British National Corpus and will include text samples from a variety of genres covering a 30-year span (1975 to 2005). The 2009 Monitor Data contains four genres and 44,900,000 words: books (10,423 samples/30,000,000 words), white papers (1,500 samples/4,800,000 words), Yahoo! *Chiebukuro* (45,725 samples/5,200,000 words), and proceedings of the National Diet (159 samples/4,900,000 words).<sup>8</sup>

Corpus queries were constructed on the basis of two principles: first, that the structure and constituents of idioms are relatively fixed in comparison to those of freely constructed phrases, and second, that regardless of the first principle, many idioms have institutionalized variants (Miyaji 1985; Morita 1985, 1994; Ishida 1998; Satō 2007b) and/or allow a range of syntactic transformations (Miyaji 1986; Morita 1985, 1994; Ishida 2000) or creative modifications.<sup>9</sup> In order to collect all possible forms of the target idioms, effort was made to create queries from the smallest number of constituents necessary (cf. Moon 1998; Fellbaum et al. 2006; Philip 2008). For example, the search string used for *akke ni torareru* was the noun/particle combination *akke ni*, because *akke* is an unusual element that appears only in the expressions *akke ni torareru* and *akke nai* 'unsatisfactory; leaving s.t. to be desired.' Because the Japanese orthographic system allows for the use of either Chinese characters (*kanji*) or the *kana* syllabaries (*hiragana* and *katakana*), queries were structured to take into account all possible orthographic variations. Multiple queries

<sup>7</sup> *Koshi o nukasu* and *koshi ga nukeru* are transitive/intransitive variants in terms of morphology and internal syntactic structure, but they are not semantically transitive/intransitive (Miyaji 1982a, 1982b; Ishida 1998). Both can be glossed as 'be paralyzed with astonishment or fear.' The compound variant *koshinuke* (lit. one whose hips have collapsed) is derived from *koshi ga nukeru* and means 'a weak-kneed person; a coward.'

<sup>8</sup> Yahoo! *Chiebukuro* is an online question-and-answer bulletin board. Information about the BCCWJ 2009 Monitor Data is available on the website of the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (<http://www.kokken.go.jp/kotonoha/ex.8.html>) (last accessed by the author on April 29, 2011). For details of the overall design and content of the BCCWJ, see Maekawa (2008).

<sup>9</sup> The phenomena of variation and creative modification have been widely reported about idioms in a variety of languages. See Itō (1990) and Fellbaum et al. (2006) regarding German idiom *Variations*; see Gläser (1998), Moon (1998), and Philip (2008) regarding English variations and modifications. For a discussion of the representation of idiom variation in phraseological dictionaries, see Cowie (1998).

were usually necessary. After the initial search results were obtained, irrelevant examples<sup>10</sup> and examples from translated texts were excluded manually and search results were compiled for each idiom.

Data analysis focused on the following seven features, selected on the basis of previous research and with an eye toward the description of idioms in monolingual idiom dictionaries:

- 1) frequency of occurrence (excluding irrelevant examples/examples from translated texts),
- 2) genre (books/white papers/Yahoo! *Chiebukuro*/National Diet proceedings),
- 3) orthography,
- 4) lexical/structural variants,
- 5) sentence patterns,
- 6) commonly-used grammatical forms, collocates, and grammatical restrictions,
- 7) semantic features.

Results for the first four items are outlined briefly in Section 3.2.1. Results for items 5), 6), and 7) are discussed in detail in Sections 3.2.2–3.2.4. Past studies have suggested a number of other features for inclusion in the description of idioms in dictionaries, including provenance, pragmatic features (Itō 1998; cf. Burkhanov 2003), the metaphorical meaning of idiom constituents (Itō 1998; cf. Kunihiro 1997), and so on. However, discussion of these is beyond the scope of this paper.

## 3.2. Analysis of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku*

### 3.2.1. Frequency, genre, orthography, and variants

*Akke ni torareru* is the fourth most frequently used idiom of surprise in the BCCWJ, with a total of 129 occurrences. Almost all examples were from books (127), with the remaining two from Yahoo! *Chiebukuro*. *Akke* and *torareru* both appear in *hiragana* more often than in Chinese characters, with the all-*hiragana* form accounting for 71 of the 129 occurrences (55.0%). No structural or lexical variants were found.

There were 43 occurrences of *shita o maku* in the BCCWJ, and all but one were from books. No lexical or structural variants were found, and the

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<sup>10</sup> For instance, the present analysis excluded a literal example of *shita o maku* used with the compound verb [*shita o*] *makitsukeru* ‘to twist/wrap [one’s tongue] around [s.t.]’. *Akke ni torareru* has no literal reading.

most common orthographical form used Chinese characters for both *shita* and *maku* (90.7%).<sup>11</sup>

### 3.2.2. Sentence patterns

In texts and discourse, idioms function as extended parts of speech: verb phrase idioms function as verbs (or adverbs), adjective phrase idioms as adjectives, and so on (Miyaji 1982a, 1986). Verb phrase idioms, which account for the majority of Japanese idioms, display great variety in terms of their internal syntactic structure and the extra-idiomatic elements they require or permit when used in sentence constructions (Miyaji 1982b; Morita 1985, 1994). This paper will use the term “sentence pattern” (*bunkei*) to refer to an idiom and the obligatory or optional extra-idiomatic elements it takes, including nouns with the grammatical roles of subject, object, or possessive and the semantic roles of agent, experiencer, patient, cause, target, etc. (Kunihiro 1997, 1998; Itō 1998; see also KIY and NKJ).

BCCWJ data show that each of the target idioms takes several sentence patterns. *Akke ni torareru* appears in the patterns NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + *akke ni torareru*, as in (1), and NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + NP *ni* ‘by/at’ (CAUSE) + *akke ni torareru*, as in (2):<sup>12</sup>

- (1) “*Dōshita n desu. Sonna ni kōfun shite?*” *Hoshijima wa akke ni torareta.* “‘What’s the matter. Why are you so excited?’ Hoshijima was taken by surprise.”<sup>13</sup>
- (2) *Sono tōtotsusa ni, Sawa wa akke ni torarete, jōdan da to omotte ita.* ‘Sawa was startled by its [= his proposal’s] abruptness, and thought it was a joke.’

The *ni*-particle NP in the second sentence pattern (*sono tōtotsusa ni* ‘by its abruptness’) specifies the cause or reason for surprise. In sentences without a *ni*-particle NP, the cause is usually described in the surrounding context, as in (1). In the BCCWJ, there were 85 examples of the first pattern (65.9%) and 15 of the second (11.6%). These results are comparable to those obtained in a separate analysis of the *Asahi* Newspaper database (see Table 1 for details).

<sup>11</sup> Similar results for orthography were found in the *Asahi* Newspaper database (1985–2010), where *akke ni torareru* appears most often in *hiragana* (673/822 occurrences=81.9%) and *shita o maku* in Chinese characters (1594/1734 occurrences=91.9%). For details of the newspaper analysis, see Section 3.2.3.

<sup>12</sup> The particle *ga* marks the grammatical subject of a sentence and may be replaced by the topic-marker *wa*, as in (1) and (2) above.

<sup>13</sup> All BCCWJ examples cited in this paper are from books. Details have been omitted for the sake of brevity.

*Shita o maku* also takes the two patterns described above. Example (3) realizes the pattern NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + *shita o maku*, and (4) is an example of NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + NP *ni* 'by/at' (CAUSE) + *shita o maku*:

(3) *Furuhashi wa hisoka ni shita o maita. Kangaete ita yori mo kono kuni no shōnen-tachi wa zutto benkyōka-zoroi no yō de aru.* 'Furuhashi was inwardly astonished. It seemed as if the young men of this country were all far more studious than he had thought.'

(4) *Kurāku wa, kanojo no eigo-ryoku ni shita o maita.* 'Clark was amazed at her English ability.'

BCCWJ data yielded 22 occurrences of the pattern with a *ni*-particle NP referring to the cause of surprise (51.2%) and 7 occurrences without (16.3%).

**Table 1. Sentence patterns of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku***

	<i>akke ni torareru</i>		<i>shita o maku</i>	
	BCCWJ	<i>Asahi</i>	BCCWJ	<i>Asahi</i>
NP <i>ga</i> (EXPER) + idiom	85 (65.9)	99 (60.4)	7 (16.3)	3 (3.5)
NP <i>ga</i> (EXPER) + NP <i>ni</i> (CAUSE) + idiom	15 (11.6)	22 (13.4)	22 (51.2)	27 (31.4)
S <i>to</i> 'that' (QUOT) + NP <i>ga</i> (EXPER) + idiom	0 (0.0)	2 (1.2)	8 (18.6)	44 (51.2)
Other*	29 (22.5)	41 (25.0)	6 (14.0)	12 (14.0)
Number of occurrences**	<b>129 (100.0)</b>	<b>164 (100.0)</b>	<b>43 (100.1)</b>	<b>86 (100.1)</b>

\* This category primarily includes use of the target idioms as adnominal modifiers (see Section 3.2.3).

\*\* Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of the total number of occurrences for each idiom.

In addition, *shita o maku* also appears in the pattern S *to* 'that' (QUOTATION) + NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + *shita o maku*. In this case, the cause of surprise is expressed in the form of a *to* ('that') clause containing a direct quotation of speech or internal monologue:

(5) *...osoru beki kan no yosa da wa-to, Yuka wa hisoka ni shita o maita.* '...Yuka was secretly astonished, [thinking] that [Masako's] intuition was really terribly good.'

Variations of this pattern include placement of the subject NP before the *to* clause and/or combining this pattern with a *ni*-particle NP specifying CAUSE to create the expanded pattern NP *ga* (EXPER) + NP *ni* 'by/at' (CAUSE) + S *to* 'that' (QUOT) + *shita o maku* (e.g. *Torampu wa...sono keiei shuwan ni teki nagara appare to shita o maita "Trump was astonished at his management skills, [saying] "Well done, even if he is my enemy"'). Eight instances of quotative patterns were found in the BCCWJ (18.6%); in the *Asahi* newspaper,*

these patterns accounted for just over half of the occurrences of *shita o maku*.

The evidence shows that the target idioms differ in terms of the type and distribution of sentence patterns they take (Table 1). Monolingual idiom dictionaries should provide data-based descriptions that show examples and/or specify the structure of the sentence patterns in which individual idioms frequently appear, as well as the nature of obligatory and optional extra-idiomatic elements (Itō 1998; Fellbaum et al. 2006; cf. KIY, NKJ). Rich and precise information about sentence patterns is likely to be of particular benefit to non-native learners of Japanese and native adolescent dictionary users.

### 3.2.3. Verb forms and collocates

Some Japanese idioms are subject to extensive grammatical restrictions, while others are quite flexible (Asuka 1982; Miyaji 1982a, 1986; Morita 1985, 1994; Ishida 2000). A reliable account of the use of individual idioms should present information about probable and possible grammatical forms (verb forms, aspectual endings, etc.), as well as associated patterns of collocation. Such information can be obtained from the analysis of corpus data, which provide positive evidence of distributional patterns that may not be available from native speaker introspection alone. At the same time, corpus data do not provide definitive evidence of the grammatical restrictions of idioms, because corpora cannot distinguish between forms that are unattested and impossible and those that are unattested but possible. In these cases, native speaker introspection is a valuable supplement to corpus data.

This section presents the results of analysis of the verb forms and collocates of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku*. A summary of this analysis can be found in Table 2, which also shows, for the sake of comparison, the results for four other idioms of surprise: *me o miharu* (lit. open one's eyes wide, 'open one's eyes wide in amazement'), *iki o nomu* (lit. swallow one's breath, 'catch one's breath; gasp'), *koshi o nukasu* (lit. collapse one's hips, 'be paralyzed with surprise or fear'), and *koshi ga nukeru* (lit. one's hips collapse, 'be paralyzed [with surprise, fear, etc.]'). The discussion below will focus on verb forms and collocates that account for 10% or more of the occurrences of the two main target idioms in the BCCWJ. The results of this analysis were largely supported by a separate analysis carried out on a random sampling of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku* in the *Asahi* Newspaper database<sup>14</sup> (see Table 3).

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<sup>14</sup> Since journalism is a rich source of idioms (Gläser 1998; Moon 1998; Fellbaum et al. 2006; cf. KIY, NKJ), it was thought that newspaper data might furnish a useful benchmark for com-

Table 2. Verb forms of selected idioms of surprise in the BCCWJ

	<i>me o miharu</i>	<i>iki o nomu</i>	<i>akke ni torareru</i>	<i>koshi o nukasu</i>	<i>koshi ga nukeru</i>	<i>shita o maku</i>
plain (dictionary) form	81 (32.4)	46 (25.6)	5 (3.9)	8 (16.0)	6 (23.1)	15 (34.9)
V- <i>ta</i> form	108 (43.2)	82 (45.6)	49 (38.0)	12 (24.0)	6 (23.1)	17 (39.5)
V- <i>te</i> form/V-stem form	35 (14.0)	40 (22.2)	48 (37.2)	11 (22.0)	6 (23.1)	4 (9.3)
V- <i>te iru</i> form	11 (4.4)	4 (2.2)	23 (17.8)	6 (12.0)	2 (7.7)	5 (11.6)
V- <i>te shimau</i> form	2 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.6)	2 (4.0)	1 (3.8)	1 (2.3)
V-stem form + <i>sō</i> (+ <i>ni naru/da</i> )	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	5 (19.2)	0 (0.0)
V- <i>nbakari</i>	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (8.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
passive form	3 (1.2)	0 (0.0)	all	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
causative form	8 (3.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
negative form	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Other	2 (0.8)	8 (4.4)	2 (1.6)	5 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.3)
Number of occurrences*	250 (100.0)	180 (100.0)	129 (100.1)	50 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	43 (99.9)

\* Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of the total number of occurrences for each idiom.

The description of grammatical restrictions of each idiom is based on judgments obtained from three Japanese native speaker informants.

*Akke ni torareru* is frequently used in *-ta* form, including sentence-final *-ta* form with past meaning, as in (1) above, and placement immediately before an NP for use as an adnominal modifier, as in the following example:

(6) *Shiyō-nin wa akke ni torareta kaotsuki de, kubi o hinetta.* 'The servant twisted her head round, a startled look on her face.'

When used as an adnominal modifier, this idiom tends to collocate with NP's that refer to facial expression, as in *akke ni torareta [kao/hyōjō/kaotsuki] [de]* '[with] a startled {face/expression/look}' (see (6) above). This pattern may also take the auxiliary *yō na* 'like; as if' (*akke ni torareta yō na kao o suru* 'make a startled-looking face'). The *-ta* form sometimes modifies NP's that refer to the experiencer of surprise (*akke ni torareta saikun 'my wife, who was taken aback'*). However, in the BCCWJ over 70% of the post-collocates of *akke ni torareta* were NP's referring to facial expression. The adverbial form *-ta yō ni* ('like; as if') + VP is also used, as in *...to, akke ni torareta yō ni itta* '...he said, as if taken aback.'

parison with the data obtained from the BCCWJ. The *Asahi* Newspaper database (1985–2010) was queried to extract every fifth occurrence of *akke ni torareru* (total 822 occurrences) and every twentieth occurrence of *shita o maku* (total 1734). This yielded a data set of 164 examples of *akke ni torareru* and 86 of *shita o maku*. The goal of this sampling was to obtain a data set for each idiom slightly larger than that yielded by the BCCWJ.



*Akke ni torareru* often appears in the *V-te* and *V-stem* conjunctive forms, as shown in (7) and (8) respectively. These forms have the function of linking two clauses (S) and indicating chronological occurrence and/or cause.

- (7) *Marude, mahō no yō ni, watashi-tachi no mae ni hito ga taorete ita! Minako wa akke ni torarete, sora o miru.* 'Just like magic, there was someone lying in front of us! Minako was taken aback, and looked [up] at the sky.'
- (8) *Kimetsukeru kuchō ni, Yamao wa akke ni torare, Kojima Setsuko no anjigao ga ukabu.* 'Yamao is taken by surprise by [her] tone of condemnation, and Setsuko Kojima's worried face pops into his mind.'<sup>15</sup>

The conjunctive forms seem to attract verbs of visual perception in the subsequent clause, including *miru* 'look' (7) as well as the following:

- (9) *akke ni torare(te) + NP o (OBJ) + {mita/mite ita 'looked/was looking at,' nagamete iru/ita 'is/was gazing at,' mitsumeru/mitsumeta/mitsumete ita 'stares/stared/was staring at,' mimawashimashita 'looked around,' miagete ita 'was looking up at,' miokuru 'watch s.o. leave,' mimamoru 'watch carefully,' mikaeshita 'looked/stared back at,' miawaseta 'looked at each other'}*

The list above includes all verb forms attested in the BCCWJ. These results were supported by the *Asahi* newspaper data, which showed *akke ni torare(te)* followed by *mite ita* 'was looking at,' *nagamenagara* 'while gazing at,' *miiru* 'gaze intently at,' etc.

BCCWJ data show that *akke ni torareru* is commonly used with the aspectual ending *te iru*, as in (10) below.

- (10) *Watashi wa kōjō-chō o yonde, sugu ni kōjō no naka ni petto botoru no rain o hiku yō mejita. Kōjō-chō wa akke ni torarete ita.* 'I called in the factory chief and ordered him to set up a PET bottle line immediately. The chief was taken aback.'

When attached to continuative verbs, *te iru* indicates the dynamic continuation of an action or event over time (e.g. *hashitte iru* 'is running'); when attached to instantaneous verbs, it expresses a state resulting from the occurrence of an instantaneous event (e.g. *shinde iru* 'is dead'). *Akke ni torarete iru/ita* (lit. is/was being taken by [shock]) is interpreted as a dynamic psychological activity that extends over a period of time, which shows that this idiom can be classed as continuative (cf. Ishida 2008: 280–281 regarding the *te iru* form of anger idioms).

The BCCWJ contained only a few examples of *akke ni torareru* in the plain (dictionary) form, and most of these were accompanied by *bakari* or

<sup>15</sup> The *V-stem* conjunctive form (e.g. *torare, maki*) is used in written or formal spoken style, and the *V-te* conjunctive form (e.g. *torarete, maitte*) is used in colloquial Japanese.

*hodo*, particles that function as intensifiers (e.g. *akke ni torareru bakari datta* ‘was simply astounded,’ *akke ni torareru hodo datta* ‘it was enough to take them by surprise’). On the other hand, the plain form accounted for 18.9% of the instances of this idiom in the *Asahi* newspaper (Table 3), and most of these were adnominal modifier uses (e.g. *akke ni torareru kisha-tachi* ‘the shocked reporters’).

Analysis of the context preceding this idiom shows that it collocates with adverb phrases that specify duration, such as *isshun* ‘for an instant,’ *shunkan* ‘for a split second,’ and *shibaraku* ‘briefly; for some time’ (e.g. *isshun, akke ni torareta* ‘[I] was momentarily taken aback,’ *Teruko wa shibaraku akke ni torarete ita* ‘Teruko was astonished for a while’). Adverbs of degree may also be used (*yaya* ‘somewhat,’ *zuibun* ‘very,’ *tada* ‘nothing but’).

**Table 3. Verb forms of the target idioms in the BCCWJ and *Asahi* Newspaper**

	<i>akke ni torareru</i>		<i>shita o maku</i>	
	BCCWJ	<i>Asahi</i>	BCCWJ	<i>Asahi</i>
plain (dictionary) form	5 (3.9)	31 (18.9)	15 (34.9)	39 (45.3)
V- <i>ta</i> form	49 (38.0)	75 (45.7)	17 (39.5)	34 (39.5)
V- <i>te</i> form/V-stem form	48 (37.2)	25 (15.2)	4 (9.3)	2 (2.3)
V- <i>te iru</i> form	23 (17.8)	26 (15.9)	5 (11.6)	9 (10.5)
V- <i>te shimau</i> form	2 (1.6)	4 (2.4)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)
passive form	all	all	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
causative form	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.2)
negative form	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Other	2 (1.6)	2 (1.2)	1 (2.3)	1 (1.2)
Number of occurrences*	<b>129 (100.1)</b>	<b>164 (99.9)</b>	<b>43 (99.9)</b>	<b>86 (100.0)</b>

\* Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of the total number of occurrences for each idiom.

*Akke ni torareru* is subject to a number of restrictions of grammar and usage.<sup>16</sup> It is always used in the passive voice, never in the active (*\*akke ni toru* ‘take by surprise’), and negative forms are not usual (*\*akke ni torarena-katta* ‘was not taken by surprise’). It does not permit relativization (*\*torareru akke/\*torareta akke/\*torarete iru akke* ‘surprise that {\*is taken/\*was taken/\*is

<sup>16</sup> Descriptions of the grammar/usage restrictions of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku* are based on 1) the lack of instances of the relevant forms in both the BCCWJ and the *Asahi* Newspaper database, and 2) acceptability judgments obtained from three native speaker informants. Test items were selected with reference to Miyaji (1982a, 1986), Morita (1985, 1994), and Ishida (2000).

being taken}' or adnominal modification (*\*hen na/\*fushigi na/\*ōki na akke ni torareta* 'was taken by [a] \*strange/\*amazing/\*great [sense of] surprise'). Although the pre-placement of adverbial modifiers is possible (see above), the insertion of adverbials into the idiom phrase is not (*akke ni {\*isshun/\*zuibun} torareta* 'was taken {\*momentarily/\*very} aback'). It can be concluded that *akke ni torareru* is relatively inflexible.

*Shita o maku*, like *akke ni torareru*, is often used in sentence-final *-ta* form, as in *Yuka wa hisoka ni shita o maita* 'Yuka was secretly astonished' (5). However, in the BCCWJ there were no examples of the adnominal use of *shita o maita*, and the *Asahi* data yielded only a few instances of this pattern (e.g. *shita o maita oboe* 'a recollection of having been astonished').

*Shita o maku* appears frequently in the plain (dictionary) form, and this form is often sentence-final, as in the example below:

- (11) *Kare-ra no atama no yosa to, taimingu o toraeru takumisa ni wa, watashi nado wa itsumo shita o maku.* 'I am always amazed at their intelligence and clever timing.'

The plain form may also be followed by the particle-copula combination *hodo da* 'so much that, enough to' (*sono surudosa ni wa, otona ga shita o maku hodo desu* 'their shrewdness is enough to amaze adults') or used as an adnominal modifier, either in bare form (*shita o maku chi-teki zunō* 'an amazing intellect') or in combination with the intensifier *hodo no* 'so...that' (*shita o maku hodo no jōtatsu* 'improvement so [great] that it amazes').

*Shita o maku* is also used in the *V-te iru* form (with continuative meaning), although this form was less common than the *-ta* form and the plain form in both the BCCWJ and the *Asahi* newspaper data.

- (12) *Sore ni shite mo, Unokichi no yozuri no ude no yosa ni wa, Hanbei mo naishin, shita o maite ita.* 'Even so, Hanbei too was inwardly astonished (lit. was twisting his tongue) at Unokichi's night-fishing skills.'

Unlike *akke ni torareru*, *shita o maku* is not often used in the conjunctive *V-te/V-stem* forms. However, the BCCWJ did yield a few examples of these forms (e.g. *sono ishi no tsuyosa ni wa, Kindaiichi Kōsuke mo shita o maite kyōtan shita* 'Kindaiichi Kōsuke, too, was astonished and marveled at his strength of will').<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The BCCWJ also included a few instances of the use of both target idioms with *-te shimau*, an aspectual marker indicating completion or irreversibility (e.g. *shita o maite shimaimashita* 'I was totally amazed'), and *-nagara* ('while; as'), a conjunctive particle that links simultaneous events or actions (e.g. *akke ni torarenagara miagete ita* 'while being taken by surprise, [they] were looking up').

BCCWJ data suggest a clear tendency for *shita o maku* to co-occur with adverbials that refer to an internal psychological state, including *naishin* ‘inside,’ *hisoka ni* ‘inwardly, secretly,’ and *shinchū/kokoro no naka de* ‘in one’s heart’:

- (13) *Hanbei mo naishin, shita o maite ita* ‘Hanbei too was inwardly astonished’ (=12) / *Yuka wa hisoka ni shita o maita* ‘Yuka was secretly astonished’ (=5; see also 3) / *shinchū shita o maku omoi de* ‘with a feeling of amazement in his heart’ / *kokoro no naka de shita o makinagara* ‘while feeling in my heart a sense of amazement’

This point will be discussed further in Section 3.2.4.2.

*Shita o maku*, like *akke ni torareru*, is subject to many restrictions of grammar and usage. It has a strong tendency to be used in the affirmative (3–5, 11, 12); negative forms are not usual (\**shita o makanakatta* ‘[he] wasn’t astonished’). Neither relativization (\**maku shita* / \**maita shita* / \**maite iru shita* lit. [my] tongue that [I] {\*twist/\*twisted/\*am twisting}) nor passivization is possible (\**shita ga/o makareta*, lit. [my] tongue was twisted/[I] had [my] tongue twisted). Adnominal modification is impossible (\**nagai* / \**odoroki no*) *shita o maita*, lit. [I] twisted [my] {long tongue/tongue of surprise}), as is the insertion of adverbial modifiers (*shita o* {\**naishin*/\**hisoka ni*) *maita*, lit. [I] twisted [my] tongue {\*inwardly/\*secretly}). The causative form is possible (*fan no shita o makaseta* ‘[he] astonished the fans’), although no examples were found in the BCCWJ.<sup>18</sup>

The preceding analysis shows that, although *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku* share some grammatical forms, they also have distinctive patterns of verb use and collocation. Adequate information about idiom usage is essential for the users of monolingual idiom dictionaries, and dictionary descriptions of Japanese idioms should draw upon the results of corpus analysis in order to provide reliable accounts of characteristic patterns.

### 3.2.4 Semantic features

Descriptions of idiom meanings in dictionaries should be based on the principled analysis of naturally-occurring data and should clearly indicate semantic differences between idioms with related meaning. Patterns of idiom use revealed by corpus data, including frequent collocates and verb forms (Section 3.2.3), provide positive evidence of the semantic features of idioms

<sup>18</sup> *Shita o makaseru* was attested in the *Asahi* database, and native speakers judge this form to be acceptable.

(Fellbaum et al. 2006; Ishida 2008; cf. Sinclair 1991, 2004).<sup>19</sup> However, in the case of low-frequency idioms and/or small corpora, it may be difficult to obtain data sets large enough to identify clear patterns and judge the status of unattested forms.

The usage restrictions of individual idioms are a powerful means to verify the validity of semantic features extracted from the analysis of corpus data. Usage restrictions reflect semantic constraints and furnish negative evidence of the distinctive semantic features of individual expressions (Ishida 2003a, 2003b, 2008). In this paper, commutation tests and native-speaker judgments were used to verify a number of semantic features hypothesized on the basis of BCCWJ data analysis: ⟨concrete/abstract⟩, ⟨expressivity⟩, and ⟨positive evaluation⟩.<sup>20</sup> Judgments were obtained from three adult Japanese native speakers, using a written questionnaire and oral interview. The results of the analysis are reported below.

### 3.2.4.1 ⟨concrete/abstract⟩

When *shita o maku* appears in the sentence pattern NP *ga* (EXPERIENCER) + *ni* 'by/at' (CAUSE) + *shita o maku* (Section 3.2.2), it takes *ni*-particle NP's that refer to a special quality or a physical, intellectual, or mental ability. Instances found in the BCCWJ include the following:

- (14) *ishi no tsuyosa* 'strength of will' / *tsuyosa* 'strength' / *takumisa* 'cleverness, skill' / *yūkansa* 'courage' / *keikaisa* 'nimbleness' / *seikakusa* 'precision' / *surudosa* 'keenness, shrewdness' / *hassō no takubatsusa* '[outright] excellence of [the] idea' / *eigo-ryoku* 'English ability' (=4) / *kansatsu-ryoku* 'powers of observation' / *sōbakan* 'market sense' / *keiei shuwan* 'management skills' / *ki'ryoku* 'vigor, spirit' / *wakariyasui shaberi-kuchō* 'easy-to-understand way of speaking' / *atama no yosa to, taimingu o toraeru takumisa* 'intelligence and clever timing' (=11) / *yozuri no ude no yosa* 'night-fishing skills'

<sup>19</sup> Sinclair's (1991, 2004) view of semantic prosody suggests that the meaning of a form is shaped by the semantic consistency of its habitual collocates. However, Walker (2009) points out the difficulty of assigning semantic prosodies in cases where collocates lack semantic consistency (cf. Louw 1993, who argues that exceptions tend to be linked to irony or insincerity and serve to verify the prosodies in question).

<sup>20</sup> Ishida's (2003b) analysis of *me o miharu* 'open one's eyes wide in amazement,' *shita o maku*, and *odoroku* 'be surprised' identified the features ⟨interior/exterior⟩, ⟨positive/negative evaluation⟩, and ⟨expressive⟩, and Ishida (2008) showed that ⟨expressive⟩ also functions distinctively in Japanese and English anger idioms. The present analysis confirms and extends the results of these studies, using BCCWJ corpus data. The features ⟨abstract/concrete⟩ (above) correspond to ⟨interior/exterior⟩ in Ishida (2003b). Labelling has been revised in order to account for cases in which the cause of surprise may be aural rather than visual (e.g. *akke ni torareru*).

(=12)/*kenbun no seikaku na koto* ‘the fact that [their] observations were accurate’ / *tōshi, buppin hikiyose, yoken nōryoku* ‘clairvoyance, psychokinesis, ability to foresee the future’

On the other hand, *akke ni torareru* shows a strong tendency to co-occur with *ni*-particle NP’s that refer to an aural or visual stimulus, as in (15) *kimetsukeru kuchō* ‘[her] tone of condemnation’ and (16) *Rie no sugata* ‘Rie’s appearance.’

(15) *Kimetsukeru kuchō ni Yamao wa akke ni torare...* ‘Yamao was taken by surprise by [her] tone of condemnation...’ (=8)

(16) *Haha de arō josei wa Rie no sugata ni akke ni torarete iru...* The woman, who was probably the girl’s mother, was shocked by Rie’s appearance...’

Virtually all other *ni*-particle NP’s that co-occur with *akke ni torareru* in the BCCWJ also refer to some kind of aural and/or visual stimulus or event.<sup>21</sup> A sampling is shown below:

(17) *Kiyama no sobokuge na shitsumon* ‘Kiyama’s simple question’ / *Sae no kotae* ‘Sae’s answer’ / *sono isogi-ashi* ‘her hurried footsteps’ / *hitonatsukoi o-kotoba no taido* ‘the affable tone of his words’ / *sono tōtotsusa* ‘the abruptness [of his proposal]’ (=2) / *hā hā iu Gyūtarō* ‘Gyutarō, who was huffing and puffing’ / *Matsuken* ‘Matsu[daira] Ken[’s samba]’ / *kōshi kondō-buri* ‘[her] confusion of public and private behaviour’ / *totsuzen no hyōhen-buri* ‘his sudden and complete change of attitude’ / *Kazeno no amari no kenmaku* ‘Kazeno’s excessive fury’ / *keiren-teki na hitan o...haji mo gaibun mo kama-wazu shimesu koto* ‘[her] display of convulsive grief, without shame or regard for others’

This paper takes the view that the semantics of idiom-external *ni*-particle NP’s reflect the semantic features of the idioms themselves. NP’s that refer to skills, abilities or special qualities are ⟨abstract⟩, and the tendency of *shita o maku* to co-occur with such NP’s indicates that this idiom also has the feature ⟨abstract⟩. On the other hand, NP’s that express an aural/visual stimulus can be characterized as ⟨concrete⟩, because they represent real-time events that can be grasped by the human senses. The fact that the meaning of *akke ni torareru* is consistent with such NP’s indicates that this idiom is also ⟨concrete⟩.

The resistance of the target idioms to intersubstitutability provides additional evidence for these semantic features. In the following examples, the cause of surprise is an abstract ability, and while the use of *shita o maku* is

<sup>21</sup> When *akke ni torareru* is used without a *ni*-particle NP, the surrounding context usually includes reference to some kind of aural/visual stimulus, such as words, behaviour, or events (e.g. 1, 7). In the case of *shita o maku*, the context usually refers to another person’s skills, abilities, or special characteristics (e.g. 3, 5).

natural and acceptable (18a), the use of *akke ni torareru* is less so (18b).

(18a) *Naminami naranu sainō da to, Shokatsugen wa shita o maita.* ‘Shokatsugen marveled at [the boy’s] extraordinary talent [for precise expression].’

(18b) *?Naminami naranu sainō ni, Shokatsugen wa akke ni torareta.* ‘Shokatsugen was stunned by [the boy’s] extraordinary talent [for precise expression].’

The same judgment holds for examples such as (4) above: *Kurāku wa, kanojo no eigo-ryoku ni {shita o maita/?akke ni torareta}* ‘Clark was {amazed/?taken by surprise} by her English ability.’ In these contexts, the less acceptable *akke ni torareta* also forces the interpretation of surprise at the concrete manifestation of ‘[the boy’s] extraordinary talent’ and ‘her English ability’ in real-time verbal communication, rather than at the ‘talent’ or ‘ability’ itself.

*Shita o maku*, on the other hand, is resistant to use with NP’s that refer to a concrete aural or visual stimulus. Compare this idiom with *akke ni torareru* in the context below:

(19) *San-ki no kishū o mokugeki shita tabibito-ra wa, namakubi o muttsu mo miserarete ori, zen-in ga {akke ni torarete ita/\*shita o maite ita}.* ‘The travelers who witnessed the three horsemen’s surprise attack, having seen six severed heads, were all {shocked/\*amazed}.

The use of *shita o maku* is incongruous in (19) because the cause of surprise is a visual stimulus (cf. *?yama no ōkisa ni shita o maita* ‘he was amazed at the mountain’s size). The interpretation that the ‘travelers’ were amazed at the horsemen’s talent for cold-blooded assassination is possible, but unlikely. The resistance of *shita o maku* to co-occurrence with NP’s that refer to concrete stimuli provides further evidence that this idiom is ⟨abstract⟩.

### 3.2.4.2. ⟨expressivity⟩

As reported in Section 3.2.3, BCCWJ data show that *shita o maku* tends to co-occur with adverbial modifiers such as *naishin* ‘inside,’ *hisoka ni* ‘inwardly, secretly,’ and *shinchū/kokoro no naka de* ‘in one’s heart’ (3, 5, 12; see also 13). On the other hand, *akke ni torareru* tends to be used to modify NP’s that refer to facial expression, as in *akke ni torareta {kaotsuki/kao/hyōjō} [de]* ‘[with] a startled {look/face/expression}’ (6). Also, when this idiom is used in conjunctive forms it is sometimes followed by verbs that indicate a physical inability to move, such as *tachitsukusu* ‘remain standing’ or *tachisukumu* ‘be petrified’ (e.g. *boku wa akke ni torarete, tachisukunda* ‘I was stunned and couldn’t move’).

Corpus evidence thus suggests that *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku* can be distinguished on the basis of ⟨expressivity⟩. *Akke ni torareru* may be ⟨+expressive⟩, because the psychological activity of surprise tends to be ac-

accompanied by a visible facial expression or physical reaction; on the other hand, *shita o maku* may be ⟨-expressive⟩, because it refers to a wholly internal psychological activity.

The hypothesis that *shita o maku* is ⟨-expressive⟩ is supported by native speaker judgments that this idiom cannot be used to modify NP's referring to facial expression:

- (20) *Shiyō-nin wa {akke ni torareta/??shita o maita} kaotsuki de, kubi o hinetta.*  
 'The servant turned her head round, {a startled/??an astonished} look on her face.' (cf. 6)

Neither does it co-occur with verbs that refer to a physical inability to move (*\*boku wa shita o maite, tachisukunda* 'I was astonished and couldn't move').

(20) improves slightly with the addition of *yō na* 'like, as if' (*?shita o maita yō na kaotsuki* 'a look on her face as if she was astonished'); nevertheless, speakers report that they lack a clear sense of the facial expression being described. Use with *tachisukunda* is anomalous because it is difficult to interpret a relationship of cause/effect or successive occurrence between *shita o maku* and *tachisukumu*.

There is no evidence in the BCCWJ that *akke ni torareru* can be modified with adverbs such as *naishin* 'inwardly' and *shinchū* 'in one's heart.' This seems to support the hypothesis that *akke ni torareru* is ⟨+expressive⟩. However, native speaker judgments obtained for (21) and (22) indicate that *akke ni torareru* can, in fact, be modified by the adverb *naishin*:

- (21) {Ø/Naishin} *akke ni torareta.* *Aisu kōhī ga hiete iru to kiita toki, dorippu shita regyurā kōhī o kōri de hiyashita moji-dōri no aisū kōhī o sōzō shita no da.* 'I was {Ø/inwardly} shocked. When she said she had some chilled iced coffee, I had imagined regular drip coffee that had been chilled with ice, real iced coffee.
- (22) *Sono tōtotsusa ni, Sawa wa {Ø/naishin} akke ni torarete...* 'Sawa was {Ø/inwardly} startled by its abruptness...' (cf. 2)

In these cases, *akke ni torareru* is analyzable as ⟨-expressive⟩. This leads to the conclusion that this idiom is neutral with respect to expressivity (⟨±expressive⟩). Whether it refers to a purely internal psychological activity or whether the surprise emotion is accompanied by an external/physical manifestation depends on the context in which it is used.

### 3.2.4.3. ⟨positive evaluation⟩

As described in Section 3.2.4.1, *shita o maku* takes *ni*-particle NP's that refer to abilities, skills, or qualities, such as *atama no yosa* 'intelligence,' *keiei shuwan* 'management skills,' *yozuri no ude no yosa* 'night-fishing skills,' *yūkansa* 'courage,' *ishi no tsuyosa* 'strength of will,' etc. (14). These NP's have positive



evaluative meaning, in the sense that they reflect general norms of what is considered to be good (Moon 1998), and when *shita o maku* is used with them, it signals not only surprise but also an attitude of praise or admiration on the part of the experiencer (4, 11–12; see also 3, 18a). This holds true even in contexts describing a negative situation or event, such as (23) below.

- (23) *Masako wa...rokotsu na jerashii o butsukete kuru. Sore ni shite mo, osoru beki kan no yosa da wa-to, Yuka wa hisoka ni shita o maita. ‘Masako...vented her naked jealousy [on Yuka]. Even so, Yuka was secretly astonished, [thinking] that [Masako’s] intuition was really terribly good.’ (=5)*

In (23), *shita o maita* is interpreted to mean that Yuka is surprised and impressed by Masako’s keen intuition, regardless of the fact that it is associated with an overt display of jealousy. The evidence thus suggests that *shita o maku* has ⟨positive⟩ evaluative meaning.

BCCWJ data for *akke ni torareru* show that this idiom co-occurs with *ni*-particle NP’s referring to causes of surprise associated with either negative or positive evaluative meaning. For instance, *Kazeno no amari no kenmaku* ‘Kazeno’s excessive fury’ in (24) has negative evaluative meaning, whereas *genkisa* ‘vitality’ in (25) is positive.

- (24) *Kazeno no amari no kenmaku ni, Eriko wa akke ni torarete iru. Eriko is stunned by Kazeno’s excessive fury.’*
- (25) *Kinniku ga datsuraku shite mattaku kuchi mo kikenakatta hito to wa omoenu genkisa ni, mina, akke ni torare... ‘Everyone was stunned by his vitality, which was hard to believe belonged to the same man whose muscles had wasted away and who hadn’t been able to speak a word...’*

However, *akke ni torarete iru* in (24) does not convey a negative evaluation of ‘Kazeno’s excessive fury’; it is interpreted to mean only that Kazeno’s fury was sudden and unexpected to Eriko. In the same way, *akke ni torare* (25) conveys shock at the man’s unexpected vitality without attaching either a positive or a negative evaluation to this emotion.

Comparison of the target idioms in the examples below confirms that *shita o maku* conveys ⟨+positive evaluation⟩ while *akke ni torareru* has no inherent evaluative meaning (⟨±positive evaluation⟩).

- (26) *Kenbutsu-shū no naka ni iru Kotarō wa...Shirō no keikaisa ni {shita o maita/akke ni torareta}. ‘Kotaro, who was in the crowd of spectators, was {astonished/stunned} by Shiro’s nimbleness.’ (*shita o maku*=BCCWJ)*
- (27) *“Anata ni wa warui kedo” “Nan desu ka?” “Akagawa-sensei ga ai shite ita no wa, watashi datta no yo.” Dare mo ga, {akke ni torareta/\*shita o maita}. “For your sake, I’m sorry about this, but...” “What is it?” “I was the one that Akagawa-sensei loved.” Everyone was {stunned/\*astonished}.’ (*akke ni torareru*=BCCWJ)*

Both idioms can be used in (26). However, *shita o maita* is interpreted to mean that Kotaro admired and was impressed by Shiro's nimbleness, while *akke ni torareta* means that Kotaro was surprised because Shiro's nimbleness was unexpected to him. On the other hand, *shita o maita* is anomalous in (27) because the context does not provide any apparent reason that the speaker's revelation should elicit admiration or praise.<sup>22</sup>

#### 3.2.4.4. Discussion

The semantic features identified in the preceding analysis (see Table 4) can serve as the basis for defining the target idioms in dictionaries. *Shita o maku* is ⟨+abstract⟩, ⟨−expressive⟩, and ⟨+positive evaluation⟩, so it could be defined as “be amazed and impressed by another person's skills, abilities, or special qualities, without showing one's surprise visibly by a facial expression or physical reaction.” On the other hand, *akke ni torareru* is ⟨+concrete⟩ and neutral (±) with respect to ⟨expressivity⟩ and ⟨evaluation⟩. This idiom could be defined as “be shocked or surprised at the unexpectedness of someone's words or behaviour, or an event one has seen or heard; the emotion of shock/surprise may sometimes be manifested outwardly by a facial expression or physical reaction.” A key point here is that the tools of analysis make it possible to draw principled distinctions between idioms with related meanings.

**Table 4. Semantic features of *akke ni torareru* and *shita o maku***

	⟨concrete⟩	⟨abstract⟩	⟨expressive⟩	⟨positive evaluation⟩
<i>akke ni torareru</i>	+	−	±	±
<i>shita o maku</i>	−	+	−	+

<sup>22</sup> The feature ⟨abstract⟩ (Section 3.2.4.1) contributes to the unacceptability of *shita o maku* in (27), since this feature is inconsistent with the cause of surprise described in this context, which is an aural stimulus. The effect of the feature ⟨abstract⟩ is further evidenced by the fact that a possible (though unlikely) interpretation of *shita o maku* in (27) is that ‘everyone’ admired the inner strength or boldness underlying the speaker's verbal revelation. In the same vein, the feature ⟨positive evaluation⟩ contributes to the unacceptability of *shita o maku* in (19), because this feature clashes with the ⟨negative⟩ evaluative meaning of *namakubi* ‘severed heads.’

#### 4. Conclusions

This paper has shown how corpus data can be analyzed to extract a range of information about the meaning and use of Japanese idioms, including sentence patterns, verb forms and collocates, and semantic features. This paper has also shown that patterns revealed by corpus data can be verified and supplemented by traditional linguistic methods. Lexicographers, of course, face time pressures and space constraints that researchers have the luxury to ignore. However, the approach outlined here is a theory-driven model that yields a rich source of material for the description of idioms in monolingual idiom dictionaries.

One limitation of this paper is that the BCCWJ is presently a relatively small corpus with a limited number of genres. As reported above, queries for the target idioms produced results that were almost exclusively from books. Although the results of the present analysis were largely supported by a separate analysis of the *Asahi* Newspaper database, they should be tested and confirmed using a larger corpus with a greater variety of genres. This will become possible after the BCCWJ is completed later in 2011. However, because many idioms have a low frequency of occurrence even in large-scale corpora, it may be desirable to verify findings from BCCWJ data with supplementary data obtained from multiple newspaper databases and/or the World Wide Web (cf. Fellbaum et al. 2006; Philip 2008).

This paper has focused on the treatment of idioms in monolingual Japanese dictionaries. These dictionaries are often used by learners of Japanese, in part because at present there are no idiom dictionaries designed specifically for learners. This contrasts with the situation in English-speaking countries, where theory-driven, corpus-based idiom dictionaries aimed at learners are available (e.g. the *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Idioms*, HarperCollins 2002). There is arguably a need to develop such dictionaries for Japanese learners, especially in light of the fact that idioms tend to receive little attention in the JFL classroom.

Future research should also consider the possibility of developing an electronic lexicographic resource that provides not only information about the meaning and usage of individual idioms but also a rich collection of corpus data examples (cf. Fellbaum et al. 2006). Such a resource could be designed with links to different types and amounts of information for different users (native vs. non-native, layman vs. scholar, etc.). User studies are also necessary to clarify the needs, wants, and actual behaviour of individual groups.

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## Data

Asahi Newspaper Digital News Archives for Libraries, 1985–2010.

Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), 2009 Monitor Data.

## Dane korpusowe i opis idiomów w jednojęzycznych słownikach japońskich

### Streszczenie

Autorka artykułu podejmuje problem frazeograficznego opisu idiomatycznych połączeń japońskich, zwracając uwagę na fakt, że większość japońskich słowników idiomów zawiera niewiele informacji na temat znaczenia i użycia poszczególnych jednostek, bazując na przykładach autorskich lub manualnie wyekscerpowanych z powieści i prasy. Należy założyć, że analiza dużych korpusów powoli na pełniejszy opis znaczeń i użycie idiomów. Na podstawie materiału z the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (2009 Monitor Data) porównano dwa japońskie związki wyrażające zaskoczenie. Analiza objęła takie aspekty, jak: postać formalna omawianych jednostek, komponent czasownikowy, łączliwość i cechy semantyczne. Przeprowadzona analiza wykazała, że istnieją wyraźne schematy ich użycia, które są związane z danymi funkcjami semantycznymi. Badanie wykazało, że konieczne jest wykorzystanie istniejącej podbudowy teoretycznej w połączeniu z wynikami analizy korpusów oraz tradycyjnych metod analizy językoznawczej.





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## **Współczesna polska frazeologia „sportowa” z perspektywy leksykograficznej**

**Abstrakt.** Interesującą warstwę polskiej frazeologii stanowią związki wyrazowe, którym możemy przypisać miano sportowych. Rejestrują je ogólne słowniki języka polskiego oraz słowniki frazeologiczne. Analiza zawartości największych i najnowszych źródeł leksykograficznych dowodzi jednak zróżnicowanego traktowania sportowych frazeologizmów, odmiennego ich zapisu i kategoryzowania. Wpływ na to ma charakter tych związków i praktyka leksykograficzna, w której znajduje odbicie nie tylko różnorodność stanowisk teoretycznych i poglądów badaczy na charakter poszczególnych typów związków wyrazowych, ale też ewolucja metod polskiego słownictwa i wybór konkretnych wzorców opisu leksykograficznego. Analizowane słowniki mają różny charakter i przeznaczenie, dlatego też inaczej organizują artykuły hasłowe i podają materiał dokumentacyjny, wprowadzają nowe kategorie frazeologizmów, rozmaicie różnicują zakresy pojęciowe frazeologizmu i frazemu, traktują frazeologię wąsko lub szeroko, w różnym wymiarze uwzględniają frazeologię potoczną i socjolektalną. To wszystko przekłada się na strukturę słownika i ostateczną liczbę haseł. Bez względu jednak na to, jak licznie reprezentowane są sportowe frazeologizmy w leksykonach współczesnej polszczyzny, warto zdawać sobie sprawę, że rejestry te są dalekie od kompletności. Z jednej strony wynika to z natury samych słowników, z drugiej ma na to wpływ fakt, że sfera sportowej leksyki stale się rozrasta i w coraz większym wymiarze nasycą język ogólny, także na skutek determinologizacji słownictwa środowiskowego. Coraz liczniejsze wśród frazeologizmów sportowych stają się też połączenia wyrazowe wywodzące się spoza rzeczywistości sportowej, a powoływane do życia w przestrzeni medialnej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *język polski, frazeologia, terminologia, sportowa, słowniki*

Polską frazeologię tworzą związki wyrazowe różnego typu, tradycyjnie klasyfikowane ze względu na budowę jako frazy, zwroty i wyrażenia (Skorupka 1967), w nowszych ujęciach, w których dominuje syntaktyczny punkt widzenia, z uzupełnieniem o wyrażenia rzeczownikowe i określające oraz wskaźniki frazeologiczne (Lewicki, Pajdzińska 1993: 308). Drugim zasadniczym kryterium podziału frazeologizmów jest stopień łączliwości kompo-

mentów, na której to podstawie wyróżnia się związki stałe (idiomatyczne) i łączliwe (zwane dziś częściej frazemami), do których zalicza się m.in. porównania frazeologiczne, przysłowia, powiedzonka, wielowyzrazowe terminy, slogany propagandowe i reklamowe, formuły etykietalne, tytuły, zwroty wykrzyknikowe, wtrącenia metatekstowe (Chlebda 1993: 328–329).

Wymienione tu różne rodzaje połączeń wyrazowych, zwłaszcza należące do zasobu polszczyzny ogólnej<sup>1</sup>, są rejestrowane w specjalnych słownikach związków frazeologicznych oraz – w pewnym zakresie – w ogólnych słownikach języka polskiego. W wypadku polszczyzny pierwszej połowy XX wieku za najważniejsze zbiory polskiej frazeologii uznaje się powszechnie monumentalny *Słownik frazeologiczny języka polskiego* Stanisława Skorupki (dalej: SFJP) i – stanowiący dlań podstawę źródłową *Słownik języka polskiego* pod redakcją Witolda Doroszewskiego (SJPD). Związki wyrazowe z drugiej połowy XX i początków XXI wieku znajdują najepełniejsze odzwierciedlenie w kilku dużych słownikach frazeologicznych, zwłaszcza *Słowniku frazeologicznym współczesnej polszczyzny* Stanisława Bąby i Jarosława Liberka (SFWP), *Wielkim słowniku frazeologicznym* autorstwa Renaty Lebdy, *Wielkim słowniku frazeologicznym PWN z przysłowiami* opracowanym przez zespół: Anna Kłosińska, Elżbieta Sobol, Anna Stankiewicz (WSF PWN) oraz *Wielkim słowniku frazeologicznym języka polskiego* Piotra Müldnera-Nieckowskiego (WSFJP). W pewnym zakresie związki frazeologiczne są też notowane przez najpopularniejszy dziś słownik polszczyzny ogólnej, czyli *Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego* pod redakcją Stanisława Dubisza (USJP), stanowiący nb. materiałowy punkt wyjścia dla autorek *Wielkiego słownika frazeologicznego* PWN.

Nie wchodząc głębiej w niełatwe i stale dyskutowane zagadnienia definicyjne, trzeba podkreślić, że znaczący fragment – według różnych ujęć typologicznych – „polskiego języka sportu”, „polszczyzny sportowej”, „słownictwa sportowego”, „terminologii sportowej”, „języka sportowców” (zob. Ożdżyński 1970: 8; Tworek 2000: 331–339; Lewicki, Pajdzińska 1993: 319) stanowi sportowa frazeologia. Jest ona składnikiem wielu typów wypowiedzi pisanego i mówionego języka sportu, m.in. przepisów i regulaminów, relacji i komentarzy sportowych: prasowych, radiowych, telewizyjnych, internetowych (por. Reczek 1998, Grochala 2009), wypowiedzi naukowych, publicystycznych, a nawet literatury pięknej. Sportowe związki wyrazowe są ponadto jednym z kluczowych elementów sposobów porozumiewania się

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<sup>1</sup> Poza najbardziej rozbudowaną frazeologią języka ogólnego (rejestr oficjalny i potoczny) możemy wyróżnić mniej liczne zasoby frazeologizmów o ograniczonym zasięgu funkcjonowania, np. frazeologię gwar ludowych, socjolektów zawodowych i środowiskowych, żargonów (por. np. Krawczyk-Tyrpa 1987, Kołodziejek 2007).

sportowego środowiska, zawodników, trenerów i działaczy czy kibiców (por. Tworek 2000: 331–340).

Frazeologizmy sportowe stają się dziś przedmiotem szczególniejszego zainteresowania językoznawców, ponieważ wymiar ich ilościowej obecności na gruncie języka ogólnego, tak jak w ogóle całego słownictwa wywodzącego się ze sfery sportu, wykazuje tendencję wyraźnie zwiększającą (Dunaj i in. 1999: 242–243). W opinii wielu badaczy tendencja ta jest szczególnie widoczna w języku publicznym, zwłaszcza polskiej polityki (Bralczyk 1999: 215; Ożóg 2004: 228; Frankowska 1994, zwł. s. 34–38; Zieliński 2002: 260–270).

Wychodząc zatem z założenia, że frazeologia sportowa tworzy bardzo istotny fragment współczesnych zasobów leksykalnych języka polskiego przyjrzymy się jej z perspektywy leksykograficznej, dążąc do ustalenia, w jakim zakresie i sposobie jest reprezentowana w najważniejszych i największych słownikach frazeologicznych polszczyzny przełomu XX i XXI wieku.

1) W najmniejszym z interesujących nas słowników, czyli leksykonie Bąby i Liberka zanotowano tylko 4000 frazeologizmów, przede wszystkim stałych związków wyrazowych, ale też nieco porównań frazeologicznych i bliżej nieokreśloną liczbę frazemów. Nie dziwi zatem, że i sportowych związków wyrazowych jest tu mało, zaledwie 6 (sic!). Na ich sportowy charakter wskazuje swoista parakwalifikacja, której się dokonuje za pomocą komponentu definicji określającego przestrzeń występowania związku wyrazowego, np.: *złapać drugi oddech* ‘w realiach sportowych: przewyciężyć zmęczenie, poczuć przypływ sił, przyspieszyć’, *powietrze uszło z kogoś* ‘zwykle w realiach sportowych: ktoś osłabł, stracił pewność siebie’, *iść łeb w łeb* ‘zwykle w odniesieniu do realiów sportowych lub innych o podobnym charakterze: równo, razem, dorównując sobie nawzajem’, *grać ławkę* ‘w realiach sportowych: być graczem rezerwowym, nie być wystawianym przez trenera do gry’; publ. *obrona Częstochowy* ‘najczęściej w realiach sportowych: zacięta, zażarta, a również często chaotyczna, bezładna obrona korzystnego wyniku, odpieranie zmasowanych ataków przeciwnika przez broniącą się drużynę’, *ładować akumulatory* ‘w realiach sportowych: intensywnie trenować’.

Warto zauważyć, że w SFWP rejestruje się także inne związki wyrazowe, którym można by przypisać sportowy charakter, a z pewnością sportowe korzenie, jak: *leżeć na obu łopatkach* a) ‘być w złym stanie, szwankować’, b) zaniebować się w czymś’; *kłaść, położyć na (obie) łopatki* ‘zdecydowanie kogoś pokonać w jakiejś rywalizacji, sporze; wykazać swą wyższość nad kimś, większe umiejętności w jakiejś sferze’, *rozłożyć, rozkładać na (obie) łopatki* a) pokonać kogoś’, b) przyczynić się do upadku czegoś’, *cios, chwyt poniżej pasa* ‘nieszlachetne, nieuczciwe zachowanie się wobec kogoś, nieetyczny postępek, nieetyczne po-

suniecie'; *podnieść, podnosić poprzeczkę* 'zwiększyć wymagania, utrudnić coś komuś', *rzutem na taśmę* 'w ostatniej chwili przed końcem czegoś', *przechylić szalę zwycięstwa na swoją korzyść* 'przyczynić się do wygrania z kimś', *damski bokser* 'mężczyzna używający siły fizycznej wobec kobiety', *czarny koń* 'ktoś, kto okaże się niespodziewanym zwycięzcą czegoś lub w decydujący sposób wpłynie na coś', ale jednak traktuje się je tu już jako frazeologię pozasportową!

2) Kolejny słownik, czyli WSF przedstawia nieco obszerniejszą listę związków frazeologicznych przypisanych kategorii „sport”, bo ok. 20, ale i tak skromną w zestawieniu z ogólną liczbą 18 tysięcy haseł słownika. Ponieważ WSFJP jest słownikiem tematycznym, liczy się w nim niemal wyłącznie semantyczny wymiar haseł, o którym w pierwszej kolejności decyduje usytuowanie w konkretnym dziale słownika. Większość frazeologizmów „sportowych” ujęto w dziale „Rozrywka, sport”, który obejmuje jednak przede wszystkim frazeologię pozasportową. Ze sposobu objaśniania „sportowych” związków wyrazowych, zwłaszcza z dodatkowych informacji o znaczeniu frazeologizmów zawartych w obrębie definicji zakresowych lub częściowo zakresowych, wynika jednak, że za frazeologię sportową uznaje się tu (choć bardzo niekonsekwentnie) zarówno związki wywodzące się z obserwacji rzeczywistości sportowej i w niej przede wszystkim obecne, np.: *obronić mistrzostwo* 'ponownie zdobyć tytuł mistrza, potwierdzić wcześniejszy sukces, zwykle sportowy', *pierwsza liga czegoś* 'grupa najlepszych drużyn sportowych walczących między sobą o mistrzostwo w danej dyscyplinie' – 'grupa najlepszych osób, organizacji, instytucji w danej dziedzinie, branży'; *drużyna solistów* 'drużyna sportowa składająca się z indywidualistów, niepotrafiąca zgrać swoich działań, współgrać ze sobą' – 'organizacja, stowarzyszenie składające się z indywidualistów niepotrafiące zgrać swoich działań, a tym samym odnieść sukcesu'; *dostać czerwoną kartkę* 'w sporcie: zostać usuniętym z gry, zdyskwalifikowanym w wyniku rażącego złamania reguł' – 'zostać surowo upomnianym, ukaranym'; *pokazać, pokazywać komu czerwoną kartkę* 'w sporcie: usunąć z gry, zdyskwalifikować kogoś w wyniku rażącego złamania reguł' – 'surowo upomnieć, dotkliwie kogoś ukarać'; *sytuacja podbramkowa* 'w sporcie: sytuacja bliska zdobycia gola, rozgrywana pod bramką' – 'sytuacja trudna, krytyczna, wymagająca szybkiego rozwiązania', jak i frazeologizmy o rodowodzie sportowym, ale obecnie funkcjonujące przede wszystkim poza realiami sportowymi: *bić rekordy popularności* 'być bardzo popularnym', *coś jest trampoliną do kariery* 'coś umożliwi błyskawiczną karierę, bardzo szybki awans', *damski bokser* 'mężczyzna używający siły fizycznej wobec kobiety', *służyć komuś za worek treningowy* 'być przez kogoś bitym', *sztuka walki* 'zespół technik i reguł opisujących zasady walki w jakimś stylu'.

Niekonsekwencji w opisie i kwalifikowaniu frazeologizmów „sportowych” dowodzą stosunkowo liczne przykłady. Zaskakuje m.in. odmienne potraktowanie, czyli z jednej strony umieszczenie w dziale „Rozrywka, sport” związku wyrazowego: *przejmować / przejąć pałeczkę* ‘przejmować coś po kimś; kontynuować czyjąś pracę, podejmować rozpoczęte przez kogoś działania’ opatrzonego komentarzem jednoznacznie wskazującym na jego sportową genezę (W biegu sztafetowym przekazanie pałeczki jest znakiem rozpoczęcia biegu przez następnego zawodnika), przy jednoczesnej lokalizacji innych frazeologizmów o podobnej charakterystyce w dziale „Ciało człowieka”, np.: *cios poniżej pasa* ‘nieuczciwy argument, zarzut; postępek sprzeczny z regułami’ (Wyrażenie pochodzące z terminologii bokserskiej; w tej dziedzinie sportu uderzenia poniżej pasa są niedozwolone), *położyć / kłaść kogoś, coś na (obie) łopatki* ‘pokonywać kogoś, coś ‘doprowadzać kogoś, coś do złego stanu’ (Frazeologizm pochodzący z walki zapaśniczej, w której położenie rywala na łopatki jest oznaką zwycięstwa), a nawet „Przyroda”: *palma pierwszeństwa / zwycięstwa* ‘najwyższa nagroda, pierwsze miejsce’ (Podczas olimpiad w starożytnej Grecji zwycięzca otrzymywał w nagrodę gałązkę palmową). Nie usprawiedliwia tego rozwiązanie tematyczny charakter słownika, mamy w nim przecież dość liczne przykłady sytuowania tego samego frazeologizmu w obrębie różnych działów, na przykład przywołany już zwrot: *coś jest trampoliną do kariery* poza działem „Rozrywka, sport” znajdziemy też w dziale „Aktywność, praca”.

Słownik notuje ponadto frazeologizmy niewątpliwie wywodzące się z realiów sportowych i nadal w nich funkcjonujące, które – choć zaliczone do tematycznej sfery „sportu” – zostały jednak pozbawione w definicji informacji o ich rodowodzie, jak w przykładach: *podnosić poprzeczkę* ‘zwiększyć wymagania, stawiać coraz trudniejsze zadania’ czy *strzelić sobie gola* ‘popęłnić błąd, który obróci się przeciwko popełniającemu; swoją decyzją wywołać skutek odwrotny do zamierzonego’. Inne związki o podobnym charakterze, mimo że udokumentowane nieraz sportowymi kontekstami użycia, znalazły się za to w działach „Ciało człowieka”: *iść łeb w łeb* ‘posuwać się naprzód z taką samą prędkością’ – ‘osiągać takie same wyniki’, *biec łeb w łeb* ‘posuwać się naprzód z taką samą prędkością, ścigać się, nie uzyskując przewagi’, *czuć na plecach czyjś oddech* ‘mieć świadomość silnej konkurencji z czyjejś strony’, albo „Człowiek i jego usposobienie”, a nawet „Przekonania”: *być na szarym końcu* ‘na ostatniej pozycji, zupełnie na końcu’.

3) Wprawdzie WSF PWN bazuje na zasobach USJP, jednak sposób przedstawienia, opis i kwalifikowanie związków wyrazowych w obu słownikach zdecydowanie się różni. Przykładów dostarcza frazeologia sportowa.

Przede wszystkim istotnie inna jest liczba frazeologizmów uznawanych za sportowe, WSF PWN notuje tylko 3 (słownie: trzy) takie związki, opatrząc je ogólnym kwalifikatorem *sport(owe)*. Są to: mianowicie: *sport. grać czysto* a) 'grać zgodnie z regułami'; b) 'postępować uczciwie, zgodnie z zasadami'; *położyć, powalić, rozłożyć, kłaść kogoś na (obie) łopatki* a) pot. 'pokonać kogoś, być znacznie lepszym od kogoś, wyraźnie wyprzedzać kogoś w jakiejś rywalizacji', b) *sport. 'zwyciężyć, zwyciężać kogoś w walce zapaśniczej przez położenie go na plecach, na wznak', wolna amerykanka* a) *sport. 'walka, zwykle zapaśnicza, w której wszystkie chwytty są dozwolone; wolno-amerykanka'*, b) pot. 'sposób postępowania polegający na nieprzestrzeganiu żadnych zasad, reguł, norm'. Kilka dalszych połączeń wyrazowych, mimo iż pozbawionych stosownego kwalifikatora, także można uznać za przynależne do sfery sportu, do czego zachęca albo kształt definicji, albo dokumentacja użycia, jak w przykładach: pot. *grzać ławę* 'zwykle o piłkarzach: siedzieć na ławce rezerwowych, nie uczestniczyć w grze': *Grał nawet we włoskiej Serie A. Teraz grzeje ławę w Glasgow Rangers*; pot. obraźl. *sędzia kalosz* 'epitet wykrzykiwany czasem pod adresem sędziego przez kibiców niezadowolonych z jego decyzji w trakcie rozgrywek sportowych', *wyprzedzić, zwyciężyć itp. o długość, o kilka długości* 'w zawodach wioślarskich, wyścigach konnych: wyprzedzić, zwyciężyć itp. o tyle, ile wynosi długość (kilka długości) łodzi, konia itp.>'; pot. *iść łeb w łeb* a) 'o zwierzętach, zwłaszcza o koniach wyścigowych: biec, galopować równo, nie prześcigając jeden drugiego' b) 'o ludziach podczas jakiejś rywalizacji: mieć przez cały czas takie same wyniki'.

Inne kojarzone z realiami sportowymi związki frazeologiczne albo nie znajdują miejsca w WSF PWN, albo przypisuje się im charakter wyrażen pozaspportowych, jak: *bomba (poszła) w górę* 'wyrażenie oznaczające podniesienie kuli na maszt na znak rozpoczęcia wyścigu koni', *cios, chwyt poniżej pasa* 'posunięcie niezgodne z przyjętymi normami etycznymi, postępek nieszlachetny, nieetyczny', *czysta gra* 1) 'gra zgodna z regułami', 2) 'postępowanie uczciwe, zgodne z zasadami', *odpaść w przedbiegach* 'wycofać się lub zostać usuniętym od razu na początku jakiegoś przedsięwzięcia, nie podołać czemuś już na początku, zostać pozbawionym możliwości udziału w czymś', *rzutem na taśmę* 'zdobywając coś lub kończąc coś ostatkiem sił, w ostatniej chwili', *sytuacja podbramkowa* 'sytuacja trudna, krytyczna, wymagająca natychmiastowego działania', *obniżyć poprzeczkę* 'zmniejszyć wymagania', *podnieść, podwyższyć poprzeczkę* 'zwiększyć wymagania', *wysoko (nisko) ustawić, stawiać poprzeczkę* 'wymagać dużo (mało)'.

4) Z kolei USJP rejestruje ok. 20 frazeologizmów sportowych i wykorzystuje w ich opisie kilka kwalifikatorów. Ogólny kwalifikator *sport.* występuje

m.in. przy takich, związkach, jak: *objąć, uzyskać, zdobyć prowadzenie; wyjść, wysunąć się na prowadzenie, na pierwsze miejsce* ‘być pierwszym w jakiejś klasyfikacji, mieć przewagę nad przeciwnikiem, zwyciężyć, przodować’, *prowadzić bieg, prowadzić wyścig* ‘być na czele, biec, jechać na pierwszej pozycji’; *jechać, siedzieć (komuś) na kole (kółku)* ‘w kolarstwie: jechać w bliskiej odległości, doganiać kogoś’; *czysta gra* ‘gra uczciwa, zgodna z zasadami’, *grać czysto* ‘grać uczciwie, zgodnie z zasadami, grać na remis ‘dążyć do osiągnięcia w grze wyniku remisowego’, *do kółka* ‘o wynikach gier sportowych: do zera’, *dać mata* ‘wygrać partię dzięki doprowadzeniu gry do sytuacji uniemożliwiającej przeciwnikowi obronę jego króla’, *dostać mata* ‘przegrać partię wskutek dopuszczenia do sytuacji uniemożliwiającej obronę swojego króla’, *płynąć strzałką* ‘płynąć na brzuchu przez krótki czas z wyciągniętymi do przodu, wyprostowanymi rękoma i złożonymi dłońmi, wykonując lekkie, naprzemienne, pionowe ruchy nogami’, *bomba (poszła) w górę* ‘utarte wyrażenie wyścigowe oznaczające podniesienie kuli na maszt na znak rozpoczęcia biegu koni’, *pułapka ofsajdowa* ‘w piłce nożnej: akcja, w której zawodnicy celowo przepuszczają przed siebie w kierunku własnej bramki gotowego do strzału przeciwnika, aby ten znalazł się na spalonym’; *mieć jakiś czas, któreś miejsce* ‘osiągnąć w zawodach w danej konkurencji jakąś szybkość, zdobyć któreś miejsce’, *odebrać piłkę, podanie, serw itp.* ‘prawidłowo przejąć przekazaną podczas gry piłkę’, *prowadzić piłkę, krążek itp.* ‘zgodnie z zasadami gry lekkimi uderzeniami rąk, nóg lub odpowiedniego kija posuwać piłkę, krążek, wymijając przeciwników’, *uzyskać jakiś czas* ‘osiągnąć określony wynik sportowy mierzony w jednostce czasu’, *zejść z maty* ‘skończyć zawody lub wycofać się z nich’.

Przy opisie kilku innych związków wyrazowych pojawiają się bardziej szczegółowe kwalifikatory wskazujące albo na ograniczony zasięg ich funkcjonowania, albo charakter specjalistyczny. I tak, za *sportowe środowiskowe* uznaje się frazeologizmy: *grzać ławę* ‘zwykle o piłkarzach: siedzieć na ławce rezerwowych, nie uczestniczyć w grze’, *(jechać) na krechę* ‘o jeździe na nartach: szusem’, za należące do słownictwa *publicystyki sportowej*: *uzyskać jakiś czas* ‘osiągnąć określony wynik sportowy mierzony w jednostce czasu’; za *sportowe medyczne*: *próba ergometryczna (wysiłkowa)* ‘badanie organizmu przeprowadzane w czasie wysiłku fizycznego lub też po jego zakończeniu’; za *sportowe wojskowe*: *marsz, bieg patrolowy* ‘zespołowy bieg, marsz długodystansowy, zwykle na trudnej trasie, połączony z ćwiczeniami o charakterze wojskowym lub sportowym’; a nawet za *sportowe kosmetyczne*: *odnowa biologiczna* ‘zabiegi kosmetyczne i ćwiczenia poprawiające ogólny stan zdrowia i pozwalające zrelaksować się’.

W USJP nietrudno dostrzec jeszcze inną grupę związków frazeologicznych, którym można by przypisać charakter sportowych. Mam tu na uwadze

związki wywodzące się ze sfery sportu, w której także obecnie w funkcjonują w dosłownych znaczeniach, a które w słowniku, pozbawione odpowiedniego kwalifikatora, traktowane są wyłącznie jako związki wyrazowe o ogólniejszym, metaforycznym sensie, np.: *cios poniżej pasa* 'posunięcie niezgodne z przyjętymi normami postępowania; postępek nieszlachetny, nieetyczny', *odpaść w przedbiegach* 'wycofać się lub zostać usuniętym od razu na początku jakiegoś przedsięwzięcia, nie podolać czemuś już na początku, zostać pozbawionym możliwości udziału w czymś', *obniżyć poprzeczkę* 'zmniejszyć wymagania', *podnieść, podwyższyć poprzeczkę* 'zacząć więcej wymagać', *wysoko (nisko) ustawić, stawiać poprzeczkę* 'wymagać dużo (mało)', *rzutem na taśmę* 'zdobywając coś, kończąc coś ostatkiem sił, w ostatniej chwili', *sytuacja podbramkowa* 'sytuacja trudna, krytyczna, wymagająca natychmiastowego działania', *iść łeb w łeb* 'o ludziach podczas jakiejś rywalizacji: mieć przez cały czas takie same wyniki, osiągać to samo', *zeszło z kogoś powietrze* 'ktoś stracił ochotę, siłę, zapął do robienia czegoś, ktoś się zmęczył lub zniechęcił'. Szczególnie jaskrawo widać ten sposób traktowania frazeologizmów o korzeniach sportowych w nagromadzeniu bliskich sobie wariantów: *utrafić w dziesiątkę* 'wpaść na doskonały pomysł, dotknąć istoty sprawy'; *trafić w dziesiątkę* 'celnie coś skwitować, zinterpretować lub wpaść na udany pomysł'; *strzelić w dziesiątkę* 'trafnie coś odgadnąć', *strzał w dziesiątkę* 'wyjątkowo udany pomysł lub jego realizacja'.

Prymarnie sportowego charakteru takich związków i ich żywej obecności w języku sportu dowodzą przywoływane przez redakcję słownika konteksty użycia: *pobić rekord (rekordy), bić rekordy* 'osiągnąć, osiągać wynik lepszy od poprzedniego w danej dziedzinie': *Pobił rekord świata na igrzyskach olimpijskich; Bił rekordy na wszystkich dystansach sprinterskich; (z)łapać, chwycić drugi oddech* 'przy długotrwałym wysiłku przewyciężyć, przewyciężać uczucie zmęczenia lub chwilową stagnację, poczuć, czuć przypływ świeżych sił: *W końcowym odcinku trasy biegacze chwytają drugi oddech.*

Na tym tle wyróżnia się frazeologizm *położyć, powalić, rozłożyć, kłaść kogoś na (obie) łopatki*, który poza znaczeniem ogólnym 'pokonać kogoś, być znacznie lepszym od kogoś, wyraźnie wyprzedzać kogoś w jakiejś rywalizacji', objaśnia także definicja wskazująca na jego wyraźnie sportowy charakter: 'zwyciężyć, zwyciężać kogoś w walce zapaśniczej przez położenie go na plecach, na wznak.

Na rzeczywiste rozmiary polskiej frazeologii sportowej (i frazematyki) wskazuje w tym słowniku duży (zwłaszcza w proporcji do liczby właściwych frazeologizmów sportowych), bo liczący ponad 250 jednostek, zbiór takich połączeń wyrazowych wyposażonych w kwalifikator lub definicję wskazującą na ich sportowy charakter, które – choć mieszczą się w obrębie szeroko



rozumianej frazeologii – nie są jednak traktowane jako związki frazeologiczne, lecz zestawienia terminologiczne. Należą do nich przede wszystkim wyrażenia takie, jak: *bieg na przelaj* ‘bieg odbywający się w terenie otwartym, z pokonywaniem przeszkód naturalnych’, *bieg przez płotki* ‘konkurencja lekkoatletyczna polegająca na biegu po torze, na którym są ustawione takie przeszkody’, *ćwiczenia siłowe* ‘ćwiczenia mające na celu wyrobienie przede wszystkim siły’, *ćwiczenia sprawnościowe* ‘ćwiczenia, trening mające na celu wyrobienie sprawności ruchowej’, *ćwiczenia wolne* ‘ćwiczenia gimnastyczne bez przyrządów’, *czerwona kartka* ‘czerwony kartonik, który sędzia piłkarski pokazuje zawodnikowi jako znak usunięcia go z boiska za poważne złamanie przepisów gry’, *żółta kartka* ‘żółty kartonik, który sędzia piłkarski pokazuje zawodnikowi jako znak upomnienia za złamanie przepisów gry’; *krok łyżwowowy* ‘krok narciarski polegający na silnym odpychaniu się raz jedną, raz drugą nogą w bok, ruchem podobnym jak przy jeździe na łyżwach, stosowany w szybkiej jeździe po równym lub lekko falistym terenie’, *kwiat lotosu* ‘w gimnastyce: ćwiczenie, pozycja polegające na siedzeniu ze skrzyżowanymi nogami i stopami ułożonymi na udach’, *start lotny* ‘minięcie linii startowej przez zawodnika rozpędzonego w wyścigu, traktowane jako chwila startu’, *lotny finisz* ‘wyznaczony punkt na trasie wyścigu, w którym zawodnik, przekraczający go pierwszy, zdobywa punkty lub nagrodę; także: rywalizacja w tym punkcie trasy’, *ławka kar* ‘w hokeju: ławka, na której podczas meczu siedzą zawodnicy karnie wykluczeni z gry na ściśle określony czas’, *martwa piłka* ‘piłka podana lub rzucona w czasie przerwy w grze, nieuwzględniona’, *raid gwiazdzisty* ‘raid samochodowy lub motocyklowy polegający na tym, że zawodnicy startują w oznaczonym czasie z różnych miejscowości i zdążają do wspólnej mety (linie ich dróg stanowią ramiona gwiazdy)’, *róża skoczkowa* ‘w szachach: pozycja, z której skoczek może wykonać posunięcie w każdym z ośmiu możliwych kierunków’, *stały fragment gry* ‘w piłce nożnej jedna z powtarzalnych sytuacji: rzut różny, rzut wolny itp.’, *sucha zaprawa* ‘trening polegający na wykonywaniu ruchów właściwych danej dyscyplinie sportowej lub na wykonywaniu ćwiczeń przygotowujących do jej uprawiania, ale nie w warunkach dla tej dyscypliny typowych’, *worek treningowy* ‘skórzany worek wypełniony włosem, używany przez bokserów jako przyrząd do ćwiczeń’ oraz mniej liczne zwroty, w rodzaju: *(z)gasić piłkę* ‘w grach sportowych, np. w piłce nożnej, tenisie: odpowiednim ruchem nogi, rakiety itp. przytrzymać, przytrzymywać, zahamować, hamować spadającą piłkę’, *przejąć pałeczkę* ‘w biegach sztafetowych: wziąć pałeczkę od zawodnika kończącego bieg w celu przekazania jej następnemu zawodnikowi po przebiegnięciu określonego odcinka trasy’.

5) Najobszerniejszy zestaw frazeologizmów sportowych zarejestrował w swoim ogromnym słowniku, liczącym, według samego autora, ok. 200

tysięcy haseł, Piotr Müldner-Nieckowski. Obecność w nim prawie 400 jednostek opatrzonych kwalifikatorem *sportowe* to w równym stopniu refleks wielkości słownika, co i niezwykle szerokiego pojmowania przez zespół redakcyjny frazeologii (por. Żmigrodzki 2003: 197–198), czyli uwzględniania w słowniku nie tylko związków stałych, idiomów i frazemów, ale też przysłów i powiedzeń oraz tzw. produktów językowych, które w tradycyjnej klasyfikacji nazywa się związkami luźnymi. W rezultacie także sfera frazeologii sportowej jest niezwykle rozbudowana, a niektóre artykuły hasłowe liczą po kilka, a nawet po kilkanaście związków wyrazowych (*atak, bramka, cios, forma, gra*) i ich wariantów. Największy, dotyczący hasła *piłka*, prezentuje aż 24 związki: 1) *być przy piłce* ‘mieć kontrolę nad ruchem piłki, nie dopuszczać przeciwnika do przejęcia kontroli nad ruchem piłki’, 2) *być w posiadaniu piłki* ‘być przy piłce, mieć kontrolę nad ruchem piłki, nie dopuszczać przeciwnika do przejęcia kontroli nad ruchem piłki’, 3) *długa piłka* ‘płaskie uderzenie piłka na drugi koniec boiska’, 4) *gasić piłkę* ‘przyjmować, odbierać piłkę, zmniejszając jej prędkość, pęd tak żeby uzyskać kontrolę nad jej ruchem’, 5) *krótka piłka* ‘piłka lecąca krótko i szybko’, 6) *nagrywać piłkę* ‘podawać piłkę w ściśle określonym kierunku, umożliwiając partnerom skuteczną grę’, 7) *odbierać piłkę* ‘przyjmować, łapać, przechwytywać piłkę, nad której ruchem panował inny zawodnik’, 8) *oddawać piłkę* ‘dopuszczać do tego, żeby przeciwnik przejął kontrolę nad ruchem piłki’, 9) *odegrać piłkę* ‘odbić, odrzucić podaną przez kogoś piłkę’, 10) *piłka w grze* ‘gra się rozpoczęła’, 11) *podawać piłkę* ‘serwować; rozpoczynać grę, kierując piłkę na pole przeciwnika’, 12) *podawać piłkę na głowę, nogę* kierować piłkę do innego zawodnika tak, żeby odbił ją głową, nogą’, 13) *podkręcać piłkę* ‘uderzanej piłce nadawać rotację’, 14) *posyłać piłkę do kogoś* ‘kopać, rzucać piłkę w kierunku kogoś, czegoś’, 15) *posyłać piłkę na coś* ‘kopać, rzucać piłkę w kierunku czegoś’, 16) *posyłać piłkę w stronę* ‘kopać, rzucać piłkę w kierunku kogoś, czegoś’, 17) *puszczać, przepuszczać piłkę* ‘nie skutecznie bronić bramki; nie przechwytywać piłki’, 18) *szanować piłkę* ‘jak najdłużej nie dopuszczać przeciwnika do kontroli nad piłką, sterować ruchem piłki dokładnie trafnie, po swojej myśli’, 19) *ścinać piłkę* ‘silnie uderzać piłkę tak, żeby gwałtownie zmieniła kierunek’, 20) *uderzać piłkę z kozła, kozłem* ‘uderzać piłkę tak, żeby się odbiła od ziemi’, 21) *utrzymywać się przy piłce* ‘mieć kontrolę nad ruchem piłki, nie pozwalać przeciwnikowi na przejęcie kontroli nad ruchem piłki’, 22) *wykładać komuś piłkę* ‘podawać piłkę bardzo dokładnie’, 23) *zagrywać piłkę* ‘serwować; rozpoczynać grę, kierując piłkę na pole przeciwnika’, 24) *z pierwszej piłki (grać)* ‘(piłka nożna) bez przymierzania się do uderzenia, bez ustawiania piłki; natychmiast, nie zwlekając’.

Sportowe zakresy znaczeniowe związków wyrazowych w słowniku Müldnera-Nieckowskiego określa regularnie kwalifikator. Zwraca jednak

uwagę, że przy zarejestrowanej tu znaczącej części sportowych frazeologizmów mamy albo wyznaczone dodatkowe przestrzenie funkcjonalne, w tym ogólne: *dobiegać do mety* 1) sport. ‘kończyć bieg’, 2) ‘być blisko celu, kończyć coś’, *na pierwszym miejscu* 1) sport. ‘uzyskując zwycięstwo, najlepszy wynik, uzyskując najkrótszy czas’, 2) ‘najważniejsze, najpilniejsze, priorytetowe’, *stać na głowie* 1) ‘podejmować zwiększone wysiłki, aby dopiąć celu’, 2) sport. wykonywać ćwiczenie gimnastyczne polegające na chwilowym utrzymaniu ciała w pozycji pionowej, opartego na czubku głowy’, *za którymś nawrotem*, 1) sport. ‘po pokonaniu kolejnego odcinka basenu’, 2) ‘kiedy po raz któryś wrócił’, *przekazywać pałeczkę* 1) sport. ‘podawać pałeczkę następnemu zawodnikowi w sztafecie’, 2) ‘umożliwiać komuś kontynuowanie działań przez siebie rozpoczętych’, i równie często specjalistyczne, np. wojskowe: *atak rozwija się* 1) sport. ‘zawodnicy wzmagają akcję zaczepną’, 2) wojsk. ‘oddziały zdobywają nowe tereny’, *ofensywa na coś* 1) sport. ‘atak’, 2) wojsk. ‘natarcie, atak’, *ostre strzelanie* 1) sport. ‘częste strzały w kierunku bramki przeciwnika’, 2) wojsk. ‘strzelanie nabojami zawierającymi pocisk’, *pozycja strzelecka* 1) sport. *dzien*. ‘takie ustawienie zawodnika na boisku, które umożliwia kopnięcie piłki w stronę bramki przeciwnika’, 2) sport. ‘poprawne ustawienie, ułożenie ciała, które umożliwia oddanie strzału’, 3) wojsk. ‘miejsce, z którego można lub powinno się strzelać’, *zagrzewać do boju* 1) sport. *dzien*. ‘dopingować’, 2) wojsk. ‘zachęcać’, łowieckie: *dochodzić do strzału* 1) sport. ‘zaczynać znajdować się w sytuacji, w której można strzelić piłką do bramki’, 2) łow. ‘zbliżać się do zwierzyny na odległość strzału’, prawnicze: *linia obrony* 1) sport. ‘grupa zawodników, których zadaniem jest obrona przed atakami przeciwnej drużyny’, 2) praw. ‘sposób prowadzenia obrony, sposób argumentacji obrońcy’, artystyczne: *dawać koncert gry* 1) sport. ‘wykazywać znaczne umiejętności sportowe’, 2) szt. ‘grać utwór, wykonywać rolę popisowo, po mistrzowsku’, albo szczególne nacechowanie stylistyczne lub ekspresywne, na przykład żartobliwe znaczenie związków w rodzaju: *bieg przez płotki* 1) sport. ‘rodzaj konkurencji lekkoatletycznej’, 2) żart. ‘zajęcie trudne, wymagające pokonywania licznych przeszkód’, *bieg sprinterski* 1) sport. ‘typ konkurencji lekkoatletycznej’, 2) żart. ‘szybkie wykonanie czegoś, załatwienie sprawy w dużym tempie’, *tor przeszkód* 1) sport. ‘przeszkody rozstawione na trasie biegu’, 2) *dzien*. żart. ‘liczne utrudnienia realizacji jakiegoś zadania’, *mieć siłę w nogach* 1) sport. ‘mieć silne, dobrze umięśnione nogi’, 2) żart. ‘móc łatwo uciekać’, *odpadać, przegrywać w przedbiegach* 1) sport. ‘przegrywać w eliminacjach’, 2) żart. zupełnie nie kwalifikować się do czegoś, nie spełniać podstawowych warunków’, *waga lekka*; 1) sport. ‘w sportach walki jedna z najniższych kategorii wagi zawodników’, 2) *posp*. żart. ‘osoba niska, szczupła’ ironiczne: *gol do własnej bramki*, 1) sport. ‘gol samobójczy’, 2) *iron*. ‘działanie na własną nieko-

rzyść', *stara kadra* 1) *sport.* 'zespół zawodników w wieku, w którym już się nie osiąga dobrych wyników', 2) *iron.* 'zespół pracowników którzy nie nadążają za postępem', *zielony stół* 1) *sport.* 'stół do gier hazardowych', 2) *sport. iron.* 'sędziowie, urzędnicy sportowi, którzy podejmują arbitralne decyzje'.

Najbardziej jednak w tym słowniku na uwagę zasługuje spora grupa frazeologizmów, które – opatrzone kwalifikatorem *sport.* – mają z jednej strony konkretne zastosowanie w realiach sportowych, ale z drugiej towarzyszy im kwalifikator *dzien.* wskazujący na szczególną ich frekwencję w języku dziennikarstwa, zwłaszcza jego mówionej postaci (WSFJP: 24). Do takich związków wyrazowych należą m.in.: *bomba w górę* 1) 'podniesienie kuli na maszt, oznaczające rozpoczęcie biegu koni na wyścigach', 2) 'rozpoczęcie czegoś, początek', *eliminować, wykluczać kogoś z gry* 1) 'spowodować, że ktoś nie weźmie udziału w dalszych rozgrywkach, zawodach', 2) 'pozbawiać kogoś wpływu na politykę', *wycofać się, wychodzić z gry* 1) 'zawieszać swój udział w zawodach, rozgrywkach', 2) 'przestawać brać w czymś udział, uczestniczyć', *morderczy cios* 1) 'mocne uderzenie, śmiertelne', 2) zdarzenie, które jest przyczyną upadku, likwidacji, obalenia czegoś', *oddawać inicjatywę* 1) 'rezygnować z walki' 2) 'rezygnować z kierowania przedsięwzięciem na czyjąś rzecz', *odsyłać do narożnika* 1) '(boks) kierować zawodnika do kąta ringu za karę a. żeby czekał na decyzję sędziego', *rzut na taśmę* 1) 'energiczne wysunięcie się do przodu w momencie przekraczania mety', 2) 'końcowy, szczególnie intensywny wysiłek', *schodzić z trasy* 1) 'rezygnować z udziału w wyścigu', 2) 'przestać poruszać się po urzędowo wyznaczonej drodze, zacząć iść inną drogą', *toczą się rozgrywki* 1) 'odbywają się gry sportowe, mecze', 2) 'toczą się walki, spory o coś', *warunki startu* 1) 'okoliczności początku biegu, wyścigu', 2) 'okoliczności rozpoczynania jakiegoś działania, jakiejś działalności; zmieścić się w wyznaczonym czasie 1) 'wykonać zadanie przed upływem wyznaczonego czasu': Zawodnik zmieścił się w wyznaczonym czasie i zakwalifikował się do półfinału, 2) 'zdążyć w terminie'.

Osobną, jeszcze liczniejszą kategorię frazeologizmów dziennikarskich stanowią wyrażenia, które opatruje w słowniku kwalifikator *sport. dzien.* jednoznacznie przypisujący ich przynależność do sfery szeroko rozumianego dziennikarstwa sportowego nie tylko gazetowego, ale też radiowego, telewizyjnego i Internetowego. W ich obrębie mamy m.in. takie konstrukcje, jak: *atomowe uderzenie* 'bardzo silne uderzenie, mocne podanie piłki', *białe szaleństwo* 'narcciarstwo, saneczkarsstwo, sport uprawiany na śniegu', *bieg po zdrowie* 'bieganie jako sposób na podtrzymywanie zdrowia', *coś na miarę zwycięstwa, coś z najcenniejszego kruszcu złoty, ze złota*, *egzekwować, wykonywać rzut karny, wolny* 'wznawiać grę przez rzut piłką z miejsca wskazanego przez sędziego', *stawać na podium* zdobywać jedno z trzech pierwszych miejsc w konkursie,

w zawodach’, *niska wysoka forma* ‘mała, wysoka sprawność fizyczna, kondycja’, *otrzymać cięcie* ‘zostać trafionym ostrzem broni siecznej’, *popęłnić faul na kimś* ‘sfaulować kogoś, nieregularnie przeszkodzić przeciwnikowi w grze przez zastosowanie wobec niego niedozwolonych chwytów, ciosów’, *przewaga jest po stronie* ‘ktoś jest lepszy, góruje, zwycięża’, *przy pustych/pełnych trybunach* ‘na stadionie, w sali z wolnymi/zajętymi wszystkimi miejscami’, *robić coś jak profesor* ‘robić coś wzorcowo, pokazowo’, *wracać z dalekiej podróży* ‘wydostać się z opresji, zażegnać niebezpieczeństwo’, *tracić pozycję* ‘przestawać zajmować jakieś miejsce w klasyfikacji’, *umocnić się na swojej pozycji* ‘zwiększyć swoją przewagę nad rywalami’, *zmieniać barwy klubowe* ‘przechodzić do innego klubu’. Podkreślana w tym miejscu znamienność liczebność frazeologizmów dziennikarskich obecnych na poziomie języka ogólnego, a obsługujących jednocześnie jego sportową i pozasportową sferę użycia, jest dowodem, z jednej strony – tradycyjnej i rosnącej popularności związków wywodzących się z realiów sportowych w innych przestrzeniach komunikacyjnych, z drugiej – coraz silniejszego oddziaływania na język ogólny i jego rozmaite odmiany mediów.

Zaskakiwać może to, że za osobną kategorię sportowych związków wyrazowych uznano w WSFJP, nb. stosunkowo skromnie reprezentowaną, frazeologię środowiskowego stylu zawodowego (opatruje ją kwalifikator *sportowe żargonowe* – sic!), np.: *iść za ciosem* ‘uderzać ponownie, dlatego że pierwszy cios był skuteczny’, *być na deskach* 1) ‘jeździć na nartach’, 2) ‘zostać znokautowanym’, *być faworytem* ‘być uważanym za przyszłego zwycięzcę’, *mieć swojego faworyta* ‘typować kogoś na zwycięzcę’, *zwyżka formy* ‘poprawa kondycji, sprawności fizycznej’, *podnosić swoją formę* ‘zwiększać sprawność fizyczną’, *przegrywać do kogoś ileś* ‘przegrywać z kimś jakąś różnicą punktów’, *przy-padkowa ręka* ‘(piłka nożna) mimowolne dotknięcie piłki ręką’, *oddychać rękawami* ‘być bardzo zmęczonym, wyczerpanym, u kresu sił’, *zagrywać serwis* ‘(tenis, siatkówka) podawać piłkę, rozpoczynając grę’, *strefa medalowa* ‘trzy pierwsze miejsca, które mogą zająć zawodnicy’, *ustalać wynik meczu* ‘zdobywać ostatni punkt w jakiejś rozgrywce’, *grać w osłabieniu* ‘grać w niepełnym składzie’, *ostatnia pozycja* ‘ostatnie miejsce w klasyfikacji’, *rozgrywać zawody* ‘organizować’, różną ponoć od frazeologii środowiskowej, charakterystycznej dla określonych grup zawodowych (WSFJP: 25).

Podobnie jak i w innych słownikach także w WSFJP zdarza się, i to wcale nierzadko, że kwalifikowanie konkretnego związku wyrazowego zachęca do dyskusji. Na przykład, ilustrowane kontekstami z publicystyki dziennikarskiej związku *formalności stało się zadość* ‘stało się to, czego wszyscy oczekiwali, stało się po naszej myśli’: *W ostatniej chwili strzeliliśmy jeszcze jedną bramkę i formalności stało się zadość* oraz *dopełnić formalności: Formalności dopełnił nasz*

*środkowy napastnik, strzelając bramkę, która przypieczętowała zwycięstwo, są oceniane skrajnie odmiennie. Pierwszy frazeologizm uznaje się za reprezentanta stylu dziennikarstwa sportowego, drugi zalicza do sportowego żargonu!*

Inny przykład. WSFJP notuje jako dwa odmiennie frazeologizmy i opisuje w następujący sposób jednostki: *kłaść przeciwnika na obie łopatki* 1) '(zapasy) wygrywać walkę przez położenie przeciwnika plecami na macie', 2) 'wygrywać z kimś bezspornie, jednoznacznie, z dużą przewagą', *kłaść, rozkładać powalać, rozciągać kogoś na obie łopatki* 1) sport. 'zwyciężać kogoś w walce wręcz: *Zapaśnik wenezuelski położył naszego zawodnika na obie łopatki*, 2) 'górować nad kimś'. Pomijając ogólniejsze znaczenia metaforyczne, warto zauważyć, że w pierwszym wypadku nie ma kwalifikatora wskazującego na sportowy charakter związku, zastępuje go komponent definicji (zapasy). Drugi frazeologizm ma już kwalifikator sportowy, ale objaśnienie wskazujące ogólnikowo na walkę wręcz, jaskrawo kontrastuje z dokumentacją kontekstową, która jednoznacznie sytuuje związek w sferze sportu zapaśniczego!

## Wnioski

Wstępny ogląd tego fragmentu polskiej sportowej frazeologii, który znajduje zaświadczania leksykograficzne zachęca do różnych wniosków i refleksji. Pokazuje przede wszystkim to, że liczba frazeologizmów sportowych w poszczególnych leksykonach jest istotnie inna, w przedziale od kilku do kilkuset jednostek! Zwraca też uwagę odmienny sposób ich opisu i kwalifikacji. Bezpośrednim dowodem w tym zakresie jest inne traktowanie tego samego połączenia wyrazowego w różnych słownikach.

Przyjrzyjmy się kilku najpopularniejszym przykładom, regularnie wykorzystywanym w różnego typu kontekstach.

I tak, związek *cios, chwyt poniżej pasa* jest wprawdzie rejestrowany we wszystkich analizowanych słownikach frazeologicznych SFWP, WSF, WSF PWN, WSFJP i jako frazeologizm w USJP, ale tylko WSFJP poza przypisaniem mu ogólniejszego metaforycznego znaczenia 'nieszlachetne, nieuczciwe zachowanie się wobec kogoś, nieetyczny postępek, nieetyczne posunięcie', jednoznacznie, za pomocą kwalifikatora przyznaje mu prymarnie status frazeologizmu sportowego, oznaczającego 'uderzenie w brzuch poniżej talii, niezgodne z regulaminem'. Chociaż w WSF zwraca się uwagę na sportową genezę frazeologizmu poprzez dopisek: *Wyrażenie pochodzące z terminologii bokserskiej; w tej dziedzinie sportu uderzenia poniżej pasa są niedozwolone*, to jednak frazeologizm ten umieszcza się wyłącznie w dziale tematycznym „Ciało człowieka” (związek z komponentem *pas*).

Frazeologizm *grzać ław(k)ę* notują trzy z analizowanych słowników. SFWS opisowo wskazuje na jego sportowy charakter: ‘w realiach sportowych: siedzieć na ławce rezerwowych, nie uczestniczyć w grze’, WSF PWN uznaje go za frazeologizm potoczny dotyczący jednak sfery sportu: ‘zwykle o piłkarzach: siedzieć na ławce rezerwowych, nie uczestniczyć w grze’, z kolei USJP jednoznacznie kwalifikuje frazeologizm jako element języka *środowiska sportowego*.

Związek wyrazowy *przejmować/przejąć/przekazywać pałeczkę* rejestrują cztery słowniki. WSF umieszcza go w dziale tematycznym „Rozrywka, sport” z objaśnieniem ‘przejmować coś po kimś; kontynuować czyjąś pracę, podejmować rozpoczęte przez kogoś działania’ i z komentarzem potwierdzającym jego sportową genezę (*W biegu sztafetowym przekazanie pałeczki jest znakiem rozpoczęcia biegu przez następnego zawodnika*)<sup>2</sup>. Sportowy charakter związku *przekazywać pałeczkę* podkreśla kwalifikatorem *sportowe* WSFJP ‘podawać pałeczkę następnemu zawodnikowi w sztafecie’ ujawnia przy tym także jego ogólniejszy metaforyczny sens ‘umożliwić komuś kontynuowanie działań przez siebie rozpoczętych’. USJP rejestruje dwa osobne związki o postaci *przejąć pałeczkę* ‘w biegach sztafetowych: wziąć pałeczkę od zawodnika kończącego bieg w celu przekazania jej następnemu zawodnikowi po przebiegnięciu określonego odcinka trasy’, jeden, za pomocą kwalifikatora i treści definicji uznawany za sportowe zestawienie terminologiczne, drugi kwalifikowany jako frazeologizm, ale podobnie jak WSF PWN o ogólniejszym, niedosłownym znaczeniu: ‘podjąć zaczęta przez kogoś pracę’.

Wyrażenie *sytuacja podbramkowa* zostało zanotowane znów w czterech słownikach. W dwóch, zależnie od konwencji, w różny sposób przypisuje mu się status frazeologizmu sportowego: WSF ‘w sporcie: sytuacja bliska zdobycia gola, rozgrywana pod bramką’, WSFJP *sport*. ‘(piłka nożna) moment gry, w czasie którego może dojść do uzyskania gola; szansa uzyskania gola’. Kiedy jednak dochodzi do ustalenia pozasportowej sfery funkcjonowania związku drogi redakcji słowników się rozchodzą. W WSF ma on znaczenie ogólne ‘sytuacja trudna, krytyczna, wymagająca szybkiego rozwiązania’, w WSFJP uznaje się go za *pospolicie* ‘sytuacja przymusowa, wymagająca jakiejś reakcji’. W pokrewnych WSF PWN i USJP nie dość, że w ogóle nie notuje się znaczenia sportowego, to związek *sytuacja podbramkowa* definiowany jako ‘sytuacja trudna, krytyczna, wymagająca natychmiastowego działania’, zalicza się w pierwszym do zasobów języka ogólnego, ale w drugim już do frazeologii potocznej.

<sup>2</sup> Nawiasem mówiąc, komentarz dotyczy innego, choć bliskiego zakresowo frazeologizmu, mianowicie *przekazać pałeczkę*.

Traktowane jako bliskoznaczne frazeologizmy *iść łeb w łeb*, *biec łeb w łeb* odnajdujemy we wszystkich omawianych słownikach, ale tylko w jednym wskazuje się na jego prymarnie sportowy charakter: SFWP (*iść łeb w łeb* 'zwykle w odniesieniu do realiów sportowych lub innych o podobnym charakterze: równo, razem, dorównując sobie nawzajem'. WSF w obu związkach *iść łeb w łeb* 'posuwać się naprzód z taką samą prędkością' – 'osiągać takie same wyniki', *biec łeb w łeb* 'posuwać się naprzód z taką samą prędkością, ścigać się, nie uzyskując przewagi' widzi wyłącznie nawiązania antropologiczne, w konsekwencji więc sytuuje je w obrębie kręgu tematycznego „Ciało człowieka”. WSF PWN oraz USJP wyróżniają dwa pozasportowe znaczenia związku *iść łeb w łeb* 1) 'o zwierzętach, zwłaszcza o koniach wyścigowych: biec, galopować równo, nie prześcigając jeden drugiego', 2) 'o ludziach podczas jakiejś rywalizacji: mieć przez cały czas takie same wyniki, osiągać to samo'; oba zalicza do frazeologii potocznej. Z kolei WSFJP we frazeologizmie *iść łeb w łeb* 'równo, jednakowo, razem, jednocześnie', mimo wyraźnie sportowego kontekstu: *Konie przybiegły na metę łeb w łeb*, widzi połączenie wyrazowe charakterystyczne przede wszystkim dla stylu dziennikarskiego.

WSP jako jedyny z interesujących nas słowników dostrzega we frazeologizmie *podnosić poprzeczkę* związek z realiami sportowymi, odnotowując go w dziale „Rozrywka, sport”. Definiuje go zarazem, podobnie jak pozostałe słowniki, jako związek o znaczeniu niedosłownym, pozasportowym 'zwiększyć wymagania, stawiać coraz trudniejsze zadania'. WSFJP z kolei, znów jako jedyny, widzi w tym połączeniu wyrażenie typowe dla stylu dziennikarskiego. WSF PWN i USJP poza konstrukcją *podnieść, podwyższyć poprzeczkę*, rejestrują jeszcze inne, zbliżone znaczeniowo i strukturalnie, połączenia *obniżyć poprzeczkę* 'zmniejszyć wymagania', 'zwiększyć wymagania', *wysoko (nisko) ustawić, stawiać poprzeczkę* 'wymagać dużo (mało)', nie dostrzegając w nich jednak elementów odwołujących się do realiów sportowych.

Zwrot frazeologiczny *odpaść/odpadać w przedbiegach* rejestrują tylko trzy słowniki, przy czym WSF PWN i USJP zgodnie traktują go jako związek bez nacechowania stylistycznego o ogólniejszym, metaforycznym znaczeniu 'wycofać się lub zostać usuniętym od razu na początku jakiegoś przedsięwzięcia, nie podołać czemuś już na początku, zostać pozbawionym możliwości udziału w czymś' wyraźnie nie związanym ze sportem. WSFJP natomiast za pomocą kwalifikatora wyróżnia jego sens sportowy 'przegrywać w eliminacjach', zaś drugie znaczenie 'zupełnie nie kwalifikować się do czegoś, nie spełniać podstawowych warunków' ocenia jako żartobliwe.

Przywołane rozbieżności w zakresie opisu i kwalifikowania dotyczą wielu innych związków m.in. takich, jak: *białe szaleństwo*, *bomba w górę*, *damski bokser*, *czerwona kartka*, *dostać czerwoną kartkę*, *dostać żółtą kartkę*, *gol do własnej*



*bramki, gol samobójczy, rzut(em) na taśmę worek treningowy, żółta kartka*, które są uznawane bądź za właściwe związki frazeologiczne, bądź tylko składniki frazematyki, ewentualnie zestawienia terminologiczne wychodzące poza frazeologię. Uwzględniając inne kryteria, przede wszystkim genetyczne, stylistyczne i funkcjonalne, kwalifikuje się te związki nie tylko jako frazeologizmy *sportowe*, lecz także *sportowe środowiskowe*, *sportowe żargonowe*, *sportowe dziennikarskie* lub *publicystyczne*, a nierzadko jako wyrażenia pozasportowe, reprezentujące polszczyznę ogólną lub jej inne wyspecjalizowane odmiany.

Wpływ na to ma z jednej strony natura sportowych połączeń wyrazowych; już na pierwszy rzut oka dostrzeżemy w ich masie: 1) związki wywodzące się z obserwacji sportowej rzeczywistości i funkcjonujące w podstawowym znaczeniu przede wszystkim w jej obrębie (*grzać ławkę*), 2) wywodzące się z obserwacji sportowej rzeczywistości (*iść łeb w łeb, złapać drugi oddech, kłaść, położyć na łopatkę, rzutem na taśmę, podnieść poprzeczkę, strzał w dziesiątkę, przekazać pałeczkę, sytuacja podbramkowa*), ale funkcjonujące: a) w podstawowym znaczeniu w obrębie realiów sportowych, b) w znaczeniu przenośnym poza sferą sportu, 3) wywodzące się z obserwacji rzeczywistości pozasportowej, ale odnoszone metaforycznie także do realiów sportowych (*ładować akumulatory, przechylić szalę zwycięstwa*), 4) będących wytworem fantazji i językowej kreatywności środowiska dziennikarskiego (*białe szaleństwo, obrona Częstochowy, wyekspediować piłkę w pole, egzekwować rzut karny, strzelić w światło bramki*). Z drugiej strony dzieje się też tak dlatego, że w polskiej praktyce leksykograficznej znajduje odbicie nie tylko różnorodność stanowisk teoretycznych i poglądów badaczy na charakter i status poszczególnych typów związków wyrazowych, ale też ewolucja metod polskiego słownictwa i wybór konkretnych wzorców opisu leksykograficznego. Interesujące nas słowniki, mają różną wielkość, charakter i przeznaczenie, dlatego też inaczej organizują strukturę artykułów hasłowych, swoiście podają materiał ilustrujący użycia frazeologizmu, wprowadzają nowe kategorie i subkategorie frazeologizmów, rozmaicie różnicują zakresy pojęciowe frazeologizmu i frazemu, traktują frazeologię wąsko lub bardzo szeroko. Poza tym, w zależności od charakteru i stopnia cechującego je normatywizmu, w różnym wymiarze uwzględniają frazeologię potoczną i socjolektalną. To wszystko przekłada się na charakter makro- i mikrostruktury słownika, w tym na najbardziej zwracający uwagę ilościowy parametr słownika, czyli ostateczną liczbę haseł.

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Z analizy zawartości słowników obejmujących współczesną polską frazeologię wynikają poza już omówionymi, jeszcze inne interesujące spostrze-

zenia. Przede wszystkim godne odnotowania jest to, że mimo dość obfitej obecności w słownikach związków frazeologicznych i frazemów o sportowym charakterze, ich zbiór jest jednak znacząco mniejszy i mniej różnorodny niż można by było oczekiwać. Obserwacja współczesnej polszczyzny dostarcza bowiem licznych dowodów na to, że podobnie jak cała sfera słownictwa specjalistycznego (Bajerowa 2003: 110) także słownictwo i frazeologia sportowa w ostatnich latach przeżywają gwałtowny rozwój ilościowy i jakościowy (Sobczak 2000, 42–49, Nowowiejski 2008: 23–35), znajdując tylko częściowe odzwierciedlenie w rejestrach słowników (Nowowiejski 2010: 283–298).

Za najważniejsze przyczyny niebywałego rozrastania się polskiej leksyki sportowej, poza samym rozwojem sportu w wymiarze profesjonalnym i jako sposobu na życie, uznaje się *in communis opinio*, po pierwsze – fakt nobilitacji leksyki środowiskowej, w ślad za którym idzie masowe przenikanie słownictwa socjolektalnego na grunt języka ogólnego, po drugie – zjawisko mediatyzacji sportu, skutkujące m.in. koniecznością powoływania do życia nowych jednostek języka służących nie tyle lepszemu, co barwniejszemu, bardziej ekspresywnemu opisywaniu i komentowaniu wydarzeń sportowych.

1/ Liczne dowody obecności leksyki i frazeologii pochodzenia środowiskowego w języku mediów znajdziemy na stronach sportowych doniesień prasy tradycyjnej i elektronicznej, w treści sportowych komentarzy, relacji radiowych i telewizyjnych. Na przykład w języku transmisji z najpopularniejszych na świecie rozgrywek sportowych, czyli meczów piłkarskich, relacjonowanych przez dziennikarzy sportowych i byłych piłkarzy lub trenerów, bez trudu zauważymy nieznanne słownikom takie związki wyrazowe lub ich znaczenia, jak: *bramka wisi w powietrzu* 'rozwój sytuacji na boisku wskazuje, że za chwilę padnie gol', *czytać grę* 'przewidywać zagranie przeciwnika', *gol do szatni* 'bramka strzelona tuż przed przerwą w meczu', *grać na jeden kontakt* 'grać szybko, bez przetrzymywania piłki', *gryźć trawę* 'grać z pełnym zaangażowaniem', *jeździec bez głowy* 'piłkarz grający ambitnie, szybko, ale w sposób nieprzemyślany, chaotyczny', *(mieć) żelazne płuca* 'mieć dobrą kondycję', *murować bramkę* 'ustawić bardzo szczelną obronę złożoną z wielu zawodników', *robić wiatr, robić dużo wiatru* 'grać z zaangażowaniem, ale chaotycznie i bezproduktywnie', *skleić piłkę* 'przyjąć piłkę bardzo dokładnie, tak żeby nie odskoczyła', *skrobać po achillesach* 'delikatnie faulować', *wrzucić (bramkarzowi) piłkę za kołnierz* 'przerzucić piłkę nad bramkarzem', *wskazać na wapno* 'podyktować rzut karny', *zagrać na nos* 'podać bardzo dokładnie piłkę', *zagranie na afere* 'podanie piłki pod bramkę przeciwnika z nadzieją na to, że coś z tego wyniknie', *założyć siatkę* 'przepuścić przeciwnikowi piłkę między nogami' oraz powiedzenia, w rodzaju: *piłka jest okrągła, a bramki są dwie; bramki zdobyte na wyjeździe liczą się podwójnie; niewykorzystane sytuacje się mszczą*. Niemal tak

samo liczne przykłady nagminnie występujących w języku współczesnych polskich mediów, a przez to coraz powszechniej znanych frazeologizmów, odnajdziemy wśród opisów i komentarzy dotyczących mniej popularnych, czy nawet elitarnych dyscyplin, jak tenis ziemny, np.: *as serwisowy*, ‘punkt zdobyty bezpośrednio z podania piłki’, *błąd stóp* ‘przekroczenie linii końcowej kortu przez zawodnika serwującego’, *dzika karta* ‘uprawnienie dla zawodnika do wystąpienia w turnieju bez konieczności uczestnictwa w eliminacjach’, *gem lacostowski* ‘siódmy gem każdego seta, często decydujący o wygranej’<sup>3</sup>, *karo serwisowe* ‘fragment pola kortu, w który powinna padać piłka po serwisie’, *łokieć tenisisty* ‘przypadłość będąca efektem uprawiania tego sportu’, *mieszać uderzenia* ‘stosować różne techniki i siłę zagrań’, *przełamać przeciwnika* ‘wygrać gema przy podaniu przeciwnika’, *sokole oko* ‘elektroniczne urządzenie umożliwiające sprawdzenie miejsce upadku piłki’, *wygrać mecz, set, gema na sucho* ‘wygrać mecz, set, gema do zera’, *wielki szlem* ‘seria czterech najważniejszych turniejów tenisowych’, czy snooker (odmiana bilardu), np.: *bila odstawna* ‘zagranie pasywne, prowadzące do oddania inicjatywy przeciwnikowi’, *bila na frama* ‘zdobycie punktu przesądzającego o wygranej frama’, *budować breaka* ‘organizować odpowiednią kolejność wbijanych bili, by osiągnąć jak najkorzystniejszy wynik’, *chiński snooker* ‘takie ustawienie bili, do której uderzenia zawodnik jest zobowiązany, gdy zagranie jest utrudnione ze względu na znaczną bliskość innej bili’, *cięcie bili* ‘uderzenie bili pod odpowiednim kątem’, *czyszczenie stołu* ‘wbicie wszystkich bili pozostających na stole bilardowym’, *maksymalny break* ‘najwyższy, możliwy do osiągnięcia wynik w jednym framie’, *postawić snookera* ‘ustawić bile w taki sposób, by przeciwnik nie mógł bezpośrednim uderzeniem zaatakować bili, do której zagrania jest zobowiązany’.

2) We współczesnej komunikacji językowej dotyczącej sportu występują także innego typu bardzo interesujące związki wyrazowe, które rodzą się w przestrzeni medialnej. W głównej mierze są to efektowne i ekspresywne innowacje będące produktem wyobraźni i kreatywności środowiska sportowych dziennikarzy i komentatorów. Zadaniem tych komunikatów jest zadziwić, zabawić, a nawet zaszokować odbiorcę<sup>4</sup>.

a) Znaczący udział w tym mają frazeologiczne innowacje modyfikujące, polegające głównie na modyfikacji składu tradycyjnego związku poprzez jego skrócenie, rozwinięcie, wymianę komponentów lub kontaminację, oraz związki rozszerzające konteksty leksykalne (por. Bąba 2009: 26–30).

<sup>3</sup> Od nazwiska słynnego tenisisty francuskiego René Lacoste (1904–1996).

<sup>4</sup> Warto przy okazji zauważyć, że autorami nowych związków wyrazowych są także odbiorcy komunikatów płynących z mediów, zwłaszcza wypowiadający się na forach internetowych.

Wiele takich „sportowych” nowych związków, nieobecnych oczywiście w słownikach frazeologizmów, spotkamy w sportowych doniesieniach, artykułach i komentarzach w cotygodniowym dodatku do poniedziałkowego wydania „Gazety Wyborczej” (2005–2010) zatytułowanego „Gazeta Sport”.

Oto przykładowe innowacje modyfikujące tradycyjne związki frazeologiczne: *Niedźwiedzia przysługa Bonitty* (o włoskim trenerze Marco Bonitcie w polskiej siatkówce żeńskiej), por. „niedźwiedzia przysługa”; *Teatr jednego żywiołu* (o wyścigu kolarskim Tour de Pologne), por. „teatr jednego aktora”; *W Bełchatowie twierdzą, że do trzech razy sztuka* (w sprawie awansu Skry Bełchatów do kolejnej fazy europejskich rozgrywek siatkarskich), por. „do trzech razy sztuka”; *Wilczy bilet dla PZPN* (na temat marnej jakości pracy nowych władz związku piłkarskiego), por. „wilczy bilet”; *Zimny prysznic* (o niespodziewanej porażce na własnym boisku Korony Kielce z Odrą Wodzisław), por. „coś jest dla kogoś zimnym prysznicem”; *Narcyz Mourinho rozbiegany do rosołu* (echa wywiadu ze słynnym trenerem piłkarskim), por. „rozebrać (się) do rosołu”; *Bayern rozpędzony na cztery wiatry* (komentarz po kolejnej porażce mistrza Niemiec), por. „rozpędzić na cztery wiatry”; *Młodziaki Beenhakera postawiły kadrę na głowie* (o nowych zawodnikach w polskiej reprezentacji piłkarskiej), por. „postawić coś na głowie”; *Kubel zimnej wody* (o nieudanych sparingach Jagiellonii Białystok), por. „wylać (na kogoś) kubel zimnej wody”; w tym przysłowia: *Tonący biodra się chwytą* (trener koszykarski z NBA Pat Riley udaje się na leczenie), por. „tonący brzytwy się chwytą”; *Jeden lato wiosny nie czyni* (o wyborach w PZPN), por. „jedna jaskółka nie czyni wiosny”; *Co trener, to obyczaj* (o doborze trenerów w polskiej siatkówce), por. „co kraj, to obyczaj”; *Kto przeklina, ten nie gra* (o wulgaryzmach w ustach polskich piłkarzy), wykorzystanie schematu przysłowia: „kto śpi, nie grzeszy”, „kto nie pracuje, ten nie je”; *Gdzie dwóch remisuje, tam Zagłębie korzysta* (o awansie Zagłębia Lubin po meczu Korona Kielce – Widzew Łódź), *Gdzie dwóch robi błędy, tam Hamilton korzysta* (o awansie Lewisa Hamiltona po kolejnym wyścigu Formuły 1), por. „gdzie dwóch się bije, tam trzeci korzysta”; *Larry z wozu, łokom lżej* (o odejściu koszykarza Larry’ego Browna z Detroit Pistons), por. „baba z wozu, koniom lżej”.

b) Drugą grupę bardzo interesujących połączeń wyrazowych stanowią konstrukcje, w których wykorzystywane są we właściwej lub zmodyfikowanej postaci tzw. skrzydlate słowa. Analizowane numery GWS dostarczają w tym zakresie obfitego materiału badawczego.

W roli „skrzydlatych słów” występują najczęściej tytuły tekstów literackich i filmów (będących nierzadko adaptacjami dzieł literackich), np.: *O 12 takich, co znów skradli Puchar Polski* (o zwycięskiej drużynie Skry Bełchatów w Pucharze Polski) – nawiązanie do filmu Jana Batorego „O dwóch takich,

co ukradli księżyc” zrealizowanego na podstawie książki Kornela Makuszyńskiego; *Krajobraz po Wdowczyku* (o niechlubnym końcu kariery trenerskiej znanego piłkarza Dariusza Wdowczyka) – nawiązanie do filmu Wajdy „Krajobraz po bitwie”; *Niewiarygodne przygody Mouhamedou Falla GWS* (o marokańskim piłkarzu w polskiej lidze) – nawiązanie do powieści Edwarda Niziurskiego „Niewiarygodne przygody Marka Piegusa”; *Poszukiwacze zaginionej trójki* (komentarz do nieskuteczności koszykarzy w rzutach za trzy punkty) – nawiązanie do filmu „Poszukiwacze zaginionej arki” Stevena Spielberga; *Przepraszam, ktoś tu broni?* (komentarz do gry bramkarzy polskiej reprezentacji piłkarskiej podczas tournée w Ameryce Północnej) – nawiązanie do filmu „Przepraszam, czy tu biją?” Marka Piwowskiego, *Stary piłkarz i może. I to jak* (o skuteczności piłkarza Tomasza Frankowskiego) – nawiązanie do prozy Ernesta Hemingwaya *Stary człowiek i morze*; *Lance Armstrong w krainie kangurów* (o wyścigu kolarskim w Australii) – nawiązanie do powieści Alfreda Szklarskiego „Tomek w krainie kangurów”, *Ostatnie tango w Arizonie* (o występie koszykarza NBA Shaq’a O’Neala) – nawiązanie do filmu „Ostatnie tango w Paryżu” Bernardo Bertolucciego, *Wojna światów bez pieniędzy* (o problemach finansowych meczu USA – Europa w golfie) – nawiązanie do tytułu powieści Herberta G. Wellsa „Wojna światów”.

Pojawiają się także fragmenty tekstów literackich, np.: *Jechać, nie jechać – oto jest pytanie* (wątpliwości w sprawie wyjazdu reprezentacji Australii do Zimbabwe na mistrzostwa w krykieta); *Giro czy Tour: oto jest pytanie Lance’a Armstronga* (o dylemacie znakomitego kolarza: w którym wyścigu ma wystartować: Tour de France czy Giro de Italia) – nawiązanie do słów ze słynnego monologu Hamleta „być albo nie być, oto jest pytanie”.

Niemal równie atrakcyjne są motywy biblijne, zwłaszcza wątek syna marnotrawnego, pojedynk Dawida z Goliatem czy wieża Babel, jak w przykładach: *Dawid pokonał Goliata* (po walce bokserskiej, w której Rusłan Czagajew pokonał Nikołaja Wałujewa), *David pokonał Goliata* (po meczu tenisowym Davida Nalbandiana z Rogerem Federerem), *Francuska wieża Babel* (o składzie francuskiej reprezentacji piłkarskiej); *Powrót syna marnotrawnego* (o powrocie do drużyny „Żubrów” Białystok znanego wychowanka klubu), *Złotka i synowie marnotrawni* (o stanie polskiej siatkówki), *Boksera marnotrawnego powrót do życia* (o pięściarzu Andrzeju Gołocie), *Artur Marnotrawny* (o polskim bramkarzu Arturze Borucu), *Powrót Stephona marnotrawnego* (o amerykańskim koszykarzu Marburyem).

Dużą popularnością cieszą się także cytaty z piosenek, np.: *Hiddink to ma fajne życie* (o holenderskim trenerze piłkarskim, prowadzącym reprezentację Rosji) – nawiązanie do popularnej piosenki „Cesarz to ma klawe życie” Tadeusza Chyły; *Wysłałam za mąż, to wygrywam* (wyznanie amerykańskiej al-

pejki Lindsay Vonn) – nawiązanie do piosenki Ewy Bem „Wysłałam za mąż, zaraz wracam”, *Rowerem do nieba* (o sukcesach kolarki Mai Włoszczowskiej) – nawiązanie do piosenki zespołu „2+1” – „Windą do nieba”.

Nawet ten losowy i wrywkowy, a więc z natury rzeczy bardzo fragmentaryczny, wgląd w język współczesnych publikacji prasowych dotyczących sportu dowodzi niezbitości i rosnącej produktywności w zakresie powoływania do życia nowych związków wyrazowych, nie tylko właściwych frazeologizmów i frazemów, ale też połączeń o innym charakterze. Te fakty językowe zasługują na pełne przedstawienie i wszechstronną charakterystykę.

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## Modern Polish “sports” phraseology in a lexicographic perspective

### Summary

The multiword expressions, which can be called sports ones, constitute an interesting layer of Polish phraseology. They are registered in general dictionaries of the Polish language as well as in phraseological dictionaries. The analysis of the contents of the biggest and latest lexicographic works shows various treatments of sports phraseological units, different notations and categorizing. It is influenced by the nature of the units and lexicographic practice, in which one can see not only the reflection of the variety of theoretical approaches and researchers' views on the character of particular kinds of word combinations, but also the evolution of the methods of Polish lexicography and the choice of concrete models of lexicographic description. The dictionaries analyzed are of various character and use, so entries are organized and show documentary material in different ways, they introduce new categories of phraseologisms, they differentiate meaning ranges of the phraseologism and the phraseme in particular way, they treat phraseology in a broad or narrow sense, they include colloquial and sociolectal phraseology in various degrees. All this is reflected in the structure of the dictionary and the final number of entries. Irrespective of how numerous sports phraseologisms are in the lexicons of the contemporary Polish language, one should realize that the list is far from being complete. On one hand, it results from the very nature of dictionaries; on the other, it is influenced by the fact that the sphere of sports lexis is constantly growing and to a greater and greater extent it saturates the standard language, which is also the result of determinologisation of jargons. In sports phraseology the units originating from the reality outside sport, and those created in the media space, are becoming more and more numerous.



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## **Non-Compositionality, Syntactic Irregularity and Phraseology: An Analysis of “*have until X to V*”<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract.** This paper discusses the sequence of words “*have until X to V*” from a phraseological point of view. The discussion in this paper reveals three interesting characteristics of the unit, based on empirical data from corpora. First, the unit, in which duration-*until* is employed, expresses the time-limit meaning that is usually expressed by the preposition *by*. Second, it is difficult to resort to traditional linguistic apparatuses such as intraposition to explain the emergence of the sequence of words, which is chosen as a unit without regard to its internal syntactic structure. Third, corpora research reveals that the preposition *till* is infrequently employed in the unit even though traditional grammar argues that *till* and *until* are exchangeable in most cases. This can be attributed to a stress clash caused by the sequence of *have till*. In addition, it can be observed that some variations of the unit are used, one of which is “*have until-clause to V*”. All of these empirical facts point to the phraseological nature of “*have until X to V*”.

**Key words:** *phraseological unit, non-compositionality, syntactic irregularity, corpus, principle of rhythmic alternation*

### **1. Introduction**

It has been argued that recurrent word combinations or fixed expressions sometimes do not obey ordinary syntactic rules in their composition and may include syntactically anomalous parts that are difficult to account for in conventional ways of language analyses such as X-bar theory (Moon 1998: 80ff.; Barlow 2000: 326). This is because, as Sinclair (1991) claims, fixed expressions are chosen as a unit without regard to their internal syntactic

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<sup>1</sup> This is a revised and enlarged version of Sumiyoshi (forthcoming), which is based on the paper read at Europhras 2010 held in Granada, Spain on June 30–July 2, 2010.

structures. Such syntactic irregularities are one of the features that characterize fixed expressions.

The examples given in (1) include syntactic anomaly. The underlined part of the sentences, schematically represented as “*have until X to V*” in the following, is extremely interesting. The transitive verb *have* is followed by the *until*-prepositional phrase, which serves as “object” of the verb:

- (1) a. Under the terms of last month’s unanimous Security Council resolution, Iraq has until Sunday to declare all of its biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons work, as well as its long-range missiles. Iraq says the declaration could be ready as early as Wednesday. (*The Voice of America*, 03/Dec./2002)
- b. The deadline for businesses to file 2003 returns was March 15. Businesses that took extensions had until Sept. 15 to file. (*The South Florida Business Journal*, Friday, September 17, 2004)
- c. Iran warned on Saturday the West has until the end of the month to accept Tehran’s counterproposal to a U.N.-drafted plan on a nuclear exchange, or they will start producing nuclear fuel on their own. (*The Voice of America*, 02/Jan./2010)

This sequence of words provides the problems around which this study revolves. The objectives of this paper are threefold. The first is to argue that “*have until X to V*” recurrently occurs in corpora and that it functions as a phraseological unit that means a time limit is set before someone or something does something. The second objective is to show that the meaning as well as the syntactic behavior of the phraseological unit can be characterized in terms of non-compositionality, an important defining parameter of phraseologisms, as discussed in Gries’ (2008) article. Interestingly enough, the meaning of the phraseological unit can be represented by the preposition *by*, although *until* is employed in the unit. Third, corpora searches reveal that *till* is not usually used in the unit in place of *until*, which is probably the result of the avoidance of a stress clash (Schlüter 2005). It is strongly held throughout the discussion of this paper that a phraseological approach is necessary to provide a compelling explanation of the syntax and semantics of “*have until X to V*”. This paper ends with a brief look at variant forms of this expression that can be found in corpora.

Mention should be made of where data in this paper come from. While the examples given in (1) are what I encountered while reading, data in the following discussion come mainly from some corpora such as the British National Corpus. This sequence of words, however, does not occur in the BNC frequently. Hence, especially when frequency is any indication, I rely upon two corpora available free on the Internet. One is the Corpus of Contempo-

rary American English (COCA) and the other is the Time Magazine Corpus (the Time Corpus). The detailed information of these two corpora can be found in Lindquist (2009: 17ff.) and at the URLs given in (2):

(2) a. COCA (the Corpus of Contemporary American English):

<http://www.americancorpus.org/>

b. Time Corpus (the Time Magazine Corpus):

<http://corpus.byu.edu/time/>

Just a few remarks are enough to explain what they contain and how they were constructed. The COCA is a freely available corpus created by Mark Davies at Brigham Young University, and it contains texts of 400 million words as of 2009. Data stored in this corpus come from American TV, radio, books, magazines, newspapers, journals, and the corpus is “the only large and balanced corpus of American English”, as indicated on the website. The Time Corpus is a database of American English also created by Mark Davies and includes more than 100 million words from Time Magazine texts from 1923 to the present. This corpus shows search results decade for decade and makes it possible to investigate how words, phrases, and grammatical constructions have increased or decreased in frequency over time.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Phraseology

### 2.1. Formulae

Jespersen (1924: 24) defines a formula as a whole sequence or group of words functioning as a unit that “cannot be further analyzed or decomposed in the way a free combination can”. However, recent phraseological approaches to “fixed” formulaic expressions have broadened the definitions of formulae to include recurrent expressions or sequences of words that have usually been regarded as free expressions that are formed according to regular rules:

(3) ... a wide range of preconstructed or semi-preconstructed word combinations in English. These include highly opaque multiword units of the *kick-the-bucket* type, collocations, irreversible binominals, phrasal verbs, compounds, metaphorical expressions, similes, proverbs, familiar quotations, catchphrases, clichés, slogans, expletives, and discourse markers such as politeness formulae – all of which have been subsumed under *phraseology* (Skandera (ed.) 2007: v)

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<sup>2</sup> I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mark Davies at Brigham Young University for allowing me access to the two corpora.

- (4) Whereas previously phraseology had encompassed the study of only the most fixed and opaque multi-word units, it now covers a much wider range of lexical units, many of which display a high degree of syntactic variability and semantic compositionality. (Granger and Meunier 2008: xix–xx)

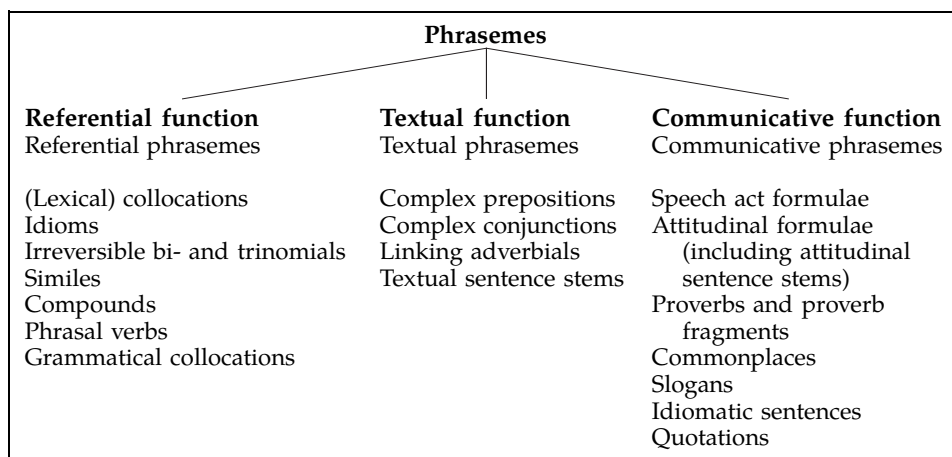
One of the reasons for this wider coverage of different linguistic phenomena is that two major approaches to phraseologism can now be recognized and that they have developed from different origins. A brief overview of them is provided by Granger and Paquot (2008):

- (5) a. [W]ord combinations come in many different shapes and forms. ... While the East European tradition has tended to favour fairly fixed combinations like idioms or proverbs, the more recent corpus-based approaches have adopted a much wider perspective and included many word combinations that would traditionally be considered to fall outside the scope of phraseology. (Granger and Paquot 2008: 27)
- b. A more recent approach to phraseology, which originated with Sinclair's pioneering lexicographic work, ... generates a wide range of word combinations ... encompassing sequences like frames, collocational frameworks, colligations and largely compositional recurrent phrases. ... Many of the units that were traditionally considered as peripheral or falling outside the limits of phraseology have now become central as they have revealed themselves to be pervasive in language, while many of the most restricted units (idioms, proverbs) have proved to be highly infrequent. ... Sinclair and his followers are much less preoccupied with distinguishing between different linguistic categories and subcategories of word combinations or more generally setting clear boundaries to phraseology. (Granger & Paquot 2008: 29)

As discussed in their arguments, one approach to phraseology comes from the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, and the other is a British corpus-based approach to "fixed" expressions. It is the latter that has found there are much more recurrent sequences of words or phrases in English than anticipated, extending the boundary of phraseology to include in its category a wider range of lexical sequences that have so far "fallen outside the limits of phraseology".

After pointing out the different phraseological approaches to formulaic expressions, Granger and Paquot (2008: 42) classify what is to be dealt with in the realm of phraseology as in Figure 1.

This figure appears to neatly categorize phraseological expressions based on their function. However, the territory of phraseology has expanded so vastly that this list does not encompass some multi-word combinations that



**Figure 1. The phraseological spectrum** (Granger and Paquot 2008: 42)

occur recurrently but are discontinuous strings that have one or more free slots into which some variables are inserted.<sup>3</sup>

Recurrent strings of words that are excluded from the lists are, for example, something called “phrase-frame”, “PoS-gram”, “collostructions”, and “clause collocations”:

- (6) phrase-frame: *plays a \* part in, a \* of, etc.*
- (7) PoS-gram: PRP AT0 NN1 PRF AT0  
= preposition + determiner + singular noun + of + determiner  
e.g. *at the end of the; as a result of the; in the middle of the*
- (8) Collostructions: [X *think nothing of* V-ing] and [S V O *into* V-ing] (Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003)
- (9) Clause Collocations: *I wonder... because* (Hunston 2002: 75)

Phrase-frames are exemplified by “plays a \* part in” and “a \* of” (Stubbs 2007). Adjectives and nouns are freely inserted to the slots (\*) to form phra-

<sup>3</sup> Figure 1 shows what Granger and Paquot (2008) regard as phrasemes. See Granger and Paquot (2008: 43f.) for illustrations. They limit the definition of grammatical collocation to exclude valency patterns such as *-ing* clauses, *to*-infinitive clauses and *that*-clauses. They borrow the term from Benson et al. (1986), who are in stark contrast to Granger and Paquot in that they include valency patterns in their definition of grammatical collocation. Benson et al. (2009) argue “a grammatical collocation is a phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause” (Underlines mine). They are in consonant with Hunston and Francis (2000), who maintain that “a pattern is a phraseology frequently associated with (a sense) of a word, particularly in terms of the prepositions, groups, and clauses that follow the word” (p. 3).

seological units. In the case of “plays a \* part in”, adjectives such as *large*, *significant*, *big* and *major* are inserted in the slot. “PoS-gram” is a string of part of speech categories which are represented, for example, as in (7). It is a 5-PoS-gram and is instantiated by the phraseological units given. They are similar to “lexical bundles” (Biber et al. 1999) in that they do not complete structurally. Stefanowitsch and Gries (2003) propose “collostructions” to refer to constructions that have internal structures such as [X *think nothing of V-ing*] and [S V O *into V-ing*], some parts of which are lexically specified. Hunston (2002) uses the label “clause collocations” to refer to sequences of clauses such as *I wonder... because*. There is nothing strange about the fact that the clause *I wonder* is followed by the subordinate *because*-clause. However, corpora search revealed that a kind of clause (for example, *I wonder...*) co-occurs with another kind of clause (for example, *because*-clauses) frequently enough to form a “fixed” sequence of clauses.

As you can see, corpora research has been identifying more fixed expressions or formulaic sequences of words than so far reported, and a large number of multi-word units have come into the research domain of phraseology. The sequence “*have until X to V*”, which is lexically partially filled, is also one of such multi-word units, as will be discussed below, and it is worthy of a close scrutiny under the phraseologists’ eye.

## 2.2. Terminology

Since phraseology has subsumed a plethora of linguistic phenomena under its rubric, formulaic expressions, multi-word expressions or fixed expressions have been referred to with a wide variety of nomenclature. Wray (2002: 8ff.) lists 58 terms that are used to refer to the aspects of formulaicity. This proliferation of terms is a reflection of the current state of phraseology. Wray (2002: 8ff.) argues that the terms used to refer to sequences of words are “implicitly or explicitly defined” and that it is difficult to “refer to findings within and across research areas without appearing to impose one or another theoretical position”. She then uses “formulaic sequence” as an inclusive term that covers “any kind of linguistic unit that has been considered formulaic in any research field” (p. 9).

As Moon (1988: 2ff.) argues, what term has to be employed in the research of fixed expressions has been problematic. Barlow (2000) shuns the terminological problem, saying “the distinctions among types of recurrent word patterns are not relevant” and he uses terms such as idioms, fixed expressions and prefabricated units more or less interchangeably (p. 342). The terminological problem has been aggravated by the recent inclusion of

a wider variety of linguistic phenomena in the field of phraseology, as discussed in section 2.1.

I do not aim at delving further into the terminological problem in this paper for space limitations. In this paper, I would like to use the term “phraseological unit” to refer to the association of words “*have until X to V*” as a superordinate term that covers a wider variety of partially- or fully-fixed word strings (Moon 1988: 5).

### 2.3. Prerequisite

We need two criteria (semantic/grammatical non-compositionality) and one principle (the idiom principle) in order to give a convincing explanation for the behavior of the phraseological unit “*have until X to V*” in the following discussion.

#### 2.3.1. Semantic/grammatical non-compositionality

Gries (2008) enumerates six parameters that define phraseologisms, including frequencies, lexical and syntactic flexibilities, distance, semantic compositionality and so forth. He maintains compositionality is the most important among the six parameters, that is, whether the meaning of a composite expression can be obtained by just summing up the meanings of the constituents. Often-quoted examples are *kick the bucket* and *by and large*. It is impossible to obtain the meanings of “die” or “generally speaking”, respectively, by combining the meanings of each word that constitutes these phrases.

In terms of its internal grammatical construction, the word string *kick the bucket* is not grammatically deviant. The verb *kick* takes the object noun phrase *the bucket*. There is nothing uncommon about this expression in terms of its internal structure, though the meaning of the whole unit is not just the sum of the meanings of the words employed in the composite.

On the other hand, the phraseological unit *by and large* is grammatically irregular in that the preposition *by* and the adjective *large* are coordinated by the conjunction *and*, which should link constituents of the same syntactic category. Word strings of this type are also non-compositional, as Moon (1998: 8) argues:

(10) a. semantic non-compositionality: *kick the bucket, by and large, etc.*

- b. [Non-compositionality] is typically regarded as a semantic criterion, in the broadest sense, and semantic non-compositionality is the archetypal form. The meaning arising from word-by-word interpretation of the string does not yield the institutionalized, accepted unitary meaning of the string. (Moon 1998: 8)

- (11) a. grammatical non-compositionality: *by and large*, etc.  
 b. Institutionalized strings which are grammatically ill formed or which contain lexis unique to the combination may also be considered non-compositional. (Moon 1998: 8) (Underlines mine)

Moon (1998: 80ff.) enumerates a large number of such grammatically ill-formed fixed expressions.

These two aspects of non-compositionality are to be taken into consideration in the analysis of formulaic expressions or phraseological units. They are also important in the following discussion of the phraseological unit “*have until X to V*”.

### 2.3.2. The open-choice principle and the idiom principle

Syntactically ill-formed sequences such as *by and large* are perfectly acceptable in English. This indicates that word strings of this type are not constructed one by one based on the syntactic rules of the English language. They are prefabricated and stored as a unit. As Sinclair contends (1991: 109), such phrases are not created by “complex choices (...) [a]t each point where a unit is completed”. They are not produced by the open-choice principle. Phraseological units are produced by the idiom principle, whereby “a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analyzable into segments” (p. 110). These two principles advocated by Sinclair are indispensable in a phraseological approach to language.

## 3. “*Have until X to V*”

I have mentioned the expertise that is necessary for the analysis of the phraseological unit “*have until X to V*”. In what follows, I would like to make a detailed analysis of this expression in terms of syntactic irregularity and semantic non-compositionality, claiming that this expression cannot be dealt with appropriately by traditional grammatical/lexical approach to *have* and *until*. “*Have until X to V*”, which is syntactically irregular in that the *until*-prepositional phrase stands in the object position of *have*, is both syntactically and semantically non-compositional. A phraseological approach is promising to explain its behavior.

### 3.1. Frequency

First, let us have a look at how often this phraseological unit is used in Present-day English. The three corpora were searched for all the variant



forms of this phraseological unit, including tensed variants and *till*-variants. All the examples I got were manually checked. Ostensibly similar but irrelevant examples were of course excluded from the counting. The raw figures are given in the following tables.

Tables 1 and 2 show the raw frequencies of the unit in the two contemporary English corpora, the COCA and the BNC. As you can see, the preposition *until* is exclusively employed in this phraseological unit in both American and British English. *Till* is unlikely to occur in this unit. One of the three corpora used in this investigation is the Time corpus. Using this corpus enabled me to detect the frequency changes of this phraseological unit every decade in the 90 years of the 20th century, which is shown in Table 3:

**Table 1. The frequency of “have until/till X to V” in the COCA** (accessed March 18, 2010)

<i>have until X to V</i>	322
<i>have till X to V</i>	5

**Table 2. The frequency of “have until/till X to V” in the BNC** (World Edition)

<i>have until X to V</i>	51
<i>have till X to V</i>	0

**Table 3. The frequency of “have until/till X to V” in the Time corpus** (accessed March 18, 2010)

	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<i>have until X to V</i>	2	4	8	11	15	25	14	13	9
<i>have till X to V</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

As you can see from Table 3, this phraseological unit is observable as early as the 1920s, and then, it occurs steadily in every decade of the last 90 years. Again, it has to be emphasized that the three corpora provide extremely few examples of “*have till X to V*”<sup>4</sup>. The three tables show that *until* is the

<sup>4</sup> It comes as a surprise to learn that as early as 1924, Jespersen (1924: 102) illustrated “*have till X*” with the example *You have till ten to-night*, saying that “[w]ord groups of various kinds” can stand “as Primaries”. “Word groups” here are meant to be “two or more words, the mutual relation of which may be of the most different character” and “in many instances occupy the

preposition chosen by default in this phraseological unit, both in American English and in British English, and also diachronically.

Many monolingual learner's dictionaries tell us that *till* is "less formal than *until* and is used mainly in speech and informal writing" (*The Macmillan ENGLISH Dictionary* 2nd edition, s.v. *till*). Fowler (2004: 783) argues that "[i]n practice, *until* is six times more likely than *till* to turn up" in edited prose including fiction and "the evidence tends to confirm that *till* is sometimes the informal equivalent of *until*, but also that in many contexts the two words are simply interchangeable without affecting the stylistic level". Quirk et al. (1985) note that "[*till* is used in the same way as *until*" (p. 1080). However, as is clear from the tables, this is not the case with this phraseological unit. *Until* occurs predominantly in this unit and it is the almost exclusive choice. Figure 2 shows the concordance lines of "*have until X to V*" from the COCA.

1	office will handle this. They <u>have until</u> June 8th, I believe it is, <u>to</u> file paperwork in this
2	had expired documents. Parents <u>have until</u> Thursday <u>to</u> get them their shots or file waivers,
3	to enter is not binding. He would <u>have until</u> June 15 <u>to</u> withdraw from the draft.
4	Fulton County public school system <u>have until</u> June 1 <u>to</u> request a transfer if they want their
5	and investments. Other banks <u>have until</u> March 31 <u>to</u> join the plan,
6	opposition tickets. All contenders <u>have until</u> Friday <u>to</u> register for the election. "Un
7	Here's your assignment: You <u>have until</u> the end of the day <u>to</u> come up with a whole
8	for the ballot, backers would <u>have until</u> Oct. 2 <u>to</u> withdraw it
9	offers this month, and students <u>have until</u> May 1 <u>to</u> decide.

Figure 2. Concordance lines of "*have until X to V*" from the COCA

### 3.2. Syntax

#### 3.2.1. Irregularity and grammatical non-compositionality

As instantiated by the examples given so far, the *until*-prepositional phrase occupies the syntactic position after the verb *have* and is followed by *to*-infinitive clauses. I emphasize that syntactic sequences of this kind is

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same rank as a single word". "Primaries" here can roughly be defined as words of supreme importance in a combination of words serving a variety of functions in a sentence. Jespersen here regarded the word combination *till ten to-night* as a primary functioning as object of *have*.

The example Jespersen cited can be found in Chapter IV of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883). In the story, the sentence is followed by another "*have till X*": *He had till ten*. Hence, although my corpora search provided a few occurrences of "*have till X*", it cannot be denied that it had already been used in the 19th century.

difficult to reasonably explain if you take a traditional grammatical/lexical approach to the verb *have*.

As shown in (12), it has traditionally been argued, regardless of linguistic persuasion, that the object of transitive verbs is normally a noun phrase or a nominal clause:

(12) a. [T]he object is normally a noun phrase or a nominal clause. (Quirk et al. 1985: 726) (Underlines mine)

b. [T]he transitive construction ... contains a number of slots, which are easy to describe syntactically with the formula NP-V-NP. (Aarts 2007: 174) (Underlines mine)

c.

(cat V)		
(min ·+)		
(lex HAVE)		
GF:	subject	object
SR:	poss-r	poss-d
MS:	N+	N+

(Fillmore 1988: 50)

Details aside, Fillmore (1988: 50), explaining the mechanism of “construction grammar,” presupposes the object of the verb *have* is a noun phrase, which is shown by “N+” in (12c).

However, the transitive verb *have* in the phraseological unit takes the *until*-prepositional phrase, which is, of course, neither a noun phrase nor a nominal clause. Wray (2002: 49) argues that “it is common for formulaic sequences to contain a word behaving in an abnormal way, ... displaying grammatical irregularity”. She exemplifies this by giving the expression *come a cropper*, in which the intransitive verb *come* takes an object. The formation of “*have until X to V*” is a diametrically opposite phenomenon, in that a transitive verb is followed by a prepositional phrase. It is difficult to reasonably explain for the syntactic behavior of this phraseological unit if you follow the arguments given in (12).

It might be possible to assume that some kind of syntactic transformation is involved in the emergence of this expression, for example, intraposition, whereby a syntactic element is moved leftward from the end of a sentence. As a result of this syntactic operation, the word order of the sentence would be changed. However, this line of argument is easy to refute. We will soon run into problems if we say that the *until*-phrase is moved to the position after the verb *have* from the end of the sentence.

*Till* and *until* can only co-occur with durative verbs, that is, verbs that denote a period of time (such as *camp* and *work*) (Quirk et al. 1985: 690f.). *Arrive*, for example, cannot co-occur with the *until*-phrase because it is not a durative verb and the action denoted by the verb is momentary. The verb *work* is acceptable because it is a durative verb. Note a sharp contrast seen in examples (13) and (14). Example (14) shows durative verbs trigger unacceptability if *by* is used, while momentary verbs are in consonant with it:

- (13) My girlfriend  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{worked} \\ \text{*arrived} \end{array} \right\}$  there *till* Christmas.
- (14) She  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{*worked} \\ \text{arrived} \end{array} \right\}$  *by* Christmas.

achieve (1), adjust (1), agree (2), air (1), appeal (1), apply for NP (1), ask (1), be nominated (1), become (1), commence (1), comply (2), contact (1), decide (3), elect (1), eliminate (1), find (6), free (1), gain control (1), get NP in (2), hand NP over (1), make one's bed (1), make a decision (1), make up one's mind (1), meet (1), persuade (1), prepare (1), procure (1), put NP in (1), register (1), remember (1), raise (1), reveal (1), sell (1), slim down (1), sort out (2), submit (1), switch (1), think about NP (1), win control (2)

**Figure 3. Verbs occurring in the V position of “*have until X to V*” (BNC (world edition))**

Figure 3, which is based on the data gleaned from the BNC, shows what verb occurs in the V position of the phraseological unit “*have until X to V*”. The parenthesized figures indicate the frequency of the occurrences of the verbs. All the verbs occurring in the V position are momentary verbs which do not sit happily with *until*-phrases. This means that it is impossible to obtain the unit “*have until X to V*” by applying intraposition to the structure “*have to V until X*”, because the latter are ill-formed if momentary verbs appear in the V position, which can be illustrated, for example, by unacceptability seen in *\*have to make a decision until Monday*, from which moving the *until*-phrase leftward would be infelicitous to get a perfectly acceptable sequence of words *have until Monday to make a decision*.

The normal English syntactic rule states that a noun phrase follows the transitive verb *have*. However, as exemplified above, the *until*-prepositional phrase resides in the object position of the verb. In addition, it is clear that no syntactic operation such as intraposition is involved in the formation of the sequence of “*have until X to V*”. This provides a piece of evidence that the sequence of *have until* is chosen together as a unit.

### 3.2.2. Prepositional phrases as subject and object

As Quirk et al. (1985: 658) point out, we may come across sentences in which prepositional phrases stand as subject of a clause, as illustrated by examples in (15):

- (15) a. On Tuesday will be fine.  
 b. In March suits me.  
 c. Between 6 and 7 may be convenient.

It is argued that they are related to the sentences in which only the prepositional phrases are left after some parts of the sentences are omitted: e.g. (*The proposal that we meet*) *on Tuesday will be fine* / (*To meet*) *in March suits me*. This assumption is difficult to make in the case of “*have until X to V*”, because the *until*-prepositional phrase serves as object of the verb *have*, and the addition of some verbal phrases or clauses in the position would be impossible.

Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 647) provide examples such as *We must prevent under the desk from getting too untidy*, *the man recommended just above the front door* and *They consider after Christmas, of course, to be soon enough*, arguing that prepositional phrases can function as object. They explain these grammatical aberrances by assuming some NP is omitted before these prepositional phrases, e.g., *the area under the desk*, *the area just above the front door* and *some time after Christmas*. If we followed this line of discussion, it might be possible to argue that an NP functioning as the head, for example *the period* or *days*, is omitted before the *until* in the unit “*have until X to V*”, whose line of argument I could not support because of the scarcity of such sentences in the corpora I used for this research. This also does not provide an adequate explanation for why *till* is much less likely to occur in this unit, because no grammatical rule prohibits the use of *till* or *until* following the head NP (e.g. *the period until/till...*). It is probably more felicitous to assume that the sequence of words “*have until X to V*” is chosen at one go without any syntactic manipulation such as omission.

### 3.2.3. Words and phrases that characteristically occur in the X position

*Until* serves as a conjunction or preposition expressing the end point of time (Quirk et al. 1985: 691; Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 703). As a preposition, it occurs almost exclusively with a temporal noun phrase, a subjectless *-ing* clause and a noun phrase with a deverbal noun or some other noun phrase interpreted as equivalent to a clause (Quirk et al. 1985: 691):

- (16) a. a temporal noun phrase (*after next week*);  
 b. a subjectless *-ing* clause (*since leaving school*); or

- c. a noun phrase with a deverbal noun or some other noun phrase interpreted as equivalent to a clause:

*before the war* ['before the war started or took place]

*till/until the fall of Rome* ['until Rome fell']

*since electricity* ['since electricity was invented']

In normal circumstances, English speakers can use one of these three kinds of syntactic constituents with *until* depending on what they want to express, as in (17). In other words, four choices open up after *until* is chosen (the open choice principle):

- (17) a. *until* last July  
 b. *until* leaving for Rangers in November  
 c. *until* his death  
 d. *until* they died

*Last July* is a time expression itself, whereas *leaving for Rangers*, *his death* and *they died* are events. *Until* associated with events means that something continues until the events happen. Event expressions are allowed to occur with *until*. Nevertheless, time expressions are almost exclusively chosen in the X position of the phraseological unit "*have until X to V*" except for a few cases. What is listed in (18) represents words and phrases that characteristically occur in the X position of the phraseological unit. The data is based on the BNC:

- (18) Words and phrases that occur in the X position of "*have until X to V*" (BNC (World Edition))  
 a. time: *five o'clock* etc.  
 b. days of the week: *Monday; next Wednesday* etc.  
 c. dates: *1 January 1996; 14 March; October eleven* etc.  
 d. others: *tomorrow; tonight; the end of the day [this year]; then* etc.

If the open-choice principle is at work here, event nouns or subjectless *-ing* clauses should also occur in the X position, because these choices are also available to the speaker by default (see section 4 for the discussion about "*have until-clause*"). However, the slot X is in almost all cases filled by a set of NPs denoting time. This suggests that "*have until X*" is chosen as a unit to express a particular meaning relevant to time.

The discussion so far about the syntactic characteristics of the phraseological unit "*have until X to V*" can be summarized as in (19):

- (19) a. There is a stronger preference for *until* in this phraseological unit than *till*.  
 b. The *until*-prepositional phrase occurs in the object position of the transitive verb *have*, which is a permutation difficult to explain in the conventional grammar.

- c. The formation of the sequence of “*have until X to V*” cannot be explained by intraposition. This can be supported by the fact that the verbs in the *to*-infinitive clauses are momentary verbs, which are not construed with *until*. Omission is also probably not involved in the formation of the unit.
- d. NPs following *until* are in most cases restricted to time expressions in this phraseological unit, although event nouns or *-ing* clauses should be permissible in the slot following *until* in default cases.

### 3.3. Semantics

Let us start to explore the semantics of the unit, beginning with examples (20) and (21), both of which come from the COCA:

- (20) Iraq has until Friday to accept or reject the resolution the U.N. Security Council approved unanimously last Friday. If it does not, or falters afterward in following the tough provisions of the resolution, the United States and Britain have made clear they will attack Iraq.
- (21) Because April 15 falls on a Sunday this year, investors will have until April 16 to make I.R.A. contributions.

Example (20) means that Friday is the time limit that was set for Iraq to either accept or reject the resolution. Iraq is obliged to decide on it by Friday. On the other hand, example (21) means that investors are allowed to make contributions by April 16, because April 15 happens to be Sunday. It does not mean that obligations are imposed on investors to make contributions by April 16:

- (22) a. The law says Blackgoat has until February 1 to leave her house, her land....
- b. The city requested an extension, but has until Wednesday to answer the complaint.
- c. Four-year colleges sent out financial aid offers this month, and students have until May 1 to decide.
- d. She headed right for the airport after school, which meant she was sweating buckets by the time she turned her bicycle into the airport driveway. She had until 5:30 to get home.
- (23) a. “Is it too late for consumers to get coupons for the converter boxes?” “No, consumers have until July 31 to get coupons by calling 888-CALL-FCC.
- b. You have until Jan.31 to change your answer.
- c. Mulcahy and three other senior employees in the optics division took the buyouts in 1989, against the pleas of the company. “When I signed

the buyout, they were speechless,” recalled Mulcahy. They told me I had until midnight to change my mind.

(24) You have until July to get windows 7 free for a year.

All the examples given in (22) mean obligation; that is, someone or something has to do something by the time limit indicated. For example, (22a) means the law requires Blackgoat to leave her house by February 1st. (22b) indicates the city has to deal with the complaint by Wednesday, though it requested the deadline to be extended. (22c) also means the students have to make up their mind by May. In (22d), she had to go home by 5:30. The meaning expressed in all of these examples is a kind of obligation.

(23a) does not mean consumers have to get coupons by July 31. It implies they are allowed to get coupons by July 31 if they want to. (23b) does not mean you have to change your answer by January 31. What is expressed is that you are allowed to change your answer by that date if you want to. Example (23c) means they were terribly surprised when Mulcahy signed the buyout, so they gave him more time to think about it. It does not mean Mulcahy was forced to change his mind by midnight. Example (24) is found on a website. The example does not mean you are obliged to get windows 7 free no later than July. What is meant by this sentence is that you can get the latest OS free by July. It is a kind of permission that is expressed by the phraseological unit in all the examples in (23) and (24).

As you can see, two kinds of meanings are expressed by this phraseological unit. One is obligation. People have to do something by the time limit indicated. The other is a kind of permission.<sup>5</sup> It is acceptable for people to do something, if they want to, as far as they meet the deadline. The core meaning shared by these two types of meaning is that you do something by the time limit indicated.

Note that the meaning expressed by the unit is interpreted with the time-preposition *by*. As explained by (13) and (14), *until* and *by* show a complementary distribution about verbs co-occurring with them. It is interesting to see the whole unit expresses the meaning that is to be denoted by the preposition *by*, that is, *not later than*, though duration-*until* is used in the ostensible form of the unit. The time-limit meaning cannot be assigned to each word employed in the unit but to the whole unit. The two types of meaning expressed by the unit, obligation and permission, can be inferred from context. The semantics of the phraseological unit can be schematized as in (25):

<sup>5</sup> In the examples given at the beginning of this paper, the phraseological unit is used in the sense of obligation in examples (1a) and (1c), while example (1b) means permission.



- (25) *have until X to V*: [time limit] have to/be allowed to V by the time limit X

The core meaning of this phraseological unit cannot be obtained by summing up the meanings of each word used. The time-limit meaning is expressed by the whole sequence of the words.

Example (26) is interesting in that it shows a contrastive use of this phraseological unit with the ordinary sequence of words "*have X to V*", whose meaning is shown in (27):

- (26) Americans in a number of states had until this week to sign up to vote. Others have more time to register. Six of the fifty states permit registration on Election Day. (*Voice of America*, 14/Oct./2008)

- (27) *have X to V*: [period] have the period of X to V

It can be argued that the normal structure "*have X to V*" triggers the occurrence of the idiosyncratic sequence of words "*have until X to V*".<sup>6</sup> In the latter, the *until*-prepositional phrase is chosen as the object of the verb *have* without regard to its part-of-speech. This suggests the sequence of words is chosen as a unit. This happens because the former serves as a syntactic mold to create new sequences of words. As a result, the phraseological unit does not follow the ordinary syntactic rule stating that transitive verbs take NPs as their object. The phraseological unit as a whole expresses the time-limit meaning that can be equated to *by/no later than*, something different from what is expressed by the former (the period-meaning).

### 3.4. The Principle of Rhythmic Alternation

As discussed in section 3.1, there is a close association between *have* and *until* in the formation of this phraseological unit, which suppresses the possibility of *till* being used in place of *until* in the unit, despite the arguments made by grammars and dictionaries that *until* is in almost all cases interchangeable with *till* without affecting the meanings expressed. (Of course, the meaning of the phraseological unit does not change whether *till* or *until* is chosen.) This subsection deals with this asymmetry observable in the distribution of the prepositions used in this phraseological unit.

Schlüter (2005) discusses phonological influences upon the grammar of English, based on statistical data from corpora. Citing Kager's (1989) arguments that stressed and unstressed syllables tend to alternate at rhythmi-

<sup>6</sup> There is another possibility that this phraseological unit is created based on "*have yet to V*", in which the adverb *yet* occupies the object position of *have*.





The associations of words in phraseological units are so strongly established that it is easy to infer the whole string of words even if some words are omitted or changed for other words in an utterance. The sequence of “*have until X*” is a useful device to convey the message that someone should or is allowed to do something by the time limit X. When the addressees know what they should or are allowed to do, it can be left unmentioned. For example, it can be inferred from context. If you try to convey the same message with the preposition *by*, you have to repeat the V-part even if it is inferable from context and redundant: *You have to / are allowed to V... by Labor Day*, for example. The V-part is not omissible in this sentence. The examples show a constant form/meaning association established in the unit “*have until X*”.

The second variant form is very interesting in that the *until*-clause resides in the object position of the verb *have*:

(33) *have until*-clause to V

- a. “... Do we have hours? Days?” “You have until it happens.” (COCA)
- b. He had until he reached the upper atmosphere to make up his mind. (COCA)
- c. And the children have until they are 19 years old, am I correct on that? To file a lawsuit against their father? (COCA)

The object position of the verb *have* in default cases is not available for the *until*-clause. This type of sequence of words is extremely difficult for conventional approaches to English to explain. It has usually been argued that object clauses of verbs are introduced by *that*, *wh*- or *if* meaning *whether*, all of which belong to a word class called complementizer. It would be *ad hoc* if you claimed that the *until* in (33) serves as a complementizer which introduces a subordinate clause only when *have* stands as the main clause verb. It is clear that the speakers of the English language choose this sequence of “*have until*” as a prefabricated unit (the idiom principle) without caring about its syntactic irregularity. Since *until* itself has two uses as a preposition or a subordinating conjunction, speakers opt for either of them depending on what message should be expressed. I would like to end this section by saying interesting sentences like the ones given in (33) require further empirical verification and explanation.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has discussed the behavior of the phraseological unit “*have until X to V*” from different points of view. It has revealed that the phraseological unit shows irregular but intriguing syntactic characteristics and

has the meaning that is characteristically denoted by the whole unit. The emergence of “irregular” expressions of this type cannot find a place in the domain of traditional English grammar. Heine and Narrog (2010: 16) suggest that “[l]inguistic approaches tend to highlight the “regular” sentences, proposing generalizations that have a high degree of applicability”, and they go on to ask “what to do with the other part of grammar that is elusive to the generalizations such as prefabricated word combinations or idiomatic and ritualized structures”. Indeed, in actual communication we come across sequences of words that are difficult to account for in traditional language theories. Phraseology is not covered by Heine and Narrog (2010), who deal with a wide range of linguistic approaches and theories, but a phraseological approach provides compelling explanations for sequences of words that have so far got scant treatment in other linguistic approaches.

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## Leksykalizacja, nieregularność składniowa i frazeologia: analiza *have until X to V*

### Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia połączenie *have until X to V* w ujęciu frazeologicznym. Przeprowadzona analiza, oparta na empirycznych danych korpusowych, wykazała, że omawiana kombinacja wyrazowa ma trzy interesujące cechy. Po pierwsze, jednostka,

w której wykorzystane jest duratywne *until*, wyraża znaczenie przekazywane zazwyczaj przez przyimek *by*. Po drugie, trudno jest wykorzystać tradycyjny aparat pojęciowy stosowany w językoznawstwie, aby wyjaśnić pojawienie się omawianego ciągu wyrazów bez ustosunkowania się do jego wewnętrznej struktury. Po trzecie, analiza materiału korpusowego pokazuje, że przyimek *till* jest stosunkowo często używany w tejże jednostce, chociaż według tradycyjnych gramatyk *till* i *until* mogą być wymiennie stosowane w większości przypadków. Stwierdzono, że występują również warianty tego połączenia wyrazowego. Wszystkie te fakty empiryczne wskazują na frazeologiczny charakter konstrukcji *have until X to V*.





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## **A Grammatical Phenomenon from a Phraseological Perspective: with Special Reference to the Deletion of the Appositive Conjunction *that***

**Abstract.** It is sometimes said that the appositive conjunction *that* cannot be deleted. Emonds (1985), for example, judges the sentence “*John’s fear \*(that) Mary would be late turned out to be justified*”, as ungrammatical because the conjunction is missing. The deletability of the appositive *that*, however, is not so straightforward; we often encounter quite a few counterexamples, as in “... *she had an impression (that) the eyes were straining to tell her something*”. In fact, some traditional grammars say that the *that* can be omitted after certain phrases. In this paper, I argue, using the so-called ngram file (a list of all the word combinations which occur more than once in a corpus), that “phraseological units” play a certain role in this phenomenon; when some phrases like “*there’s no doubt (that) ...*”, “*amid fears (that) ...*”, “*on condition (that) ...*” are used, the conjunction is more likely deleted than when other phrases are used.

**Key words:** *appositive conjunction that, phraseological units, ngram, large-scale corpora*

### **1. Introduction**

Corpus-based linguistic research has gained a strong impetus during the past decade or so from the technological development of computers. This way of research has brought us a new way of doing research in linguistics, a way which can shed light on areas where the simple introspection of native speakers may prove insufficient or even wrong.

The linguistic phenomenon to be dealt with in this paper is the deletion of the appositive conjunction *that*. This phenomenon is, I believe, one of those where so-called “phraseological units” play a certain role, and “phraseological units” are, indeed, units which cannot be properly identified without the help of corpora.

In order to identify the phraseological units as exhaustively as possible, the so-called ngram file is useful. (The phraseological unit can be roughly defined as a recurrent word sequence which native speakers would feel constitute one unit.) The ngram file is an exhaustive list of all the word sequences which occur more than once in a corpus, and thus plays an important role in identifying phraseological patterns. In this paper, I will rely on the ngram file created based on data from the Bank of English corpus.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Deletability of the appositive conjunction *that*

The conjunction *that* has several usages, one of which is the usage of introducing a nominal clause which is in apposition to a noun phrase, as in “*John’s fear* \*(*that*) *Mary would be late turned out to be justified.*” (The *that* of this usage will be referred to as the appositive *that*.) This usage differs from that of introducing a complement clause of a verb, as in “*I think* (*that*) *he is a spy*”, and that of introducing a complement clause of an adjective, exemplified by the sentence “*I am glad* (*that*) *you came*”, in that the conjunction is usually regarded as undeletable in the appositive usage.

In fact, it is usually understood that the appositive *that* cannot be deleted unlike the *that* of the other two usages. Emonds (1985: 49), for example, judges (1a) and (1c), where *fear* in (1a) and *decide* in (1c) are verbs, to be acceptable while (1b) and (1d), where *fear* in (1b) and *decision* in (1d) are nouns, are regarded as unacceptable.

- (1) a. John **feared** Mary would be late.  
 b. \*John’s **fear** Mary would be late turned out to be justified.  
 c. She **decided** no one qualified.  
 d. \*Have you heard about her **decision** no one qualified?

Biber et al. (1999: 645) also makes a similar statement; the complementizer *that* cannot be omitted in *that* complement clauses controlled by nouns (referring to our appositive *that*), making these clauses different from most other types of *that*-clauses (including *that*-complement clauses controlled by verbs and adjectives, as well relative clauses with the relativizer *that*).

These observations seem to be basically correct, but they are not entirely free from exceptions, as is illustrated by sentences (2) through (13).

<sup>1</sup> The Bank of English corpus is one of the largest corpora in the English language, consisting of approximately 450 million words when this research was performed. The corpus was renamed after this research was completed, and it is now called *WordbanksOnline*. *WordbanksOnline* currently consists of more than 600 million words.

- (2) While speaking, Barbara had looked directly into his eyes and while there was no flicker of recognition she had an impression the eyes were straining to tell her something. (Arthur Hailey, *Wheels*, p. 440)
- (3) Today I sign it with the certainty it will send a powerful, unified message from the United States to Havana that the yearning of the Cuban people for freedom must not be denied. (*The Daily Yomiuri*<sup>2</sup>)
- (4) This official, who spoke on condition he not be named, ... (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (5) ...: "There is no doubt this is now a major international centre." (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (6) "Justice is probably going to have a harder time to the extent they attempt to attack the technological or physical tying of the products as opposed to the tying through contracts," ... (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (7) ..., despite the fact he had been unable to repay previous loans. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (8) ..., he would not elaborate on the progress of the investigation in fear Sanyo's safety would be jeopardized. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (9) Still, there are signs "proper" accents are losing some clout. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (10) Aid organisations expect to quickly follow the multinational force into East Timor, amid fears hundreds of thousands of refugees are scavenging for food and are at risk of disease. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (11) We are making it as hard as possible for someone to come in and take our places. That keeps us sharp, the desire to stay together, plus the fact we still love it. (The Bank of English, sunnow/N9119980407)
- (12) The crackdown has greatly disappointed scholars and party officials who welcomed Hu's rise to power in the hope he might be more open to political reform than Jiang. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)
- (13) There's no doubt the Church would prefer it to remain that way, it allows them to evade defining what they believe and how it might apply to the heir to the throne. (*The Daily Yomiuri*)

It is, in fact, not difficult to find sentences of this type. Thus the claim that the appositive conjunction *that* cannot be deleted must be modified, if not totally rejected.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Daily Yomiuri* is the English-language newspaper in Japan. All the example sentences cited from this newspaper are from the articles written by a native speaker.

### 3. Traditional grammarians' views

The fact that the appositive *that* is sometimes deleted has been pointed out, correctly, in the traditional grammarians' works. For example, Curme (1931: 202) says, "The appositional clause ... often follows the noun directly, as appositive clause without a connective: 'His fear *he might never accomplish anything* is torturing him a good deal.'" This statement can be understood to mean that the appositive *that* can be freely deleted in any context.

The following is the observation made by Jespersen (1914–1949: III, 36):

... very often in colloquial style the phrases "I've a notion", "I've an idea" are used loosely so as to be practically nothing but equivalents of "I think", and then they are analogically used without *that*: "I've a notion he'll succeed".

His statement is somewhat weaker than Curme's in that the appositive *that* can be deleted only "in colloquial style" and the phrases allowing this deletion are paraphrasable by a certain verb phrase.

Poutsma's (1929: 617) observation is in the same line with Jespersen's. He says:

*That* is never or rarely absent: ... when the statement is in some adnominal relation to a noun, ... (...) But *that* is often absent after such colloquial expressions as *I've an idea*, *I've a notion*, which are practically equivalent to *I think*, which mostly rejects *that* before the following subordinate element, ...

In addition to grammarians' claims, Bolinger (1972: 15, 19) makes very minute observations based on his own intuitive judgments, and Ross (1986: 84–90) discusses this phenomenon in the context of what he calls "modal constructions". They both admit that the conjunction *that* is indeed deletable in certain contexts.

### 4. Phraseological units

Looking at sentences (2) through (13) with Jespersen's and Poutsma's statements in mind, we notice that so-called "phraseological units" seem to be involved in some way. The underlined parts in the sentences (for example, *had an impression* in (2)) seem to constitute frequently occurring lexical patterns (or "lexical bundles" in Biber et al.'s (1999) terminology), which we call "phraseological units" in this paper.

One problem with Jespersen and Poustma, however, is that their observations are far from exhaustive.

In order to investigate this kind of sentences more minutely and more exhaustively, we have to use a large-sized corpus in order to obtain relevant examples, and see how phraseology plays a role in this phenomenon.

At first sight, however, a corpus search appears to be all but impossible, because we cannot search for a deleted element. (The search for sentences with a certain element deleted is possible with syntactically annotated corpora, where the deleted element is designated as such.<sup>3</sup> There are indeed some syntactically annotated corpora but they are not large enough for this kind of research; we have to rely on a rather large corpus in order to obtain the somewhat exceptional sentences under consideration in this paper. Unfortunately, however, large corpora including the Bank of English corpus are not syntactically annotated and thus syntax-based information is not available for our research.)

The procedure adopted in this paper is as follows.

If it is legitimate to assume that the appositive *that* is more likely to be deleted after a phraseological unit, then our first step will be to identify the phraseological units including the noun followed by *that*, and then as the next step, we search for those phraseological units without the conjunction. If, for example, “have an impression that” is considered to be a recurrent

<sup>3</sup> The deleted conjunction **that** is indicated as “(SBAR 0” in the Penn Treebank annotation scheme (Marcus et al. 1994). For example, the sentence “*The FBI initially showed little interest, and he had the impression other federal security agencies were tangled up in legal red tape.*” is analyzed as follows:

```
( (S (S (NP-SBJ The FBI)
  (ADVP-TMP initially)
  (VP showed
  (NP little interest)))
,
and
(S (NP-SBJ he)
  (VP had
  (NP the impression
  (SBAR 0
  (S (NP-SBJ-100 other federal security agencies)
  (VP were
  (VP tangled
  (NP *-100)
  (ADVP-CLR up)
  (PP-LOC-CLR in
  (NP legal red tape))))))))))
.))
```

phraseological unit in a corpus, then we search for sentences including “have an impression” with or without the conjunction *that*. In so doing, we will see at what rate the conjunction *that* is deleted after this particular phraseological unit.

I first chose the nouns to consider from Biber et al. (1999: 649), in which are listed all the abstract nouns which can take a *that*-clause and which occur more than 10 times per million words in at least one register of the corpus they used. The words listed are: *fact, idea, hope, possibility, doubt, impression, suggestion, belief, sign, conclusion, claim, ground(s), view, fear, knowledge, news, sense, report, notion, assumption, thought, hypothesis, observation*.

Then I accessed the Bank of English corpus, and used the subcorpora of written English only (consisting of more than 300 million words). The reason for restricting our search to written corpora is that deletion is less likely to occur in written corpora than in spoken corpora. Thus if we find relevant examples in written corpora, the examples can be considered more valuable than those retrieved from spoken corpora.

I searched for each of the above-mentioned nouns followed by *that*, and retrieved more than 150 thousand sentences. The next step was to save all the examples as a file and then to create the ngram file. By so doing, I managed to retrieve recurrent lexical patterns involving each of the nouns with the appositive *that*-clause.

Below are some of the word sequences (with the key word underlined) which can be regarded as phraseological units; all of these occur more than 200 times in the Bank of English written subcorpora.

on the assumption that  
 in the belief that  
 come/came to the conclusion that  
 there is/there’s no doubt that  
 there is little doubt that  
 despite the fact that  
 due to the fact that  
 for fear that  
 amid fears that  
 on the grounds that  
 in the hope that  
 with the idea that  
 had no idea that  
 give the impression that  
 under the impression that  
 in the knowledge that

with the knowledge that  
 in the sense that  
 there are signs that

As the final step, I performed a search, within the Bank of English corpus (subcorpora of written English), of the above word sequences in addition to the word sequences used in (2) through (13), but this time, I did not include the conjunction *that* in a search string in order to see how often the deletion occurs for each phraseological unit.

## 5. Ratio

The following is a table of the word sequences with the ratio of non-deleted examples and deleted examples. The ratio is presented in descending order stopping at 10%.

**Table 1. Ratio (higher than 10%)**

	Phraseological unit	that S	(that) S	Ratio
1	there's no doubt (that) S	336	391	53.8
2	for fear (that) S	357	234	39.6
3	there is no doubt (that) S	1455	510	26.0
4	on condition (that) S	385	132	25.5
5	under the impression (that) S	217	60	21.7
6	amid fears (that) S	258	66	20.4
7	to the extent (that) S	2391	534	18.3
8	plus the fact (that) S	62	12	16.2
9	in the hope (that) S	1553	257	14.2
10	despite the fact (that) S	2068	253	10.9

In the case of the phraseological unit *there's no doubt*, for example, there are 336 sentences with *that* retained and 391 sentences with *that* deleted, which means that deletion occurs in 53.6% of cases.

In this way, we identified a number of the phraseological units which often allow deletion of the conjunction *that*, and, as this table shows, certain phraseological units are more likely to trigger *that*-deletion than others. This result is in the same line, at least in spirit, with what Jespersen and Poutsma said in the first half of the previous century, but their problem was, as noted earlier, that they did not identify phraseological units which often trigger deletion. If we use large-scale corpora (like the Bank of English), however, we

can identify phraseological units more systematically and more exhaustively than in the days of these traditional grammarians.

Here, it is proper to recall the history of the conjunction *because*. This conjunction, as is well known, used to be “by cause that” but, in the course of time, the conjunction *that* has dropped and *by* and *cause* have merged into one word. In this sense, this sequence of words is reinterpreted as a word and now functions as a one-word conjunction with the appositive *that* always being deleted. The mechanism can be said to be working both synchronically and diachronically. This is a case which shows that phraseological units affect syntactic phenomena, the deletion of the appositive *that* in this case.

## 6. Remaining Problems

We have to notice, however, that the *that*-deletion occurs even when no phraseological unit is involved. In sentences (14) and (15), for example, the noun *claim* is preceded by the noun and an apostrophe, and thus it is impossible to regard these word sequences as units; still, the conjunction is absent. Likewise, the sentence-initial *The fact* cannot constitute a unit with a precedent word, but *that* is deleted.

(14) Other agencies are playing an increasing role in Liverpool, Birmingham and Newcastle. Tish Seabourne, timeplan’s chief executive, said the union’s claim they were restricting job opportunities for British teachers was untrue. (Bank of English/guard/UK/NB3-950615)

(15) Stone was sentenced to three years’ probation for the offence and was fined \$250, despite his claim it was some bloke on a grassy knoll and not him. (Bank of English/brmags/UK/MBX-6012)

(16) The fact the mice with the two other cancer genes, called Wnt-1 and Myc, developed breast cancers means those cancer genes are capable of signaling through other cell-regulating proteins, ... (*The Daily Yomiuri*)

The existence of sentences like (14) through (16) means that the concept of phraseology alone cannot fully account for the phenomenon under discussion and, as a result, other factors have to be taken into consideration, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

## 7. Conclusion

In this paper, we have dealt with the deletability of the appositive *that*. In order to deal with rather peripheral syntactic phenomena of this kind, it



is necessary to gather many sentences of similar type and attempt to find a regular pattern in them. If we try to describe a language exhaustively, peripheral phenomena should not be ignored and should be properly dealt with; linguistic theory should accommodate not only the core but also the periphery of human languages. A large-sized corpus plays an essential role for this purpose.

Needless to say, native speakers' intuitive judgments are indeed necessary for linguistic analyses, but they are not so reliable especially when we deal with the periphery, as Hunston (2002: 20) correctly points out:

A corpus essentially tells us what language is like, and the main argument in favour of using a corpus is that **it is a more reliable guide to language use than native speaker intuition is**. Although a naive speaker has experience of very much more language than is contained in even the largest corpus, **much of that experience remains hidden from introspection ...**

Phraseology is a very important factor in the deletion of the conjunction *that*. Still other factors must be playing a role in this phenomenon. I cannot say anything about these other factors or how they interact with each other. Indeed this must be developed in further research in order to more fully account for the phenomenon of the deletion of the appositive *that*.

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## Zjawisko gramatyczne w perspektywie frazeologicznej: usunięcie apozycyjnego spójnika *that*

### Streszczenie

Można spotkać się ze stwierdzeniem, że apozycyjny spójnik *that* nie może być usunięty. Emonds (1985), na przykład, ocenia zdanie *John's fear \*(that) Mary would be late turned out to be justified* jako niegramatyczne, ponieważ brakuje spójnika. Usuwalność apozycyjnego *that* nie jest jednak taka prosta; można spotkać dość liczne przykłady, które świadczą o odwrotnej tendencji, na przykład ... *she had an impression (that) the eyes were straining to tell her something*. Niektóre tradycyjne gramatyki podają, że *that* może zostać opuszczone po niektórych wyrażeniach. Autor artykułu, wykorzystując ngramy, pokazuje, że frazeologiczne jednostki odgrywają pewną rolę w tym zjawisku; kiedy połączenia, takie, jak: *there's no doubt (that) ...*, *amid fears (that) ...*, *on condition (that) ...*, są używane, zachodzi większe prawdopodobieństwo opuszczenia spójnika niż w przypadku użycia innych konstrukcji.

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## Functions of *the thing is* in Spoken Discourse<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** *The thing is* has both parenthetical and non-parenthetical uses in spoken English. The features that distinguish between the two macro uses are both formal and prosodic. When *the thing is* is used as a parenthetical, it may serve as either a comment clause or a discourse marker. In the former case, *the thing is* has scope over the following proposition and it is primarily evaluative and reinforcing. As a discourse marker, *the thing is* is applied more globally, working on the level of discourse. It is textually significant, which may function as a cohesive device, signaling sequential discourse relation, or a hesitation filler, signaling discourse continuation. The different textual functions of *the thing is* can be seen as the generalized and conventionalized contextual uses of its comment clause use through frequent occurrence.

**Key words:** *non-parenthetical, parenthetical, comment clause, discourse marker*

### 1. Introduction

*The thing is* frequently occurs and is variously used in spoken discourse and it has received some scholarly attention.

In Crystal & Davy (1975: 91), *the thing is*, along with *the answer is*, *the idea is*, *the point is*, *the problem is*, etc., is defined as a reinforcing connective. They are “commonly used to impose a level of organization on a conversation that has been meandering, or to give it a fresh direction”, which can be interpreted as “a lot has been said so far, but the main point we ought to concentrate on is the following...”. It is argued that the connectives function similarly to the summarizing adverbial phrases, such as *in short*, *on the whole*, *to sum up*, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful for the comments and suggestions offered by the anonymous reviewer.

Biber et al. (1999: 1075) describe *the trouble is*, *the question is* and *the (only) thing is* as “overtures”, a subcategory of “utterance launchers”, which serve the function of “signaling a new direction in the conversation”. They notice that the grammatical status of utterance launchers is sometimes ambiguous, but there is no further explanation about the correlation between the status and functions of these items.

According to Schmid (2000), the constructions containing “shell nouns”,<sup>2</sup> such as *the problem is (that)*, *the trouble is (that)*, *the fact is (that)*, *the truth is (that)*, *the thing is (that)*, “are more or less redundant from a purely propositional point of view” (2000: 9). It is argued that these shell noun phrases are frequently occurring especially in informal conversation since they have developed a rhetorical focusing function, which can be paraphrased as “what is important is that” (2000: 333).

In Aijmer (2007: 31–46), similar to *the fact is that* and *the truth is that*, “*the thing is that* is a fixed or semi-fixed unit which can be represented as a colloquational framework”, which allows “specific local transformations, deletions, additions”. *The thing is that*, therefore, can take different shapes, such as *the thing is*, *thing is*, and *silly thing is that*. According to Aijmer, *the thing is that* has epistemic meaning and can be used to express opposition or rejection when combined with *but*. It can also be used rhetorically to give an explanation or justification, or to add a new argument. She argues that “*thing is* has the form and function of a pragmatic marker”, “which situates the utterance in relation to other utterances in discourse”, such as signaling a new (sub)topic.

The review of the previous studies reveals that *the thing is* is generally treated as a parenthetical, although there is some disagreement among researchers regarding its functions. The present paper argues that *the thing is* has two macro uses, parenthetical and non-parenthetical, which are syntactically and semantic-pragmatically different. To be more specific, it may serve as a full complement-taking clause, a comment clause, or a discourse marker, as illustrated below.

**A. Full complement-taking clause: an integral constituent of the sentence, truth-claiming and focalizing**

- (1) I think the thing is that we want to start pushing out the route as fast as possible because the faster we can push the route out the less oxygen we need to use. (OED, 1989)

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<sup>2</sup> Shell nouns in Schmid (2000: 4) are defined as “an open-ended functionally-defined class of abstract nouns that have (...) the potential for being used as conceptual shells for complex, proposition-like pieces of information”.

**B. Comment clause:** a proposition modifier, denoting the speaker's judgment of the importance of the following proposition

- (2) **MANUCHER GHORBANIFAR:** ... I placed my camera inside a bag and made a hole on the side to secretly film, but the thing is, light was being reflected on the camera lens so I had to be very, very careful. (COCA: 2006 (20060708) CNN\_LiveSat)

**C. Discourse marker:** a cohesive device, signaling discourse relations<sup>3</sup> between the current utterance and the prior discourse segment, or a signal of utterance continuation

- (3) I'm sorry my assignment isn't finished. The thing is, I've had a lot of other work this week. (OALD, 2004)

The focus of this study is exploring the features and functions of *the thing is* as a parenthetical in utterances like example (2) and (3) above on the basis of distinguishing between its parenthetical and non-parenthetical uses.

The present study is empirical and adopts a bottom-up approach to give a linguistic description of *the thing is*. All the data are taken from a selection of texts representing contemporary, semiformal or informal spoken American English from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (hereafter COCA).

## 2. Identifying the relevant item

The instances of *the thing is* are abundant (728 examples in COCA) in spoken discourse. As mentioned earlier, it has both parenthetical use and non-parenthetical use. The following examples can be used to illustrate the distinction between the different uses of *the thing is*.

- (4) **Mr. HAHN:** Harold Baker, what about Margaret made her, in her time, in your opinion, so fascinating?

**RUSS VERNEY, Former Reform Party Chairman:** Well, because she was unbelievably beautiful, very intelligent, very charming. Everyone loved her. And if she had died – I agree with Kitty Kelley – years ago, she would have been remembered by everybody as the most beautiful woman in the world. Certainly, one of the most beautiful women in the world. # But you see, the thing is that she lived, in a way, too long to keep up with the tradition that she set. (COCA: 2002 (20020214) CNN\_King)

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<sup>3</sup> Basic discourse or cohesive relations discourse markers may signal are contrastive, elaborative, causal/inferential and topic-shifting (Halliday & Hasan 1976; Quirk et al. 1985; Halliday 1994; Fraser 1996; Schourup 1999).

- (5) **BOTEACH:** ... Women want men to open up to them. The thing is that we men, we don't recognize the fact that we need intimacy. We think it's just the woman. ... (COCA: 2009 (090315) CNN\_Hughley)
- (6) (OC): ... # What was so alarming to me and many, that three to four pucks a game, fans are struck by that. Fans are struck by three to four pucks a game?  
**Major VICTOR DOUGHTY:** On aver – actually, it – it could even be higher. The thing is, the difference between hockey and, say, a sport like baseball, fans are more prepared. We think of a few things. We think of, firstly, the difference, hockey is much – your proximity is much closer to the action.  
**BEN:** Right. (COCA: 2002 (20020321) ABC\_GMA)
- (7) **Earl HINES:** ...Yes. He wants the business. He's already taken a position that he can't do it under his – in the situation he's in – he takes the order because nobody wants to turn down an order of that size. Now we have the order. Now the thing is how the hell do we fill the order – how do you fill the order – he starts to scramble – he goes out and finds subcontractors to use that will shave the price – he fills up his own factory – he does whatever he can to fill that order. (COCA: 1996 (19960716) PBS\_Newshour)

Clearly, while *the thing is* is unambiguous in its non-parenthetical use in the first two examples, it serves as a parenthetical in the latter two. Generally speaking, the features that distinguish between non-parenthetical and parenthetical *the thing is* are both formal and prosodic.

## 2.1. Non-parenthetical *the thing is*

*The thing is* in its non-parenthetical use can be taken as a grammatical “subject + verb + (complement)” construction, which is followed by a clausal complement.<sup>4</sup> When *the thing is* is in its non-parenthetical use, it generally receives some stress and there is no pause before the following sentence elements.

As shown in (4) and (5) above, the non-parenthetical *the thing is* is typically followed by a complement *that*-clause with an explicit complementizer *that*. In fact, it is the appearance of the complementizer *that* that indicates *the*

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<sup>4</sup> There are also some instances (67 examples in COCA) in which *the thing is* is followed by a phrasal complement, as in “... and the thing is absolutely delicious” (COCA: 2008 (081127) NBC.Today). It seems that *the thing is* in this case should be taken as a pseudo *the thing is* construction, in which *the thing is* is used as an ordinary referential noun.

*thing is* is a matrix clause. Clearly, *the thing is* in this case is not “syntactically detachable” (Schiffrin 1987: 328). In other words, *the thing is* and what follows are closely interrelated clause elements, and the removal of the construction will render the sentence incomplete and ungrammatical.

It is obvious that the term *the thing* in such occasions has propositional content and, for instance, it can be interpreted as *the problem* in (4) and (5) above according to the context. In fact, both *the thing* and *the problem* are abstract conceptual nouns, which can be taken as labels for the message conveyed in the following *that*-clause (Schmid 2000). *The thing is*, therefore, draws the hearer’s attention to the content of the *that*-clause while claiming the truth (what is *the thing* or *the problem*). Clearly, the focalizing function is observable due to the semantic and syntactic features of the construction.

## 2.2. Parenthetical *the thing is*

When *the thing is* is used as a parenthetical, it is syntactically optional, occurring “either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it” (Brinton 1996: 34). It is observed that what follows *the thing is* in this case, as in (6) above, is normally a declarative clause without the complementizer *that*. As a parenthetical, *the thing is* is “generally marked prosodically by increased speed and lower volume” (Quirk et al. 1985: 1113). It forms an independent tone unit, usually reinforced by a following pause or pauses on both sides (or punctuation such as comma in writing), and sometimes accompanied by some other parenthetical items such as discourse markers in its immediate environment, *I mean*, *you know*, and *well*, for instance. On some occasions, *the thing is* appears in the reduced form *thing is*.

The parenthetical status of *the thing is* can unambiguously be assumed in (7) since it is followed by a non-declarative clause. The question stated in its normal interrogative sentence order clearly signals the construction in question is not integrated into the syntactic structure and thus can be considered as a parenthetical.

Generally speaking, parenthetical items can appear in a variety of positions, which is a direct result of their loose attachment to the syntactic structure of the sentence. When *the thing is* occurs in non-initial position, as in (8), it is obviously not integrated into the syntactic structure and thus can be unmistakably taken as a parenthetical. It is observed that, however, such instances are not frequently found in COCA, since *the thing is* occurs predominantly in the sentence-initial position.

(8) **Lt. MARK JONES, British Army (voice-over):** Yes, I love to see your face and its contortions as you're watching yourself. You're in front of that audience where they, they do that professionally. It's good.

**ROMER:** I know, but they, the thing is, they put me up with all of these dancers that dance everyday, and they're like amazing. And then they teach them the dance first, so I don't know it coming into it. And I was like, how do you expect me to learn this? But it was fun, it was fun, I had a great time.

**Lt. MARK JONES, British Army (voice-over):** Congratulations on it.

**ROMER:** Thank you. (COCA: 2004 (20040610) ABC\_GMA)

### 2.3. Structurally indeterminate *the thing is*

The distinction between the non-parenthetical use and the parenthetical use of *the thing is* is clear enough in the examples illustrated above. However, the identification of *the thing is* as a parenthetical is not always unproblematic. As shown in (9), without formal and prosodic clues discussed above, it is not that easy to tell whether *the thing is* is a parenthetical or an initial matrix clause.

(9) **SIEGEL:** ... all those years you were contributing premiums.

**Mr. HUSTON:** Exactly.

**SIEGEL:** Putting money in.

**Mr. HUSTON:** The various insurers for my employer got a real bargain from me' cause I hardly ever made claims.

**SIEGEL:** But now Herb is uninsured. He is neither old enough for Medicare, nor poor enough for Medicaid.

**Mr. HUSTON:** And the thing is this is going to be continuing. I've gone from someone who had had very little interaction with the medical profession to the complete opposite. (COCA: 2009 (090615) NPR\_ATC)

In the description of the functions of *the thing is* below, a large number of examples where the construction in question is used as a grammatical "subject + verb + (complement)" sequence (121 instances in COCA), or with syntactically indeterminate status (270 instances in COCA) have been excluded.

### 3. Functions of parenthetical *the thing is*

The present paper argues that in the cases where *the thing is* is used as a parenthetical, it may function as either a comment clause, expressing



the speaker's "comments on the content of the matrix clause" (Quirk et al. 1985: 1112), or a discourse marker, signaling discourse relation or discourse continuation and contributing to the coherence, which will be discussed in detail below.

### 3.1. Comment clause

It is found that there are some instances in which *the thing is* serves as a comment clause, conveying the speaker's evaluation of the following propositional content. To be more specific, it denotes the speaker's judgment of the importance of the upcoming information and signals to the hearer that what follows deserves notice. Its comment function becomes more clearly seen if we add the evaluating adjective *important* before the term *thing*. *The thing is* in this case can also be restated as *what is important is* or *importantly*, which are obviously evaluative and reinforcing as well.

The construction under discussion may be deployed in various contexts in which the speaker thinks it is necessary to emphasize the importance of what he is going to say. What the speaker refers to may be an important fact, opinion, problem, etc.

*The thing is* in example (7) above is an unambiguous case of comment clause. The discussion is about how price pressure actually contributes to the sweatshop. The meaning of *the thing is* "go(es) beyond truth-claiming" (Aijmer 2007: 45) and it highlights the following statement. The original utterance can be interpreted as what is important is how the contractor fills the order.

Observe a further example, in which *the thing is* is used for emphasis.

(10) **Rev. FALWELL:** It is coming up, rags to riches. We always love those stories. How a simple idea about watching TV on the computer created two more Internet millionaires. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

**Gov. PATAKI:** Welcome back, everyone. When Steve Chen and Chad Hurley founded YouTube early last year, few people bothered to visit the Web site initially. And then a video from the U.S. comedy show "Saturday Night Live" appeared and millions clicked on to watch. The thing is, they kept clicking, turning YouTube into a massive success and its founders into freshly minted millionaires. To learn more about them, we are joined by Dennis Kneale, managing editor of "Forbes" magazine. And good to see you, Dennis. First of all, were these guys lucky or smart or both? (COCA: 2006 (20061010) CNN.YourWorld)

As illustrated above, *the thing is* as a comment clause works on the level of sentence, evaluating the following proposition itself. In other words, it

does not link directly back to a prior discourse segment (Traugott; Dasher 2002: 155) and its function is primarily subjective (evaluative and reinforcing) rather than textual, as will be discussed in the cases of its discourse marker use below.

### 3.2. Discourse marker

*The thing is* in the following examples serves as a discourse marker, which may be either a cohesive device or a signal of discourse continuation.

*The thing is* as a cohesive device has more global scope and works on the level of discourse. Unlike its comment clause use, *the thing is* in this case has a clear reference to a prior discourse segment. It is used to signal cohesive relation between the current utterance and the prior discourse segment, contributes to the coherence of discourse, and “reinforce or clue the interpretation intended by the speaker” (Schourup 1999: 232). To be more specific, *the thing is* can be used to signal a causal or contradictory relationship across utterances, and moreover, it can be “located on a higher structural level in the discourse” (Lenk 1998: 174) and marks a topic shift.

#### 3.2.1. Marker of justification

As shown in (3) above, *the thing is* serves the function of signaling a causal relation. What follows *the thing is* in this case provides the reason or ground for the content presented in the previous utterance. *The thing is* here can be roughly interpreted as *because* or *since*.

See more examples taken from naturally occurring discourse.

Example (11) is taken from a conversation in which the speaker talks about the hunger and the waste of tons of food in America. What *the thing is* introduces can be interpreted as the reason why they need a lot more gleaning projects.

- (11) **Woman #6:** We waste it. It doesn't get eaten, it gets thrown out in the grocery store or before it gets to the grocery store it rots, or it's never picked in the field. And that's why we do gleaning projects, where we ask the farmers, could we go in and clean up? Can we take what you don't pick? And I started a program like that in Dayton, Ohio, my hometown, and it lasted for many, many years. There's a lot of gleaning projects all over the country. And we need a lot more of these kinds of projects. The thing is, all of this hunger is right in front of us. It's what Mother Theresa says, do the thing that's in front of you. Look around. Open your eyes. You'll see it. (COCA: 2006 (20060427) PBS\_Tavis)

Similarly, *the thing is* in (12) is used to give the reason why people are not so worried about the Republicans.

- (12) **JOHN ROBERTS-CNN-**: Effectively In 2002 and 2004 and really it is the only issue that they have got according to some Republicans who I talked to today. They said if we can make this stick, this is our best chance to beat back the Democrats because there is still a section of the electorate that is worried about the Democrats and that they would do on the issue of national security. They're not so worried about the Republicans. The thing is, with President Bush's speech today it was a very effective speech. And he painted a picture that people should certainly be worried about. (COCA: 2006 (20060905) CNN\_Zahn)

Admittedly, we cannot deny *the thing is* is conveying the speaker's emphasis of the importance of his upcoming statement in the examples above. Its primary function, however, is signaling a causal discourse relation and guides the hearer to interpret what follows as a justification. Clearly, we cannot replace *the thing is* on such occasions with *what is important is* or *importantly*.

### 3.2.2. Marker of contradiction

*The thing is* in the instances below signals the utterance it introduces is to be interpreted as a denial or correction of the foregoing statement made by another speaker.

- (13) **(Footage of Nyro performing) Lt. Col. NORTH (voice-over)**: Laura came out in front of the hippie audience dressed in a black gown with a soul band. I think she wanted to be like Aretha Franklin in one of the Motown acts, but the hippies thought she looked like something out of Vegas and they booed her off the stage. Well, at least that's the story that got repeated for 30 years.

**(Photos of Nyro) Lt. Col. NORTH (voice-over)**: Apparently Laura believed it, too. It's always written that Monterey shattered her confidence. The thing is, it wasn't true. The audience at Monterey didn't hate her at all. When she died, I went to see D.A. Pennebaker who filmed the festival. And Mr. Pennebaker showed me the footage of Laura's performance. It had never been seen. (COCA: 2001 (20010708) CBS\_Morning)

- (14) **HANNITY**: But there's one thing, Tony, that works. When Sandy Burglar stuck, you know, National Archives documents in his pants, they used one word: he was just sloppy. In this particular case, they're saying it's an innocent mistake. He says he's sorry.

**BLANKLEY:** And the thing is, it's clearly not an innocent mistake. And the Obama people have been using that phrase. Now, you can say it's trivial. You can say it's outweighed by his great abilities. But it's not – it was not an honest mistake because he knew it. After the audit, he still didn't do it for 2001–2002. (COCA: 2009 (090115) Fox\_Hannity)

As illustrated in the following example, sometimes, *the thing is* signaling a contradictory relation may co-occur with *well*, which indicates insufficiency (Jucker 1993) or non-expectedness (Schiffrin 1987) and thus helps to soften the force of a contradiction or correction.

- (15) **Dr. MICHAEL MERSON:** Tom, does this mean that the – that the people there in Russia ha – want to go back to the bad old days of communism?  
**Ms. COHEN:** Well, the thing is, they look on them as the good old days. Most people seem to have forgotten the long lines and the bad produce and the empty shelves. They look back on a time when their average wages were twice what they are now, when the streets were safe, when everybody could take a vacation in the South and – and life was pretty good. It wasn't great, but at least people didn't have to worry about the future. (COCA: 1996 (19960421) CBS\_SunMorn)

### 3.2.3. Marker of topic shift

*The thing is* in the examples below functions as a signal of topic shift. What *the thing is* initiates may be a shift of the focus or perspective on the current topic, or a return to a previous topic. Clearly, *the thing is* in this case serves to “relate a single utterance to a property of a longer stretch of discourse” (Schourup 1999: 257) and marks a more global relation.

**A.** *The thing is* signals a change in focus or direction, and there is no return to the prior topic.

In the following example the program host is talking with the guests about how to handle spousal betrayal. One of the guests, a lady who was once in the similar situation employs *the thing is* to initiate a topic shift to her personal experience after responding with the switch-off signal *right* to another guest's doubt about holding a press conference to apologize to one's family in public.

- (16) **#0:** Absolutely, I have the exact same conversation with my wife. I asked her if she would go the press conference and she's – get over yourself, you would never have to hold a press conference. So I guess that's good. But I mean, you know, it has reached a tipping point because I think a lot of new stations sort of played this montage of betrayals of the past. And

I don't know if they're playing it to be funny or to illustrate something, but it gave us sort of a sick feeling inside to see, sort of, a montage of pain.

**#0:428:** Right. And the thing is, and I actually went through something similar when I was married in a former life. Although, my former husband was not a politician, so he wasn't quite that skeezy, but – and there was no press conference involved. (COCA: 2008 (080313) NPR\_Talk Nation)

**B.** *The thing is* marks a return to a prior topic.

In the case of marking a topic shift, there are also instances of signaling the return to a topic discussed earlier.

The following example is taken from the interview about the attacks Jay Leno made on the Alaska Governor and her daughter. In reaction to the prior statement, Hannity shifts the topic with *the thing is* to Imus, an American radio host. He was once discussed at the beginning of the interview because he apologized to the girls for his unprepared and tasteless remark.

(17) **HANNITY:** I love Jay Leno. I think Jay Leno was the most – that's why Jay Leno has.

**HUCKABEE:** And he's also a classy human being.

**HANNITY:** He is.

**HUCKABEE:** that does not purposely hurt anyone, and I think if he thought he had done that, he would have gone on the show and said I just want to look in the camera and say I was wrong, and I'm sorry, and it's over.

**HANNITY:** And the thing is, you mentioned Imus. Imus, you know what, he went to apologize to the girls on that basketball team.

**HUCKABEE:** Yes.

**HANNITY:** After he was fired. (COCA: 2009 (090612) Fox\_Hannity)

### 3.2.4. Hesitation filler

Similar to some other discourse markers, *the thing is* can also serve as a device filling a pause, although there are not many examples of this type of use in my data. It provides the speaker with verbal planning time, signals "utterance continuation" and contributes to "the textuality, coherence and stream of the discourse" (Andersen 2000: 256). The peculiarity of *the thing is* as a hesitation filler is its sentence-medial position and its co-occurrence with other discourse markers.

The speaker in (18) cuts off his utterance and resumes talk after *the thing is* and the co-occurring *you know* with a different syntactic structure.

Obviously, the speaker uses the markers to gain time to rephrase what he wants to say when he finds that he cannot finish that with the original sentence structure.

(18) **Ms. SALTZMAN:** So only if you are the cross-dresser will you know yourself, right? So some guys are cross-dressing and they're just – they just like to sit up in a dress.

**Mr. MORGAN:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ms. SALTZMAN:** OK. And then there are people like you who are cross-dressing...

**Mr. MORGAN:** Yeah. Right.

**Ms. SALTZMAN:** ... and it's about soul.

**Mr. MORGAN:** Yeah. It's not – it's not a party. It's not about dress-up. It's about trying to – the thing is, you know, putting on clothes of the un – other gender isn't particularly satisfying, either, because it's... (COCA: 2003 (20030730) Ind\_Oprah)

Interestingly, there are some instances where *the thing is* and some other discourse markers cluster together, as illustrated in (19) and (20) below. The cluster of different discourse markers can be taken as a strong cue of hesitation. Clearly, the markers provide the speaker with verbal planning time while he is figuring out and organizing what he wants to say.

(19) **JOHN SPINELLO, Bond Trading Manager, Merrill Lynch:** Well, Senator Harkin

**1:48876:** – you know, Alan – see, the thing is, Alan doesn't want to debate this, because he wouldn't even answer my question. He doesn't want to debate it and he doesn't want to stand up and be counted.

**Mr. UNDERCOFFER:** Oh, no, that's not true, I'm ready, I want to debate, let me speak for myself. (COCA: 1991 (19910103) ABC\_Nightline)

(20) **Mr. BINGHAM:** D, don't you think you owe Carol an apology?

**Col. CRAIG:** He owes me more than an apology.

**Mr. BINGHAM:** D, you have been deceiving your fiancée.

**# D:** She don't mind when I bring the money home. I mean, and she don't – she – I mean – the point is – look – I mean, the thing is, I mean, she comes to me and asks me for some money to pay this, money to pay that; we put mo – we buy cars, we do everything. I take care of my business as far as my home life. But she don't ask me how – Where'd you get it from?' She's just glad to have it. ... (COCA: 1995 (19950828) Ind\_Geraldo)

The differences of *the thing is* between its comment clause use and discourse marker use can be shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *The thing is* in its comment clause use & discourse marker use

	<b>comment clause use</b>	<b>discourse marker use</b>
<b>scope of modification</b>	the following proposition	discourse
<b>functions</b>	subjective: evaluative & reinforcing	textual: signaling cohesive relation or discourse continuation
<b>practically paraphrasable as</b>	<i>what is important is, importantly</i>	<i>because, on the contrary, back to the original topic, etc.</i>

#### 4. Development of *the thing is*

So far we have discussed different uses of *the thing is* in spoken discourse. The present paper puts forward tentatively a hypothesis that the discourse marker (*the*) *thing is* may be derived from *the thing is* as a full complement-taking clause or matrix clause.<sup>5</sup> In the evolution from a “subject + verb+ (complement)” sequence to a discourse marker in the form of (*the*) *thing is*, the construction seems to have undergone both syntactic reanalysis and semantic-pragmatic changes characteristic of grammaticalization.<sup>6</sup>

*The thing is* may originate as a matrix clause, with a following *that*-full clausal complement. The shift from a matrix clause to a parenthetical can be said to begin with the omission of the complementizer *that* of the dependent

<sup>5</sup> The “matrix clause hypothesis” (Brinton 2008: 21), which accounts for the development of some first-person epistemic parentheticals, such as *I think, I guess, I suppose, I see, I believe*, etc. has been thoroughly analyzed by Thompson & Mulac (1991a; 1991b) and Brinton (2008). This hypothesis may also explain the possible syntactic development of third-person *the thing is*.

<sup>6</sup> There are two subtypes of grammaticalization (Traugott 1995a: 1; Brinton 1996: 51; Andersen 2000: 34; Wischer 2000: 355). One is more traditional, which is based on Meillet’s assumption, defining this process as the transition of an independent word into a grammatical element (Meillet 1912: 131). In Lehmann’s (1985: 307–308) influential discussion of the parameters of grammaticalization, he argues that the items undergoing grammaticalization are subject to the following changes: attrition, paradigmaticization, obligatorification, condensation, coalescence and fixation. The second subtype views grammaticalization from “a discourse perspective” (Andersen 2000: 34), concerning the development of discourse markers from referential expressions. The changes that discourse markers have undergone in the process of grammaticalization include decategorialization, phonological reduction, desemanticization or generalization of meaning, pragmatic strengthening and subjectification (Traugott 1995b). It is important to note that the two subtypes of grammaticalization are complementary rather than conflicting (Traugott & Heine 1991), which may account for the development of grammatical markers and discourse or pragmatic markers respectively.

complement clause. *The thing is* followed by a *that*-less clause is indeterminate between a matrix clause and a parenthetical item. "Structural indeterminacy allows a reversal in syntactic hierarchy" (Brinton 2008: 246), making the original dependent *that*-clause into the matrix clause and making the original matrix clause assume parenthetical status. The construction finally becomes a true parenthetical (usually prosodically marked) as a result of further decategorialization.

In the development of *the thing is*, "semantic-pragmatic change and syntactic change go hand-in-hand" (Brinton 2008: 24). While the construction is decategorialized in its evolution from a full complement-taking clause to a formulaic particle-like parenthetical, it also undergoes desemantization. To be more specific, the term *thing* loses its propositional content such as *problem*, *fact*, *idea*, *truth*, etc. and the construction assumes a more abstract meaning, expressing the speaker's emphasis of the importance of the following proposition.

The different textual functions of *the thing is* can be seen as the generalized and conventionalized contextual uses or pragmatic implicatures of its comment clause use through frequent occurrence (Aijmer; Simon-Vandenberg 2004). *The thing is* can be employed in various contexts for emphasis, and for instance, it is very often used when the speaker intends to provide the reason or ground for the content presented previously. It is then gradually accorded procedural meaning and can be used as a marker signaling a causal discourse relation. At the same time we can see that the degree of evaluation and reinforcement is weakened, although we cannot deny the existence of the subjective meaning. It is improper to replace *the thing is* in (11) and (12), for instance, with *the important thing is*, *what is important is* or *importantly*, as we have done in (7) and (10). Instead, some other discourse markers signaling causal relation, such as *because*, or *since*, can be properly used to take its place. In other words, *the thing is* on such occasions is primarily cohesive rather than evaluative and reinforcing. Moreover, the scope of *the thing is* expands from local to global in this process. Clearly, the discourse marker functions of *the thing is* can be said to develop from but are over and above its evaluative and reinforcing use as a comment clause.

## 5. Conclusions

*The thing is* has both non-parenthetical and parenthetical use in spoken discourse, which can be distinguished with the help of some formal and prosodic clues. Non-parenthetical *the thing is* can be regarded as a matrix



clause, which is primarily truth claiming and focalizing. Parenthetical *the thing is* may function as a comment clause or a discourse marker. *The thing is* in its comment clause use has clause or proposition scope and is primarily used to convey the speaker's evaluation of the importance of the following proposition. *The thing is* as a discourse marker works on the level of discourse and is textually significant. It may serve as a cohesive device, signaling the sequential discourse relation (causal, contradictory and topic-shifting) and guiding or facilitating the hearer's interpretation, or a hesitation filler, signaling discourse continuation. Clearly, *the thing is* as a discourse marker primarily contributes to the coherence of discourse. The different uses of *the thing is* can be taken as different stages in the process of grammaticalization, which are syntactically and semantic-pragmatically different but are closely related to each other.

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## Funkcje połączenia *the thing is* w dyskursie mówionym

### Streszczenie

Połączenie wyrazowe *The thing is* jest używane zarówno parentetycznie, jak i nieparentetycznie w mówionej odmianie języka angielskiego. Te dwa makroużycia różnią się zarówno cechami formalnymi, jak i prozodycznymi. Kiedy kombinacja wyrazowa *the thing is* jest używana jako parenteza, może być wyrażeniem komentującym lub operatorem dyskursu. W pierwszym przypadku *the thing is*, odnoszące się do zdania głównego, ma charakter wartościujący i wzmacniający. Jako operator *the thing is* używane jest ogólniej, działając na poziomie dyskursu. Analizowana jednostka ma znaczenie w perspektywie tekstu, może ona bowiem funkcjonować jako środek spójności, sygnalizować sekwencyjne relacje dyskursu, lub wypełniać pauzę spowodowaną wahaniem mówiącego, a także sygnalizować kontynuację dyskursu. Różne funkcje tekstowe *the thing is* można uznać za uogólnione i skonwencjonalizowane kontekstowe użycia omawianego związku jako jednostki komentującej.



**PART II**

**CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS,  
TRANSLATION AND PHRASEOLOGY**



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## **Frazeologizmy z komponentem czasownikowym w języku polskim i węgierskim – analiza porównawcza wybranych jednostek**

**Abstrakt.** Artykuł przedstawia wycinek badań nad frazeologią polską i węgierską. Ma on zachęcić do podjęcia szerszej zakrojonych prac, których celem powinno być opracowanie materiału stanowiącego pomoc dla uczących się języka i leksykografów. Słowniki polsko-węgierskie rzadko podają odpowiedniki frazeologizmów, a frazeologiczny słownik polsko-węgierski do dziś nie został napisany. Autorzy na podstawie zbioru polskich i węgierskich związków frazeologicznych stworzyli listy najczęściej występujących w nich komponentów czasownikowych, następnie wybrali jeden z nich (*siedzieć/ül*), zebrali tworzone przez niego frazeologizmy i dokonali ich analizy porównawczej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *frazeologia, leksykografia, polsko-węgierskie ekwiwalenty frazeologiczne*

### **1. Wprowadzenie**

Jednym z najbardziej interesujących problemów frazeologii jest porównywalność związków frazeologicznych w różnych językach. Wyniki wielu badań wyraźnie pokazują, iż oprócz związków frazeologicznych charakterystycznych tylko dla jednego języka, istnieją jednostki wspólne, choć ich zbiór i stopień zgodności jest różny dla różnych par języków. I choć powstało na ten temat wiele opracowań, nadal za aktualne należy uznać sformułowane przed laty stwierdzenie, iż „brak jest wyczerpujących danych o stopniu porównywalności frazeologii polskiej z frazeologią języków słowiańskich i niesłowiańskich” (Basaj 1982: 157). Niniejszy artykuł stanowi kolejną pracę uzupełniającą – częściowo oczywiście – te dane.

Niewiele ukazało się do tej pory opracowań konfrontatywnych z frazeologii polskiej i węgierskiej, szczególnie interesujących ze względu na różne

pochodzenie, a jednocześnie geograficzną i kulturową bliskość języków<sup>1</sup>. Autorzy chcieli się przyjrzeć temu zagadnieniu z odmiennego nieco – niż zwykle się to czyni – punktu widzenia. Otóż zarówno w języku polskim, jak i węgierskim wiele związków frazeologicznych stanowią jednostki, w skład których wchodzi komponenty czasownikowe rozumiane jako elementy związku frazeologicznego równokształtne z formami odpowiednich leksemów czasownikowych. Bardzo często, podobnie jak formy leksemów czasownikowych w wypowiedzeniu, pełnią one funkcję konstytutywną takiej jednostki, w dużej mierze decydując o jej strukturze. Niektóre z czasowników pełnią taką funkcję częściej niż inne. Celem artykułu jest zatem z jednej strony stworzenie listy najczęstszych czasownikowych komponentów frazeologizmów w języku węgierskim, porównanie jej z listą takich jednostek polskich i wyodrębnienie komponentów wspólnych dla obu języków; z drugiej – zbadanie, na ile porównywalne są – gramatycznie i semantycznie – frazeologizmy konstytuowane przez ten sam (czy raczej powinniśmy powiedzieć: ekwiwalentny, por. niżej) komponent w obu językach. Dalszym etapem badań, wykraczającym już poza ramy tego – wstępnego w zamierzeniu – artykułu powinna być odpowiedź na dwa pytania: po pierwsze, czy komponenty czasownikowe frazeologizmów w różnych językach mają jakieś wspólne cechy semantyczne i gramatyczne, decydujące o tym, iż częściej niż inne są składnikami frazeologizmów; i po wtóre, czy można przypisać konkretnym komponentom czasownikowym jakąś preferowaną treść semantyczną tworzonych przez nie związków.

W niniejszym artykule przyjmuje się definicję i klasyfikację związków frazeologicznych za A.M. Lewickim (1983: 75–83). Równokształtne z formami czasownikowymi jednostki występujące we frazeologizmach nazywa się komponentami czasownikowymi. Ponieważ jednym z celów artykułu jest stworzenie listy najczęściej występujących w obu językach komponentów czasownikowych, należałoby rozróżnić komponenty-typy (w planie gramatycznym języka odpowiadają im formy) i komponenty-klasy (ich odpowiedniki to leksemy), by móc uporządkować materiał badawczy. Zdając sobie sprawę z tego, iż komponenty czasownikowe – typy, które są elementami

<sup>1</sup> Wspomnieć tu należy o kilku artykułach poświęconych paralelom frazeologicznym słowiańsko-węgierskim Janusza Bańczerowskiego, Imrego Pacsaiego, Andrása Zoltána oraz pracach Gyuli Paczolayego, który szczególnie uwagę poświęca przysłowiom. W artykule o polskich i węgierskich frazeologizmach Éva Porcsalmy (1992) nie podaje ani jednej pozycji bibliograficznej, która odsyłałaby do podobnej pracy. Ostatnio, w 2010 roku, ukazał się artykuł Doroty Dziewońskiej-Kiss i powstała w Piliscsaba praca magisterska napisana przez Nikolett Lázár *Dwuwyrazowe przydawkowe frazeologizmy polskie i ich węgierskie odpowiedniki*. Dane z tej pracy mają być częścią planowanego polsko-węgierskiego słownika frazeologicznego udostępnionego w Internecie.



frazeologizmów, z jednej strony, a formy, które budują wypowiedzenia, z drugiej, a także odpowiednio komponenty czasownikowe – klasy i leksemy, to różne typy jednostek, będziemy dalej – dla uproszczenia – używać terminów „forma” i „leksem”, jeśli tylko nie będzie to prowadzić do niejednoznaczności.

W badaniach konfrontatywnych problem stanowi zawsze odpowiedniość porównywanego materiału. W wypadku niniejszej pracy trudności pojawiły się już na początku – na etapie jego doboru. Ponieważ autorów interesują pewne tendencje językowe, materiał badawczy wyekscerpowali ze słowników frazeologicznych, tj. kompendiów, które z założenia notują jednostki utrwalone już w języku i uznane przez normę. Istotne było znalezienie wśród wielu potencjalnych źródeł dwu słowników w miarę możliwości najbardziej równoważnych. Ostatecznie autorzy zdecydowali się na polski *Słownik frazeologiczny współczesnej polszczyzny* Stanisława Bąby i Jarosława Libberka (dalej: SFWP) oraz węgierską pracę Vilmosa Bárdosiego i Gábora Kissa *Szólások. 5000 magyar állandósult szókapcsolat betűrendes értelmező dióhéyszótára* (dalej: MÁSz) – z pełną świadomością związanych z takim wyborem problemów. Słowniki są podobne, choć nie można mówić o pełnej równoważności wyekscerpowanego materiału, nie tylko ze względu na różną ich wielkość, ale i założenia teoretyczne. Wspólne dla obu słowników jest to, że notują one przede wszystkim związki stałe, cechujące się największym stopniem nieregularności między znaczeniem frazeologizmu a jego poszczególnymi składnikami; obok nich pojawiają się również wyrażenia porównawcze (w słowniku węgierskim zajmują one dużo miejsca), nie są natomiast notowane tzw. związki luźne i kolokacje. W SFWP zanotowanych zostało ok. 4 tysiące związków frazeologicznych, w MÁSz – 5 tysięcy.

Różnice między słownikami nie mają – zdaniem autorów – większego wpływu na wyniki, ponieważ w niniejszej pracy nie chodzi o podanie konkretnych danych liczbowych czy procentowych, tylko wskazanie pewnej tendencji (czy raczej potencji) leksemów czasownikowych do budowania frazeologizmów – w języku polskim i węgierskim.

## 2. Komponenty czasownikowe we frazeologizmach polskich i węgierskich

### 2.1. Podstawowe założenia

Pierwszy etap analizy stanowiło stworzenie bazy związków frazeologicznych zawierających formy czasownikowe, wyodrębnienie tych form, przyporządkowanie ich do odpowiednich leksemów i stworzenie listy rango-

wej. Związki frazeologiczne i występujące w nich czasowniki w postaci form hasłowych wpisywano do dwu baz danych (polskiej i węgierskiej). Zgodnie z tradycją leksykograficzną formy hasłowe czasowników polskich zapisano w bezokoliczniku (**czytać**), węgierskich zaś w 3. osobie liczby pojedynczej czasu teraźniejszego (tryb oznajmujący, koniugacja podmiotowa – **olvás**). Ten sposób opracowania ułatwia tworzenie list frekwencyjnych, a jednocześnie pozwala na szybkie wyszukiwanie informacji. Istotną zaletą baz danych jest również to, że łatwiejsze staje się dzięki nim wyszukiwanie polsko-węgierskich odpowiedników frazeologicznych.

Autorzy zakładają istnienie ekwiwalentnych jednostek zarówno leksykalnych, jak i frazeologicznych, choć zdają sobie sprawę ze złożoności problemu<sup>2</sup>. Niekiedy muszą w związku z tym dokonywać pewnych uogólnień. I tak na przykład stwierdzają, iż jednym z najczęściej występujących we frazeologizmach polskich i węgierskich czasownikiem jest *być* (węg. *van*), co nie oznacza, że w języku polskim i węgierskim istnieje para całkowicie ekwiwalentnych leksemów **być** – **van**, tylko że w dużej mierze mają one ten sam zakres znaczeniowy i pełnią podobne funkcje gramatyczne (konkretne tego typu wypadki będą omawiane w części analitycznej artykułu).

Ze względu na różnice gramatyczne między językiem polskim i węgierskim konieczne było również przyjęcie kilku założeń wstępnych.

Po pierwsze, polskie czasowniki dokonane i niedokonane, należące do jednej pary aspektowej, zostały uznane za dwa odrębne leksemy, tj. na przykład jednostki *czytać* i *przeczytać* zakwalifikowano odpowiednio do leksemów **czytać** i **przeczytać**. W języku węgierskim nie ma co prawda kategorii aspektu, ale zdarza się, że czasownikowi węgierskiemu odpowiada tylko jeden leksem z polskiej pary aspektowej. Poza takimi wypadkami czasowniki niedokonane i dokonane będą analizowane wspólnie – tak, by jednostki polskie i węgierskie w miarę możliwości jak najpełniej sobie odpowiadały.

Po drugie, zdecydowano, że formy polskich czasowników z *się* będą traktowane jako odpowiednie leksemy czasownikowe bez *się*, tj. na przykład *uczy się* czy *bije się* zostały zaklasyfikowane odpowiednio do leksemów **uczyć** i **bić**. Autorzy zdają sobie sprawę z dyskusyjności takiego rozwiązania, jednakże rozstrzygnięcie, jaką funkcję pełni słowo *się* przy komponencie czasownikowym danego związku frazeologicznego – biorąc pod uwagę wielość funkcji pełnionych w języku polskim przez tę jednostkę<sup>3</sup> – wydaje się prawie niemożliwe. Trudno stwierdzić, jaką funkcję pełni *się* na przykład w jedno-

<sup>2</sup> O ekwiwalencji pisali m.in.: Basaj (1982: 155–165) i Rejakowa (1994).

<sup>3</sup> Dokładnie na ten temat Saloni (1976: 104–118); Andrejewicz (2001: 81–86).

stce *bić się* – czy jest to forma zaimka zwrotnego się użyta metaforycznie, czy mamy do czynienia z jakąś formą czasownika **bić**, czy może to odrębny leksem. Trudności te mnożymy przy określaniu statusu komponentu (komponentów?) *bić się* na przykład z frazeologizmu *bić się w piersi*, bowiem musimy brać pod uwagę, że aktualne znaczenie tego frazeologizmu jest skorelowane z pierwotnym znaczeniem luźnego związku wyrazowego *bije się w piersi*<sup>4</sup> ‘ktoś bije (uderza) siebie w piersi’. Jaki komponent czasownikowy występuje w analizowanym tu związku frazeologicznym? A w wyekscerpowanym materiale mamy i przykłady trudniejsze: chociażby jaki jest status tej samej jednostki we frazeologizmie *bić się z myślami*. Czasowniki, dla których *się* stanowi stały element, tj. tzw. refleksiwa tantum, np. **kłócić się**, **bać się**, **gapić się**, zapisywano z tą częstką. W języku węgierskim nie występują analogiczne części, toteż problem nie dotyczy czasowników węgierskich. Trudności może natomiast powodować to, że często takim polskim parom czasownikowym z *się* i bez niego odpowiadają dwie jednostki węgierskie, mające ten sam rdzeń, ale zgodnie z tradycją uważane za odrębne leksemy, np. **uczyć**, **uczyć się** – **tanít**, **tanul**; **budować**, **budować się** – **épít**, **épül** (por. też niżej).

Po trzecie, zdecydowano się nie brać pod uwagę imiesłowów ze względu na ich dyskusyjny status w różnych opisach gramatycznych, tak polskich, jak i węgierskich. W obu językach mianowicie nie zawsze są one uznawane za formy czasowników<sup>5</sup>. Warto zaznaczyć, że decyzja ta nie wpłynęła znacząco na wyniki badań ze względu na niewielką liczbę imiesłowów w wyekscerpowanym materiale.

Po czwarte, wspomnieć należy o problemie ustalania postaci słownikowej niektórych czasowników w języku węgierskim. Wiąże się to z tym, iż pewne modyfikacje znaczeniowe czasowników dokonywane są w sposób regularny, np. czasowniki kauzatywne tworzone są przez dodanie części -(t)at/-(t)et do rdzenia czasownika podstawowego, a częstotliwość, wielokrotność wykonywania czynności zaznaczana jest przez dodanie części -gat/-get. W języku polskim rozróżnienie czasowników **siedzieć** i **sadzać** jest oczywiste, ale uznanie ich węgierskich odpowiedników **ül** i **ültet** za dwa różne leksemy – już dyskusyjne. Podobnie polskie **czytać** i **czytywać** to bez wątpienia dwa leksemy, ale ich węgierskie odpowiedniki **olvas** i **olvasgat** nie dają się tak łatwo zaklasyfikować.

Ostatecznie z 4000 haseł SFWP udało się wyekscerpować 1468 związków

<sup>4</sup> Por. Basaj (1985: 75).

<sup>5</sup> Na przykład imiesłowy przymiotnikowe zostały uznane przez Saloniego (1974) za przymiotniki; w języku węgierskim imiesłowy przymiotnikowe i przysłówkowe tradycyjnie traktuje się jako odrębne, tzw. przejściowe części mowy (*átmeneti szófajok*). Por. Lengyel (2000).

frazeologicznych z komponentem czasownikowym. Wyodrębniono z nich 746 różnych czasowników. Materiał węgierski okazał się dużo bogatszy w czasowniki – na 5000 haseł aż 3700 to frazeologizmy z komponentem czasownikowym – zawierają one 1516 różnych czasowników. Tak duża różnica w liczbie wyekscerpowanych czasowników wynika z tego, iż w języku węgierskim za jądro większości frazeologizmów uznaje się jednostki nominalne, przy których może pojawić się kilka synonimicznych czasowników<sup>6</sup>.

Z obu list wybraliśmy do dalszej analizy po 25 najczęściej występujących czasowników polskich i węgierskich. Staraliśmy się wybrać czasowniki o największej frekwencji we frazeologizmach, ale często mieliśmy problem z ustaleniem, w ilu związkach frazeologicznych dany czasownik występuje. Nie zawsze bowiem można było jednoznacznie rozstrzygnąć, co jest osobnym związkiem frazeologicznym, a co tylko jego wariantem, np. czy: *ktoś jest do bani, do kitu, do luzu* to jeden frazeologizm czy trzy: *ktoś jest do bani, ktoś jest do kitu, ktoś jest do luzu*; podobnie czy: *mieć bzika, fioła, hopla, świra na punkcie kogoś, czegoś* to jeden związek czy cztery? Warto zauważyć, że zarówno **być**, jak i **mieć** tworzą większość jednostek według takiego schematu, w którym łatwo o zamianę komponentu nominalnego na inny o tej samej funkcji semantycznej. Dotyczy to również innych komponentów czasownikowych.

## 2.2. Charakterystyka komponentów czasownikowych

Niżej (tabela 1) podajemy 25 czasowników najczęściej pojawiających się we frazeologizmach węgierskich (częstotliwość  $\geq 28$ ) i 25 czasowników najczęściej pojawiających się we frazeologizmach polskich (częstotliwość  $\geq 10$ ).

Analiza przedstawionych list wskazuje, że zbiory komponentów czasownikowych pokrywają się we frazeologizmach obu języków w znacznym stopniu. Wiemy, że tego typu spostrzeżenia trzeba formułować bardzo ostrożnie, ponieważ podobieństwo czasowników może być złudne i często dotyczy tylko pewnych pól znaczeniowych, a nie ich globalnych znaczeń. Przykładem takiej częściowej odpowiedniości może być węgierski czasownik **tesz**, któremu odpowiadają co najmniej cztery różne czasowniki polskie: **czynić**, **uczynić**, **kłaść**, **położyć**.

<sup>6</sup> Jak widać, badania zostały przeprowadzone na niepełnym zbiorze frazeologizmów. Stanowią one bowiem tylko sondaż, czy analizowany w niniejszym artykule problem jest wart uwagi. Właśnie ze względu na duże prawdopodobieństwo błędów wynikających ze zbyt małego materiału badawczego odwołujemy się czasami do USJP i sprawdzamy, czy otrzymane wyniki są podobne. Zdajemy sobie przy tym sprawę, że i tak wnioski mogą być wysuwane tylko z dużym uogólnieniem. Jak zaznaczaliśmy jednak – celem artykułu nie jest podanie konkretnych liczb czy zestawień procentowych, tylko wskazanie na pewne tendencje.

**Tabela 1. Lista czasowników najczęściej występujących we frazeologizmach węgierskich i polskich**

Nr	Czasowniki węgierskie			Czasowniki polskie	
	Frekwencja	Forma hasłowa	Znaczenie	Frekwencja	Forma hasłowa
1	292	van	'być; mieć'	101	mieć
2	98	áll	'stać'	37	być
3	91	tesz	'zrobić, uczynić; kłaść położyć'	23	dać
4	87	megy	'iść, jechać'	17	pójść
5	79	jár	'chodzić; należeć się'	16	iść
6	64	kerül	'omijać, unikać; kosztować (o cenie)'	16	stanąć
7	60	vesz	'brać; kupić, kupować'	16	wziąć
8	50	tart	'trwać, trzymać, utrzymać; uważać kogoś, coś za kogo, co'	14	puścić
9	47	ad	'dać, dawać'	14	robić
10	45	kap	'dostać, dostawać'	14	trzymać
11	44	csinál	'robić'	14	wyjść
12	43	jut	'dojść, dotrzeć; otrzymać coś'	13	brać
13	41	ér	'być wartym; osiągnąć coś; przybyć gdzieś; dotknąć, dotykać'	13	siedzieć
14	41	esik	'padać, paść, spadać'	12	patrzeć
15	40	ver	'bić, uderzać'	11	chodzić
16	36	él	'żyć'	11	czuć
17	36	néz	'patrzeć'	11	rzucić
18	36	nincs	'nie ma'	11	rzucić
19	35	beszél	'rozmawiać, mówić'	10	bić
20	35	fog	'trzymać' (też cz. posiłk. tworzący czas przyszły)	10	dawać
21	33	vág	'ciąć'	10	dostać
22	30	tud	'móc; wiedzieć, umieć'	10	położyć
23	29	lát	'widzieć'	10	spaść
24	28	jön	'przyjść'	10	stawać
25	28	ül	'siedzieć'	10	trafić

Listę polską otwierają komponenty czasownikowe: *mieć* i *być*. Leksemy **mieć** i **być** zajmują dwa pierwsze miejsca na listach *Słownika frekwencyjnego polszczyzny współczesnej* (Kurcz 1990; dalej: SF), są to bowiem – po pierw-

sze – tzw. czasowniki posiłkowe, częste w tekstach polskich ze względu na pełnione specyficzne funkcje gramatyczne, np.: elementu formy czasu przyszłego złożonego, strony biernej, orzeczeń złożonych – a przez to powtarzalne w tekstach; po drugie – mają one wiele znaczeń. Również w języku węgierskim najczęściej we frazeologizmach występuje ten czasownik, który zajmuje pierwsze miejsce na liście frekwencyjnej czasowników<sup>7</sup>, tj. **van** (być; mieć). Wysoka frekwencja tych czasowników w związkach frazeologicznych daje się zatem wyjaśnić po prostu dużą frekwencją w języku<sup>8</sup>. Ogólnie można powiedzieć, że spośród zamieszczonych powyżej komponentów czasownikowych na liście polskiej i węgierskiej ponad połowa należy do zbioru czasowników o dużej częstości w obu językach. Warto sprawdzić – może w oparciu o słowniki historyczne – czy pozostałe to jednostki, które miały dużą frekwencję wówczas, kiedy dane frazeologizmy powstały<sup>9</sup>. Zastanawia natomiast to, że w niewielu frazeologizmach występują czasowniki modalne, kauzatywne czy fazowe, takie jak **można, chcieć, zostać, musieć, trzeba, powinien, zacząć** w języku polskim, czy **kell** ‘trzeba’, **akar** ‘chcieć’, **lehet** ‘można’ **kezd** ‘zacząć’ w języku węgierskim, chociaż na liście frekwencyjnej czasowników w obu językach zajmują one bardzo wysokie miejsca.

W obu językach spośród czasowników o wysokiej frekwencji rzadko występują we frazeologizmach komponenty: **kochać/szeret, wierzyć/hisz, rozumieć/ért, słyseć/hall**. Składnikami polskich frazeologizmów notowanych przez SFWP rzadko bywają również czasowniki: **mówić/powiedzieć,**

<sup>7</sup> Zob. MMNySzGySz.

<sup>8</sup> Dlaczego jednak w SFWP pierwsze miejsce zajmuje czasownik **mieć** z liczbą 101 wystąpień, a czasownik **być** pojawia się prawie 3 razy rzadziej? To zupełnie inne wyniki niż w SF. Niestety, wskazuje to na to, iż nasze wyniki możemy traktować tylko w sposób bardzo przybliżony. Wpływa na nie bowiem wiele czynników, np. **być** pojawia się w SFWP rzadziej, niż można się spodziewać – jak się wydaje – z tego powodu, że jego autorzy uznali większość związków frazeologicznych z **być** za związki łączliwe i nie zamieścili ich w swoim słowniku. Utworzyli tylko informacyjne hasło **być** z jednym związkiem frazeologicznym i komentarzem, iż „wyras BYĆ jest komponentem licznych frazeologizmów, opisanych w innych miejscach Słownika”, ale tych frazeologizmów znalazło się w słowniku tylko 37. Hasło **mieć** jest obszerniejsze i frazeologizmów z **mieć** też jest zanotowanych więcej – chociaż ich analiza nie wskazuje, by były to tylko frazeologizmy stałe. Różnica w liczbie wystąpień **być** i **mieć** jest tu zatem wynikiem decyzji dokonanych przez autorów SFWP.

<sup>9</sup> Na pewno byłoby to zadanie trudne. W polskich słownikach historycznych podawana jest przy hasłach informacja o frekwencji danej jednostki. Problem polega jednak na tym, że prace nad tymi słownikami trwały bardzo długo. W ich trakcie dodawano nowe teksty i hasła kończące słownik zbudowane są na większym materiale źródłowym niż początkowe. Nie jest zatem możliwe ich bezpośrednie porównanie.

**wiedzieć, widzieć** czy **pracować**, pojawiające się bardzo wysoko na liście rangowej SF. Zdaje się to jednak wynikać z wyborów dokonanych przez autorów SFWP, bowiem w USJP poświadczonych jest wiele frazeologizmów z tymi czasownikami<sup>10</sup>. Na węgierskiej liście brak natomiast: **gondol** ‘myśleć’, **kérdez** ‘pytać’, **érez** ‘czuć’ – choć są one bardzo częste w węgierskim.

Zarówno w polskim, jak i węgierskim zestawieniu czasowników najczęściej występujących w związkach frazeologicznych początkowe miejsca zajmuje kilka komponentów, obecność których dziwi na tak wysokich pozycjach, są to bowiem jednostki o niższej frekwencji. Chodzi tu o: **bić/ver; spaść, spadać/esik** ‘padać, paść’; w polskim ponadto: **puścić/puszczać, trzymać/utrzymać**; w węgierskim także **vág** ‘ciąć’.

Reasumując, dla wielu czasowników częstość występowania w uzusie wydaje się najważniejszym czynnikiem decydującym o ich skłonności do tworzenia frazeologizmów, chociaż nie jest to prawidłowość bezwyjątkowa. Poprawność tej tezy należałoby sprawdzić na badaniach obejmujących dużo szerszy i bardziej różnorodny zakres materiałowy.

### 3. Polskie i węgierskie frazeologizmy z komponentem *siedzieć / üll*

#### 3.1. Wyróżnione typy ekwiwalencji

Następny etap analizy stanowi porównanie cech – gramatycznych i semantycznych – frazeologizmów konstytuowanych przez ten sam (czy raczej: ekwiwalentny) komponent w obu językach. Ze względu na wstępny charakter artykułu badania zostały ograniczone do jednego czasownika. Autorzy zdecydowali się na *siedzieć / üll*, ponieważ jest on częstym komponentem frazeologizmów polskich i węgierskich, charakteryzuje się też dużą frekwencją w obu językach, i – co istotne – jest „typowym” czasownikiem, tj. nie pełni w omawianych językach żadnej szczególnej funkcji składniowej: nie jest na przykład czasownikiem posiłkowym czy modalnym, słowem, może stanowić przykład czasownika o typowych cechach gramatycznych, nazywającego typową dla człowieka czynność. Jak wspomniano wyżej, podstawę wyboru związków frazeologicznych dla języka węgierskiego stanowił MÁSz, dla polskiego – SFWP. Zbiór ten został wzbogacony o frazeologizmy niewystępujące w przytoczonych pozycjach, ale powszechnie znane i notowane. Odpowiedniki polskie dla jednostek węgierskich i węgier-

<sup>10</sup> Tylko **pracować** występuje rzadko, ale zapewne dlatego że we frazeologizmach pojawia się w tych kontekstach synonimiczne **robić**.

skie dla polskich były wyszukiwane we wszystkich dostępnych słownikach, istotną rolę odgrywała tu też intuicja językowa rodzimych użytkowników obu języków<sup>11</sup>.

Ostatecznie zebrany materiał liczy sobie 17 frazeologizmów węgierskich i 20 polskich. Do zbioru zostały włączone zarówno te jednostki, w których komponent *siedzieć/ül* jest obligatoryjny, jak i takie, w których stanowi on jeden z wariantów<sup>12</sup>. Charakterystyka frazeologizmów, oparta na analizie: znaczenia i tworzącej je metafory, struktury składniowej oraz składu leksykalnego<sup>13</sup>, doprowadziła do wyróżnienia następujących typów jednostek, a mianowicie frazeologizmów węgierskich i polskich:

- (a) z komponentem *siedzieć/ül* w obu językach
  - (i) mających to samo znaczenie, opartych na tej samej metaforze, wyrażonych tą samą lub nieco zmodyfikowaną strukturą składniową i zbudowanych z tych samych lub bliskich znaczeniowo leksemów
  - (ii) związków frazeologicznych bliskich strukturalnie i leksykalnie, ale mających inne znaczenie
- (b) z komponentem *siedzieć/ül* w jednym z języków
  - (i) mających to samo znaczenie, opartych na tej samej metaforze, wyrażonych tą samą lub nieco zmodyfikowaną strukturą składniową i zbudowanych z tych samych lub bliskich znaczeniowo leksemów,
  - (ii) mających to samo tylko znaczenie, charakteryzujących się jednak inną strukturą i innym składem leksykalnym
- (c) niemających odpowiedników w drugim języku.

Jak widać, nie wyodrębniliśmy w niniejszym opracowaniu grupy o pełnej ekwiwalencji – i semantycznej, i gramatycznej, i leksykalnej – ze względu na dużą odmienność obu języków. Problem stanowią tu bowiem zarówno różnice gramatyczne (inny sposób wyrażania relacji składniowych), jak i leksykalne – uznanie danej pary leksemów za pełne odpowiedniki to w dużej mierze decyzja arbitralna, oparta na intuicji językowej badacza. W związku z tym mniej kontrowersji budzi mówienie o zbliżonej strukturze czy składzie leksykalnym – choć stopień odpowiedniości w niektórych przykładach jest bardzo duży.

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<sup>11</sup> Zdajemy sobie sprawę z tego, że lista analizowanych związków frazeologicznych może się wydać dyskusyjna. W szczególności mogły zostać pominięte jakieś jednostki, które nie zostały zanotowane w przyjętych za źródło słownikach i nieznane autorom niniejszego artykułu.

<sup>12</sup> Wariantywność składnika czasownikowego to, jak pisaliśmy wyżej, cecha typowa dla frazeologii węgierskiej, w polskiej dotyczy mniejszej liczby związków frazeologicznych.

<sup>13</sup> Inspirację stanowił opis zaproponowany w pracy Basaja (1985: 73–82).



### 3.2. Frazeologizmy polskie i węgierskie z komponentem *siedzieć/ül* w obu językach

W opracowanym materiale znalazło się dziesięć par frazeologizmów, które w obu językach zawierają komponent *siedzieć/ül*, przy czym zaliczono do tej grupy także te jednostki, w których jest on nie jedynym, a jednym z wariantów. Osiem par związków frazeologicznych zostało uznanych za ekwiwalentne: mają przede wszystkim to samo znaczenie i oparte są na tej samej metaforze. Za ekwiwalentne uznano także ich strukturę i skład leksykalny, choć ze względu na duże różnice strukturalne dzielące języki trudno czasem dokonać porównania struktur z obu języków. W przytoczonych niżej przykładach stopień odpowiedniości wskazanych cech jest różny, lecz – zdaniem autorów – wystarczająco bliski, by zaliczyć je do omawianej grupy.

Dwie pozostałe pary związków frazeologicznych stanowią przeciwieństwo jednostek ze scharakteryzowanej wyżej grupy, bowiem mają odmienne znaczenia, a ekwiwalentną strukturę i leksykę.

#### 3.2.1. Frazeologizmy o tym samym znaczeniu oraz tej samej lub zbliżonej strukturze i leksyce

- (1) węg. *biztosan ül a nyeregben* ‘pewnie siedzi w siodle’ – pol. *siedzieć mocno w siodle*; znaczenie: ‘czuć się pewnie, bo osiągnęło się zamierzony cel: czuć się pewnie na jakimś stanowisku, mieć ugruntowaną pozycję’;
- (2) węg. *vkinek a nyakán lóg/ül* ‘wisi, siedzi komuś na szyi’ – pol. *siedzieć komuś na karku*; znaczenie: ‘pojawić się gdzieś bez zaproszenia, sprawić kłopot swoim niespodzianym przybyciem’<sup>14</sup>;
- (3) węg. *karba tett kezekkel [ül, áll, vár, néz]* itd. ‘siedzi/stoi/czeka/patrzy itd. z rękami założonymi na ramieniu’ – pol. *siedzieć/czekać/przyglądać się z założonymi rękami/rękoma*; znaczenie: ‘nic nie robić, być beczynnym, zachowywać się biernie’;
- (4) węg. *tűkőn ül* ‘siedzi na igłach’ – pol. *siedzieć jak na szpilkach* (także: *węglach, rozżarzonych/gorących węglach*); znaczenie: ‘denerwować się, niecierpliwić się, niespokojnie czekając na początek lub koniec czegoś’;
- (5) węg. (*úgy áll [jár v. megy v. ül]*), *mint aki karót/nyársat nyelt [mintha karó/nyársat volna a hasában v. mintha karót/nyársat nyelt volna]* ‘tak stoi,

<sup>14</sup> Polska jednostka jest homonimiczna – znaczy również: ‘być na czyimś utrzymaniu, być dla kogoś ciężarem’, jak: *siedzieć na czyimś garnuszku*, które nie ma swojego odpowiednika w węgierskim.

- [chodzi a. idzie a. siedzi], jak ktoś, kto pal/rožen połknął [jak ktoś u kogo w brzuchu jest pal/rožen / jakby był połknął pal/rožen] – pol. *siedzi, stoi, stąpa, chodzi, idzie itp. jakby kij połknął*; znaczenie: ‘nienaturalnie wyprostowany, sztywny, często z powodu dumy’;
- (6) węg. *ül/van oben nyakig/fülig/feje búbjáig* ‘siedzi/jest w czymś po szyję, po uszy, po czubek głowy’ – pol. *siedzieć, tkwić, tonąć w czymś po uszy*; znaczenie: ‘być całkowicie zaangażowanym w coś, pogrążonym w czymś’;
- (7) węg. *ül/van nyakig/fülig/feje búbjáig a pácban/szarban* ‘siedzi/jest po szyję/po uszy/po czubek głowy w marynacie/w gównie’ – pol. *siedzieć/tkwić/tonąć po uszy w szambie/bagnie/gównie*; znaczenie: ‘znajdować się w nieprzyjemnej sytuacji, w kłopotach’;
- (8) węg. *puskaporos hordón ül* ‘siedzi na beczce prochu’ – pol. *beczka prochu* (najczęściej: *siedzieć na beczce prochu*).

Dwie pierwsze pary można w zasadzie uznać za całkowite ekwiwalenty. Mają to samo znaczenie, oparte są na tej samej metaforze, wyrażonej za pomocą tej samej struktury składniowej (odpowiednio: VF → ADVP, NP+w/-ben; VF → NP, NP+na/-n<sup>15</sup>) o takiej samej realizacji leksykalnej – poza jednym komponentem. Para (1) mianowicie ma różną realizację frazy przysłówkowej (*mocno/biztosan* ‘pewnie’), (2) – frazy nominalnej (*na karku/a nyakán* ‘na szyi’), jednak różnica semantyczna między nimi jest w tych kontekstach nieznaczna. Należy również podkreślić, że jednostka *vkínek a nyakán lóg/ül*, jak większość zanotowanych w MÁSz związków frazeologicznych, ma wariantywną realizację frazy czasownikowej: oprócz interesującego nas *ül* ‘siedzi’ można użyć tu *lóg* ‘wisi’.

Związki frazeologiczne z pary (3) różnią się nieznacznie strukturą syntaktyczną. Schemat składniowy polskiej jednostki: VF → NP → AP został w jednostce węgierskiej rozszerzony o jedną pozycję: VF → NP → AP → NP+na/-ba: *karba* ‘na ramieniu’, czy raczej odwrotnie: w polskim frazeologizmie mamy elipsę tej frazy, bowiem w standardowych konstrukcjach składniowych jest ona konotowana przez formę *zalożony*. I w tym wypadku w języku węgierskim mamy możliwość użycia kilku czasowników. W jednostce polskiej słowniki notują trzy: **siedzieć, czekać, przyglądać się**, choć trzeba przyznać, iż w tekstach można znaleźć poświadczenie i dla innych, np. **stać**. Poza tym i polski, i węgierski związek mają dokładnie to samo znaczenie i oparte są na tej samej metaforze.

<sup>15</sup> Opis struktury fraz został oparty na formalnej metodzie zaproponowanej przez Saloniego, Świdzińskiego (1998: 238–243). Objasnienie oznaczeń na końcu artykułu.

Pary (4) i (5) zbudowane są każda na tej samej metaforze, na płaszczyźnie składniowej oddanej jednak przez różne konstrukcje. Węgierskiemu *tűkőn ül* 'siedzi na igłach' (VF → NP+n) odpowiada w polskim konstrukcja porównawcza *siedzieć jak na szpilkach* (VF → jak NP+na); konstrukcję porównawczą stanowią również frazeologizmy z pary (5), choć ich struktura w języku węgierskim jest bardziej skomplikowana, por. polskie: VF1 → jakby VF2 → NP i węgierskie: VF1 → *jak* NP1 (*ktoś*) → SP[NP2 (*kto*) → VF2 NP3].

Różnice widoczne są również w warstwie leksykalnej:

- (a) w języku polskim w przypadku frazeologizmu z pary (4) dopuszczalna jest większa liczba wariantów wyrażenia przyimkowego: obok *na szpilkach* można tu użyć *na węglach*, *na rozżarzonych węglach*, *na gorących węglach*;
- (b) różne są, choć znaczeniowo bliskie, pełniące taką samą funkcję w metaforze, rzeczowniki: w węgierskim *igła*, w polskim *szpilka*;
- (c) w parze (5) polskiej formie *kij* odpowiadają węgierskie: *karó/nyárs* 'pal/rozeń'<sup>16</sup>;
- (d) w jednostce polskiej większa jest – co rzadkie – wariantowość form finitywnych: co prawda w pozycji VF2 w miejscu odpowiednika polskiego *połknął* pojawiają się dwa węgierskie *nyelt* 'połknął' i *volna* 'byłby', ale za to w pozycji VF1 w języku polskim mogą zostać użyte poświadczone w słownikach: *siedzieć*, *stać*, *stąpać*, *chodzić*, *iść*, a także chyba inne czasowniki ruchu: *tańczyć*, *przechadzać się*, *podskakiwać* itp. (w węgierskim możliwości zdają się być ograniczone do *áll* 'stoi' i nieakceptowanego po polsku *fekszik* 'leży').

Związki frazeologiczne z punktu (6) mają taką samą strukturę: VF → NP +po/-ig, NP+w/-ban, podobna jest również realizacja frazy nominalnej: i w polskim, i w węgierskim frazeologizmie występuje wyrażenie *po uszy*; w węgierskim mamy co prawda dodatkowo *nyakig* 'po szyję' i *feje búbjáig* 'po czubek głowy', ale wszystkie one są bliskie semantycznie. Większe problemy stwarza analiza frazy finitywnej. Trudno mianowicie stwierdzić jednoznacznie, jakie może mieć ona wykładniki. Słowniki nie są w tej materii jednomyślne. SFWP i USJP notują tylko: *tkwić/tonąć w czymś po uszy*, ale w Internecie (także w słownikach internetowych) często występuje postać: *siedzieć w czymś po uszy*.

Frazeologizmy z pary (7) powstały – jak się wydaje – z przekształcenia jednostek: *ül/van vben nyakig/fülig/feje búbjáig* (por. (6)) i *siedzieć, tkwić, tonąć w czymś po uszy*, dokładniej z dookreślenia frazy NP+w/-ban:

<sup>16</sup> Rzeczowniki bardzo bliskie znaczeniowe, mające tę samą cechę istotną z punktu widzenia znaczenia frazeologizmu.

a *pácban/szarban* ('marynata'/gównno') w wersji węgierskiej, *bagno, szambo, gównno* w wersji polskiej. Desygnaty tych komponentów obu językach stanowią śmierdzące, nieprzyjemne ciecze lub miejsca taką cieczą wypełnione. Metafora we frazeologizmach obu języków oparta jest na obrazie człowieka zanurzonego w tej śmierdzącej cieczy, przy czym różny stopień głębokości tego zanurzenia pozwala określić, w jak wielkich tarapatach ktoś się znajduje. I tu znowu: w języku węgierskim jest to *nyakig* 'po szyję', *fülig* 'po uszy', *feje búbjáig* 'po czubek głowy', w polskim słowniku zanotowane jest tylko wyrażenie *po uszy*, ale łatwo znaleźć w Internecie liczne wystąpienia z *po szyję*, a nawet *po czubek głowy*. Podobne wątpliwości można też mieć co do tego, czy wszystkie trzy czasowniki, tj. *tkwić*, *tonąć* i *siedzieć*, mogą stanowić komponent omawianego frazeologizmu<sup>17</sup>.

Wątpliwości może budzić uznanie za ekwiwalentne jednostek z pozycji (8). Frazeologizm węgierski (o znaczeniu: 'znajdować się w bardzo napiętej, grożącej wybuchem sytuacji') jest konstrukcją o centrum czasownikowym: VF → NP+ón → NP. W języku polskim funkcjonuje tylko *beczka prochu* (o znaczeniu 'konflikt, który grozi wybuchem, lub miejsce, gdzie taki konflikt powstał'<sup>18</sup>), stanowiąca frazę nominalną. Mają więc one wyraźnie różną strukturę. Polski frazeologizm występuje jednak najczęściej właśnie z formą czasownika *siedzieć*, co – zdaniem autorów – stanowi podstawę do uznania pary frazeologizmów z punktu (8) za ekwiwalentne (choć trzeba przyznać, że wachlarz dopuszczalnych – obok *siedzieć* – czasowników jest tu duży). Przemawia za tym również to, że są one oparte na wspólnej metaforze i mają wspólne jądro znaczeniowe.

### 3.2.2. Frazeologizmy o innym znaczeniu, ale tej samej lub zbliżonej strukturze i leksyce

- (1) węg. *ül a pénzén* 'siedzi na (swoich) pieniądzach' ('być skąpym') i polski *siedzieć* (także: *leżeć, spać*) *na pieniądzach* ('być bardzo bogatym') (por. też 3.3.2. (2));
- (2) pol. *siedzieć na dwóch stołkach* ('być dwulicowym, prowadzić grę na dwa fronty, czerpiąc często z tego powodu korzyści') i węgierskie *két szék*

<sup>17</sup> Na schemacie frazeologizmów z przykładu (6) z dookreśloną frazą nominalną zbudowany jest też związek *siedzieć w długach* (*po uszy*) – węg. *nyakig/fülig/feje búbjáig ül/van az adósságban* 'po szyję, po uszy, po czubek głowy siedzi/jest w długu' – 'jest bardzo zadłużony'.

<sup>18</sup> Definicja pochodzi z ISJP. Chociaż frazeologizm jest często używany, to jednak autorzy znaleźli go tylko w tym jednym słowniku.

*közt [között] a pad alá esik [ül]* ‘siaść/upaść między dwoma krzesłami pod ławę’ (‘mieć dwie dobre możliwości do wyboru i obie stracić z powodu niezdecydowania’).

### 3.3. Frazeologizmy polskie i węgierskie z komponentem *siedzieć/ül* w jednym z języków

Poza opisanymi wyżej parami frazeologizmów z komponentem *siedzieć/ül* w materiale znalazły się polskie i węgierskie jednostki, którym w drugim języku odpowiadają związki niezawierające interesującego nas czasownika. Dwóm parom została przypisana – oprócz wspólnego znaczenia – podobna struktura i leksyka (oczywiście poza różnym komponentem czasownikowym), sześć pozostałych łączy tylko wspólne znaczenie.

#### 3.3.1. Frazeologizmy o tym samym znaczeniu oraz tej samej lub zbliżonej strukturze i leksyce

- (1) pol. *diabeł siedzi/tkwi w szczegółach* – węg. *az ördög a részletekben rejlik* ‘diabeł chowa się/ukrywa się w szczegółach’; znaczenie: ‘ważne są szczegóły, detale’;
- (2) węg. *(örökké) a felesége/(édes)anyja szoknyáján [kötényén v. köténye mellett] ül* ‘(ciągle) siedzi na spódnicy/fartuchu [obok spódnicy, fartucha] żony/mamusi/matki’ – pol. *trzymać się czyjejs spódnicy*; znaczenie: ‘być niesamodzielnym’.

Znaczenie frazeologizmów z przykładu (1) zostało oddane za pomocą tej samej metafory. Identyczna jest też struktura jednostek: VF → NP(nom), NP+w/-ben. Jedyną różnicę stanowi wypełnienie frazy finitywnej: w polskim mamy statyczne *siedzieć* lub *tkwić*, w węgierskim dynamiczne *rejlik* ‘chować się/ukrywać’.

Również frazeologizmy z przykładu (2) są zbudowane na bardzo podobnej metaforze. Mamy tu wyraźne skojarzenie z małym dzieckiem (to ono trzyma się blisko matki). Jednostki charakteryzują się następującą strukturą: węgierska – VF → NP+n → NP i polska – VF → NP1 → NP2. Różnica w budowie strukturalnej związków wynika z tego, że zawierają one komponenty czasownikowe o różnych wymaganiach składniowych: w wersji węgierskiej – *ül* + *-n* ‘siedzi + na’, w polskiej – *trzymać się* + Gen (*trzymać się czegoś*). Realizacja leksykalna fraz nominalnych jest podobna: w węgierskim – wariantywnie *szoknya* ‘spódnica’ i *kötény* ‘fartuch’, w polskim *spódnica*. Fraza nominalna przyrzeczownikowa w wersji węgierskiej jest ograniczona do rzeczowników: *feleség* ‘żona’, *(édes)anya* ‘mamusia, matka’, i ewentualnie

ich zdrobnień, w polskiej ograniczenie wydaje się słabsze – mogą pojawić się w tej pozycji rzeczowniki nazywające osoby spokrewnione płci żeńskiej (*matka, ciotka, babka, siostra* itd.) lub mu bliskie (*dziewczynna, przyjaciółka, szefowa* itd.)<sup>19</sup>.

### 3.3.2. Frazeologizmy o tym samym znaczeniu, ale różnej strukturze i leksyce

- (1) węg. *közél ül [van] a tűzhöz/húsfazékhoz* ‘siedzi [jest] blisko ognia/garnka z mięsem’ – pol. *być u żłobu*; znaczenie: ‘mieć układy, zapewniające korzyści materialne’;
- (2) węg. *ül a pénzén* ‘siedzi na (swoich) pieniądzach’ – pol. *mieć węża w kieszeni* o znaczeniu: ‘być skąpym’<sup>20</sup>;
- (3) węg. *felül a (magas) lóra [magas lóra ül]* ‘usiadł na (wysokiego) konia [siedzi na wysokim koniu]’ – pol. *patrzyć na kogoś z góry, chodzić nadętym jak balon, zadzierać nosa*; znaczenie: ‘być zarozumiałym, wynosić się nad innych’;
- (4) pol. *siedzieć cicho jak mysz pod miotłą, jak trusia* – węg. *hallgat [lapít v. lapul], mint szar a fűben* ‘milczy/przycupnął jak gówno w trawie’<sup>21</sup> o znaczeniu ‘siedzieć bez ruchu, milczeć, zachowywać się spokojnie, zwykle w obawie, żeby nie zwrócić na siebie czyjejs uwagi’;
- (5) pol. *siedzieć jak na tureckim/niemieckim kazaniu* – węg. *nekem ez kínai* ‘to dla mnie chiński’ o znaczeniu: ‘nic nie rozumieć z tego, o czym jest mowa’;
- (6) *siedzieć jak u Pana Boga za piecem* ‘mieć dobrze’ – węg. *él mint Marci Hevesen* ‘żyje jak Marcin w Heves’.

W przytoczonych parach związków frazeologicznych różna jest zarówno metafora, jak struktura składniowa i jej realizacja leksykalna. Wydaje się jednak, że i w tej grupie można się doszukać pewnej ekwiwalentności osnowy metaforycznej par frazeologizmów, por. kolejno: znajdowanie się blisko jedzenia, łatwy dostęp do jedzenia; utrudniony dostęp do pieniędzy (siedzimy na nich albo trzymamy je w kieszeni, do której dostępu broni wąż); schowanie

<sup>19</sup> Autorzy zdają sobie sprawę, że decyzja o zaliczeniu omawianych frazeologizmów do grupy jednostek ekwiwalentnych jest arbitralna. Wpłynęła na nią wyrazista wspólna metafora, a także podobieństwo strukturalne i leksykalne.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Być skąpym’ to po węgiersku również: *fogához veri a garast* ‘bije groszem o zęby’, a polski związek: *siedzieć/leżeć na pieniądzach/forsie* ma inne niż węgierski znaczenie, mianowicie ‘być bardzo bogatym’.

<sup>21</sup> Trzeba tu zwrócić uwagę, że węgierski związek frazeologiczny należy do innej odmiany stylistycznej języka, jest kolokwializmem.

się za czymś lub w czymś małych rozmiarów poprzez przysiad, przykucnięcie, i trwanie w bezruchu; bycie/znajdowanie się wyżej niż inni; niezajomość języka.

### 3.4. Frazeologizmy niemające odpowiedników

W analizowanym materiale są frazeologizmy, zarówno polskie jak i węgierskie, dla których nie udało się znaleźć odpowiedników w drugim z porównywanych języków, por.:

- (1) *úgy ül a lovon, mint macska a köszörűkövön* 'siedzi na koniu jak kot na kamieniu szlifierskim', *úgy ül vmin, mint majom a köszörűkövön* 'siedzi na czymś jak małpa na kamieniu szlifierskim' – 'siedzi niezgrabnie, dziwnie, pochylony do przodu (najczęściej na rowerze, koniu)';
- (2) *búsul [ül], mint Marius Karthágó romjain* 'martwi się [siedzi] jak Mariusz na ruinach Kartaginy';
- (3) *a fülén ül* 'siedzi na swoim uchu' – 'nic do niego nie dociera, niczego nie słyszy';
- (4) *siedzieć kamieniem, kołkiem, jak przykuty* 'przebywać gdzieś bez przerwy, nie ruszając się z miejsca';
- (5) *siedzieć na walizkach* 'być gotowym, przygotowanym do wyjazdu, oczekiwać z niecierpliwością na wyjazd';
- (6) *siedzieć/być pod pantoflem* 'zwykle o mężu w stosunku do żony: słuchać żony we wszystkim, nie mieć w domu własnego zdania'; po węgiersku określają takiego mężczyznę za pomocą wyrazu złożonego *papucsférj*, dosłownie: 'mąż-pantofel';
- (7) *ktoś (rzadziej coś) w kimś siedzi* 'ktoś ma takie cechy, kogoś coś charakteryzuje';
- (8) *(nie) siedzieć w kimś* '(nie) znać kogoś na wylot, (nie) wiedzieć co myśli, odczuwa, zamierza';
- (9) *siedzieć na czyimś garnuszk* ('być na czyimś utrzymaniu, być dla kogoś ciężarem').

Mają one, być może, swoje ekwiwalenty w drugim języku, tylko autorom nie udało ich się odnaleźć.

## 4. Wnioski

Analiza zebranego na potrzeby niniejszego artykułu materiału wskazuje, że frazeologię polską i węgierską cechuje duże podobieństwo, mimo iż są to języki odległe od siebie genetycznie. Stanowi to kolejny przyczynek

do tezy, że „wspólnota w idiomatyce bywa także uwarunkowana wspólnotą kulturową (...). Nie można także wykluczyć, że pewne związki powstały niezależnie, równolegle (...) dzięki identycznym lub podobnym skojarzeniom” (Pajdzińska, 1985: 148). Stworzone listy komponentów czasownikowych najczęściej występujących w związkach frazeologicznych obu języków są bardzo do siebie podobne, a zestawienie ekwiwalentnych frazeologizmów polskich i węgierskich zadziwiająco długie. Wyraźnie trzeba jednak zaznaczyć, że problem porównywalności frazeologii polskiej i węgierskiej został przedstawiony w niniejszym artykule na stosunkowo niewielkim materiale, co nie pozwala na formułowanie kategoriycznych wniosków. Wstępne obserwacje wydają się jednak ciekawe. Aby można było wyciągnąć uzasadnione wnioski, należałoby przeprowadzić badania na dużo szerszym materiale. Pierwszym krokiem powinno być stworzenie dla obu języków możliwie pełnych baz frazeologizmów notowanych we wszystkich dostępnych słownikach, a następnie regularne ich uzupełnianie o jednostki jeszcze nienotowane. Praca nad tym zagadnieniem, oprócz znaczenia teoretycznego, ma znaczenie praktyczne. Słowniki polsko-węgierskie rzadko podają odpowiedniki frazeologizmów, a specjalistyczny – frazeologiczny – słownik polsko-węgierski do dziś nie został napisany. O jego potrzebie przy nauczaniu języka obcego i pracach tłumaczeniowych nie trzeba nikogo przekonywać.

### Stosowane oznaczenia

ADVP – fraza przysłówkowa

AP – fraza przymiotnikowa

NP – fraza nominalna

NP+w/-ben- fraza nominalna zbudowana z rzeczownika oraz w języku polskim przyimka, w węgierskim – odpowiadającego mu morfemu

SP – fraza zdaniowa; SP[VF → NP] fraza zdaniowa zbudowana z frazy czasownikowej i frazy nominalnej

VF – fraza finitywna (czasownikowa)

→ – strzałka wskazuje na związek syntaktyczny między elementami, np. VF → NP oznacza, że fraza finitywna i fraza nominalna tworzą związek składniowy; VF → NP, ADVP – że mamy dwa związki: frazy finitywnej z frazą nominalną i frazy finitywnej z frazą przysłówkową.

### Skróty

pol. – polski

węg. – węgierski



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## Phraseological units with verbal constituents in Polish and Hungarian – a contrastive analysis of selected units

### Summary

Both in Polish and Hungarian a number of phraseological units contain verbal constituents, defined as elements of phraseological units formally identical to corresponding verbal lexemes (or some of their forms). Authors agree that phraseological units are language units having particular semantic and syntactical features, which may differ from the characteristics of their constituents. Nevertheless, which elements the phraseological unit is composed of may have – and very often has – an influence on its characteristics. Like every language unit it is a part of the language system, in which it has developed, and it has to be subject to its mechanisms. Due to this reason, although verbal constituents are not identified with formally identical verbal lexemes by authors, they are treated as the base of the analysis.

The verbal constituents of a phraseological unit, likewise verbs in phrases, often perform a constitutive function, to a great extent affecting its structure and grammatical characteristics. Some of the verbs perform such a function more often than others. It seems to be interesting, first, to compare the lists of Polish and Hungarian verbs particularly prone to occupy the central position in phraseological units or at least to be an element of a phraseological unit; second, to conduct the semantic and grammatical analysis of the phraseological units containing these verbs in both languages. On this base it is possible to determine whether there are any – and if yes, which – common semantic and grammatical features of verbs, deciding about their being constituents of phraseological units more often than others.

The present paper is an attempt of a preliminary discussion of the two first problems. Its first part contains a list of verbs which appear most frequently in Hungarian phraseological units and the comparison of the list with the corresponding one composed of Polish verbs, preceded by the description of the method of compiling it. The second part of the paper is devoted to the semantic and grammatical analysis of phraseological units containing one of the most frequent verbal component in both languages, i.e. *siedzieć/ül* ('to sit'). The characterization of the phraseological units, based on the analysis of the meaning and the metaphor constructing it, the syntactical structure and lexical constituents, led to distinguishing five types of correspondence between Hungarian and Polish units.

Polish units for the analysis have been excerpted from *Słownik frazeologiczny współczesnej polszczyzny* by Stanisław Bąba and Jarosław Liberek as well as from *Podręczny słownik frazeologiczny języka polskiego* by Stanisław Bąba, Gabriela Dziamska and Jarosław Liberek, while Hungarian phraseological units have been excerpted from the

following lexicographic works: Vilmos Bárdosi (ed.), *Magyar szólástár. Szólások, helyzetmondatok, közmondások, értelmező és fogalomköri szatira* and Tamás Forgács, *Magyar szólások és közmondások szótára. Mai nyelvünk állandósult szókapcsolatai példákkal szemlélítve*. The definition of the phraseological unit and particular decisions regarding which items are phraseological units and which are not comply with those presented by the authors of the above mentioned dictionaries.

The analysis of the material gathered for the needs of the present paper shows that a great similarity is observed between Polish and Hungarian, although the languages are genetically distant. The lists of verbal constituents appearing most frequently in phraseological units of both languages are very similar to each other and the one of equivalent Polish and Hungarian phraseological units is surprisingly long. It should be emphasized that in the paper the problem of comparability of Polish and Hungarian phraseology was discussed on relatively small material, which does not allow for formulating uncompromising conclusions.



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## **Motivation of Idioms and Proverbs in a Contrastive Perspective**

**Abstract.** The present paper concerns the cognitive, cultural and rhetorical motivations behind idioms and proverbs. Our aim is to shed light on the presence of cultural markers in these phraseological and paremiological units. Working from some examples from English, French, German and Russian, we will analyze the driving forces underlying familiar idioms. How are idioms motivated? How did they appear and why do they exist? Are they grounded in cultural details or are they rather the result of semantic reinterpretation?

The analysis will begin by defining the terms to be used in the paper: phraseological unit, collocation, idiom, formulae, culture, figurative and literal meaning, transparent and opaque images, motivation and semantic reinterpretation. First, transparent phraseological units will be confronted in the four languages studied. We will reflect upon the reasons for the existence of such similar idioms in different languages. Then, attention will be drawn to idioms referred to as opaque. What are the reasons for opacity? Is there any rule by which we might be able to predict the evolution of the idiom? Some conclusions will be drawn at the end.

**Key words:** *culture, figurative, motivation, opacity, transparency*

### **1. Introduction**

The study concerns phraseological units containing domestic animals. Four European languages are compared: English, French, German and Russian. Two main sources are used to build the database, each of equal importance. Research is conducted in parallel using dictionaries (monolingual and bilingual, synchronic and diachronic, paper and digital) and a corpus of original texts. The results obtained were approved or refuted by native speakers.

Constructed upon words, phraseological units can be easy to recognize; in this case we refer to them as **transparent units** such as *to eat like a pig*, *a dog's life* and *beastly cold*. If we take the comparison *to eat like a pig*, even if we have never seen this animal eating, we can imagine that it eats sloppily, because our parents, perhaps, one day compared a little boy who had bad table manners with this animal.

In cases when words acquire characteristics far removed from the prime material, we talk about **opaque units**, such as *pig-headed*, *to live high on the hog* and *dog's bollocks*. The motivation of these units seems to be different from that of transparent units. If *to eat like a pig* is easy to understand, the expression *pig-headed* is less transparent. The connection between a pig's head and stubbornness is not easy to find. The difficulty is that the image is not clearly perceivable. As in cooking, you must be a fine connoisseur to recognize the ingredients of the plate. Applied to phraseology that means that one should not trust the popular etymology, but conduct diachronic research.

Our main postulate is the following: Language is part of culture and culture is part of language; the two elements therefore evolve together.

## 2. Definition of the notions studied

We here understand **phraseology** in the widest sense: we include

- 1) collocations such as *beastly cold*, *like cat and dog* and *to play cat and mouse*;
- 2) idioms, for example *to have a frog in one's throat*, *to bell the cat* and *to rain cats and dogs*;
- 3) formulae such as *When the cat's away, the mice will play*; *It's enough to make a cat laugh* and *Curiosity killed the cat*.

Since the comparison is multilingual, we also study one-word metaphors such as (Germ.) *Angsthase* (lit. frightened rabbit) and *Pechvogel* (lit. misfortunate bird). Our definition is practically-oriented, it concerns every image-related expression: as soon as a word or a group of words has an image component and a figurative meaning, we consider it to be a **phraseological unit**.

Idioms containing an image in their structure are referred to as figurative units. The meaning of an idiom is not semantically neutral and purely functional, as is the case for most words. Words point out the denotation, the nominative aspect of things, while phraseological units are **figurative**; they are based on connotations. As well as their semantic meaning, phraseological units have an obvious emotional loading: they pass a judgment, an evaluation or express an emotion. We consider words as the prime material and phraseological units as the secondary, finished products.

The terms **image**, **motivation** and **semantic reinterpretation** are used in accordance with the work of Dmitrij Dobrovol'skij and Elisabeth Piirainen *Figurative Language: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Perspectives* (Dobrovol'skij, Piirainen 2005).

According to these two researchers, "by **image** component we understand a specific conceptual structure mediating between the lexical structure and the actual meaning of figurative units." (Dobrovol'skij, Piirainen 2005: 14) The literal meaning of an animal is the same in all languages, while its figurative meaning may differ.

The word *pig*, for example, besides its literal meaning 'domesticated animal', also has a figurative one, founded on connotations of dirtiness, a rough manner and primitiveness: (Eng.) *to eat like a pig*, *to act like a pig* and *dirty pig*.

Phraseological units which are said to be identical have no absolute equivalents in other languages. The reasons for phraseological and paremiological relativity are numerous. One of them is in their motivation.

We use the term **motivation** to speak about factors underlying the inner form of a phraseological unit. According to Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen,

in general, the analysis at the level of "rich images" involves some operations with the slots of a given frame or script. In case of **metaphorical motivation** two frames or scripts are involved. In case of **metonymical motivation** cognitive processing operates upon one frame or script. (Dobrovol'skij, Piirainen 2005: 164)

The word *duck*, for example, has its primarily literal reading 'a domestic animal'; it can be also used to describe something clumsy and inelegant. To speak about an old French car, the Citroën 2 Chevaux (2CV), German language uses the figurative meaning of the word *Ente* (lit. duck):

(1) (Germ.) *Ente* (lit. duck).

In German it is a metaphor: this car looks like a duck, it is lumbering and graceless. For the same car, French people will say:

(2) (Fr.) *deux-chevaux* (lit. two horses).

The French equivalent is founded rather on a metonymy: the word *horse* is commonly adopted to designate the car's power. However, the French car does not really have the power of two horses. It is so named because of its fiscal horse power, a unit of governmental tax, imposed upon vehicles before 2001. A fiscal horse is a ratio calculated according to CO<sub>2</sub> emission and engine power.

Both motivations stem from the ability of the human brain to effect conceptual operations. According to the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor, metaphor is one of the basic principles of human cognition, it is not matter of language, but rather of thought.

Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen stipulate that "This means that metaphor is not based upon similarity between source and target concepts, but on people's ability to structure one conceptual domain in terms of another one." (2005: 122) So, "**semantic reinterpretation** taking place in the process of creating figurative units is a result of the interaction of knowledge structures. (2005: 165)

According to Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen, the motivational links between literal and figurative readings are provided by an **indexation** of a notion in question:

The motivation links are provided neither by similarity between certain elements of the conceptual structure represented by the literal reading and corresponding elements of the figurative reading (iconic motivation), nor by a culture-specific convention (symbol-based motivation). Instead, these links are provided by an indexation of the notion in question. By indexation we mean something similar to Piere's index. Remember his well-known example: If you see smoke, there must be fire somewhere. Hence, it is neither similarity nor convention which provides a motivation link, but just the pointing to a symptom. (Dobrovolskij, Piirainen 2005: 88)

Sometimes performing conceptual operations is not sufficient to understand an idiom. English expressions like *to live the life of Riley* and *in a catch 22 situation* present difficulties to a stranger because of the differences in cultural backgrounds. It therefore seems to be important to take the culture into account.

According to Veronika Teliya,

By culture, we understand the ability of members of speech community to orientate themselves with respect to social, moral, political, and so on values in their empirical and mental experience. Cultural categories (such as Time and Space, Good and Evil, etc.) are conceptualized in the subconscious knowledge of standards, stereotypes, mythologies, rituals, general habits, and other cultural patterns. (Dobrovol'skij, Piirainen 2005: 213)

### 3. Cognitive motivation

#### 3.1. Everyday observations

We will start the case studies by those which are easiest to understand for a European speaker: transparent images. The connection between the meaning expressed by a transparent unit and the referent to which this cha-



racteristic belongs is usually easily understood as in *to play cat and mouse*, *milk cow*, *gooseflesh* and *as strong as a horse*. Indeed, interlingual differences are not significant: referents are the same or slightly different.

It seems that generally, transparent expressions are founded on everyday observations and appear independently in different languages. The reason seems to be the following: evident characteristics (especially physical) are noticed by all people, the links is metaphorical or metonymical in nature and the expression reflects a real state of affairs. Transparent phraseological units have a clearly perceivable referent, namely an animal. On the one hand, it is motivated by the image of the animal and on the other by all that this animal evokes in our imagination. That is why we think that many of them are cognitively motivated.

Let us consider four proverbs:

- (3) (Eng.) *When the cat is away, the mice will play*;
- (4) (Fr.) *Quand le chat n'est pas là, les souris dansent* (lit. When the cat is away, mice dance);
- (5) (Germ.) *Wenn die Katze aus dem Haus ist, tanzen die Mäuse* (lit. When the cat is away, mice dance);
- (6) (Rus.) *Без kota мышам масленица* (lit. Without the cat mice celebrate Mardi Gras).

The opposition *cat* vs. *mouse* is universal. The referents *cat* and *mouse* are present in all proverbs and their meaning 'when the superior is away, subordinates will enjoy their freedom' is the same. French and German mice have fun dancing, whereas their English counterparts play. Even if the mice's way of making the most of their temporary freedom in the Russian example is a little more precise because Russian mice celebrate Mardi Gras, this difference is in fact insignificant, European speakers have no difficulty understanding its meaning.

### 3.2. Realities

Apart from everyday observations, there is another type of expressions with cognitive motivation, **realities**. The simplest way to create phraseological units is to use realities, close to their culture, for example, those present in nature.

A crow is often encountered in Russian nature, folklore, literature and Krylov's fables. In Russian phraseology, crows are also prevalent:

- (7) (Rus.) *Пуганная ворона и куста боится* (lit. A crow once frightened is afraid of a bush) for 'someone who has been hurt will be much more careful the next time';

- (8) (Rus.) *Не бывать вороне соколом* (lit. A crow would not become a falcon) 'if one has no abilities, he will never attain success whatever he does';
- (9) (Rus.) *Ворона в павлиньих перьях* (lit. A crow in peacock feather) 'someone dressed in gaudy clothes, hoping to hide his usual real nature';
- (10) (Rus.) *Ворон считать* (lit. To count crows) 'to be bored';
- (11) (Rus.) *Белая ворона* (lit. A white crow) 'someone whose clothes and/or attitudes are very different from the others'.

It seems that the last fixed expression *белая ворона* (lit. a white crow) is an oxymoron: two normally contradictory terms are opposed. It is based on a deliberated choice of the white color for a crow, usually black (thanks to Elisabeth Piirainen's remark). Based on a bird which is widespread in Russia, it is not a simple metaphor. The white color in *белая ворона* (lit. a white crow), which usually has a positive value in Christian culture, receives negative loading in this Russian idiom. Indeed, the meaning of this idiom is the same as the English *a black sheep* (these idioms will be analyzed below).

In Russian everyday life, the horseradish is widely used to add flavor to dishes and also it is presented in idioms. We can observe that Russians use *a horseradish* in the three next expressions:

- (12) (Rus.) *На кой хрен* (lit. For what horseradish) meaning 'useless';
- (13) (Rus.) *Хрен с ним* (lit. Horseradish is with him) used for 'something or someone what we don't regret';
- (14) (Rus.) *Хрен знает* (lit. Horseradish knows) another way of saying 'nobody knows'.

In French cuisine, wine is frequent not only at all tables, but also in phraseology:

- (15) (Fr.) *Quand le vin est tiré, il faut le boire* (lit. When the wine is pulled, you must drink it) 'if you begin an action, you have to finish it';
- (16) (Fr.) *Mettre de l'eau dans son vin* (lit. To put water in his wine) 'to lower his demands';
- (17) (Fr.) *Etre entre deux vins* (lit. To be between two wines) 'to be a little drunk'.

The English love of plants is well known, English people refer to grass in phraseology:

- (18) (Eng.) *The grass is always greener on the other side* 'what others have is always better than what we have';
- (19) (Eng.) *To live in clover* 'to live luxuriously';
- (20) (Eng.) *Pigs in clover* 'extremely content'.

## 4. Cultural motivation

### 4.1. Conventions

Besides cognitive motivation, we distinguish cultural motivation, based on the conventions, known within a linguistic community.

The word *dog*, for example, has a figurative meaning of disdain, dishonesty and cruelty, as we can see in the following idioms:

- (21) (Eng.) *A dog's life* 'a miserable existence';
- (22) (Eng.) *Dirty dog* 'a despicable and contemptible person';
- (23) (Eng.) *It's (a case of) dog eat dog* 'in the world people are selfish and fight for themselves, hurting others'.

*Eggs*, for example, symbolize new life. It is interesting to observe its image in three following phrases:

- (24) (Eng.) *Don't teach your grandmother to suck eggs*;
- (25) (Germ.) *Das Ei will klüger sein als die Henne* (lit. The egg wants to be more intelligent than chicken);
- (26) (Rus.) *Яйца курицу не учат* (lit. Eggs should not teach chicken).

These three proverbs are not equivalent on any levels. Moreover, they are never proposed as equivalents in dictionaries. However, all of them mean something like 'people shouldn't try to teach someone who has experience or is an expert in that area'. In the Russian and German idioms the egg is a subject doing an action; it is considered less experienced than the chicken and therefore should not question the chicken's decisions. The English expression is directly addressed to the listener, where the skilled model is not a chicken, but a grandmother. The English egg is only an object, so it is not the main referent in the expression, it accomplishes the secondary function. However, despite not being the principal idiom's referent, it contributes to its meaning.

In European countries black usually has a figurative meaning of misfortune and symbolize mourning, as indicated by the following idioms:

- (27) (Eng.) *A black sheep* is used for 'an odd member of the family';
- (28) (Fr.) *Etre la bête noire de quelqu'un* (lit. To be somebody's black beast) is used for 'a person who is hated and persecuted by another person';
- (29) (Rus.) *Чёрная кошка пробежала* (lit. A black cat run in front of him) is said about 'someone who has no luck' or about 'a dispute between two people'.

However, in an idiom, all words being tied together; it is difficult to consider one component without taking its other components into account. Sometimes, several motivations are tied, as in *a black sheep*, where black is a symbol and the whole expression has a biblical origin.

## 4.2. Literature

Idioms containing a proper noun have different motivations: they can come from history, literature and songs. The particularity of translating these idioms is a systematic image loss. In fact, it is difficult to translate proper nouns in following examples:

- (30) (Eng.) *to grin like a Cheshire cat* 'to have a broad especially self-satisfied smile';
- (31) (Eng.) *to fight like Kilkenny cats* 'to fight cruelly, till the end';
- (32) (Eng.) *he will never set the Thames on fire* 'ironic expression used for someone dull and spiritless';
- (33) (Eng.) *to live/lead the life of Riley* 'to lead a very comfortable life';
- (34) (Fr.) *mouton de Panurge* (lit. Panurge's sheep) 'a person following the group without any critical thought';
- (35) (Rus.) *куда Макаp телят не гонял* (lit. where Makar did not shepherd his sheep) 'very far';
- (36) (Rus.) *Любопытной Варваре на базаре нос оторвали* (lit. Varvara the curious tore off his nose at the market) 'expression used for someone who asks indiscreet questions';
- (37) (Rus.) *при царе Горохе* (lit. in tsar Pea time) 'very long ago';
- (38) (Rus.) *драть как сидорову козу* (lit. to skin like Sidor's goat) 'to beat somebody for his faults'.

The proper noun is often perceived as a historical person by a non-specialist speaker. Indeed, one has to conduct advanced etymological research to find the real provenance of the idioms. But even if he finds the origin, it can be different from one source to another. An example of this is the American expression *to live the life of Riley*, used for someone who 'leads a very comfortable life, possibly living on someone else's money'. There are a lot of theories, but it is difficult to say which one is true. Each one is plausible, but has to be investigated in detail. Let us consider some of them.

According to Laurence Urdang and his co-authors (Urdang 1999), this idiom originates from a comic song written by Pat Rooney in the 1880s. Describing what Riley would do if he suddenly came into money, the song says

Is that Mr. Riley, can anyone tell?  
Is that Mr. Riley that owns the hotel?  
Well, if that's Mr. Riley they speak of so highly,  
Upon my soul, Riley, you're doing quite well.

Another version of the genesis of the idiom alludes to the American poet James Whitcomb Riley (1849–1916) who wrote sentimental poems about

young boys lazing around – wandering about barefoot, swimming and fishing. “He was having a wonderful time. He was living the life of Riley.”

In addition, the Internet source <http://askville.amazon.com/Living-life-Riley/AnswerViewer.do?requestId=8554604> proposes three following origins:

The name Riley is of Irish and Gaelic origin. It means ‘valiant’ and ‘courageous’. The meaning behind the name Riley begins when the name originally appeared in Gaelic as O’Raghailligh, which means descendant of Raghallach.

According to the same source, it could have an Irish origin: after the Riley clan consolidated its hold on a country caravan, they minted their own money accepted as legal tender even in England. These coins called O’Rileys and Reillys became synonymous with a rich person and a gentleman who spent freely was said to be “living on his Reillys”.

The last origin says that Riley was a British motorcar and bicycle manufacturer from 1890. Today, the company Riley is owned by BMW.

Most of these etymologies are not scientific, the first version seems to be the right one. As for the Riley trademark, it is not excluded that thanks to the song, the name of Riley became in a certain way a symbol of a carefree and comfortable way of living. Perhaps, the use of this proper noun, reinterpreted as a symbol of luxury, became a commercial trick to flatter car owners.

## 5. Rethorical motivation

### 5.1. Juxtaposition

There are also idioms where the animal is simply chosen to impress or surprise the listener; words without any connection are juxtaposed:

- (39) (Eng.) *mutton dressed as a lamb*,<sup>1</sup> used for “a mature woman dressed as a young woman, trying to look younger”;
- (40) (Fr.) *comme une poule qui a trouvé un couteau* (lit. like a chicken which found a knife) used for ‘someone who has discovered something he doesn’t need and is very astonished’;
- (41) (Fr.) *aller à quelqu’un comme un tablier à une vache* (lit. to suit to somebody like an apron to a cow) for ‘clothes that make somebody look ridiculous’;

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Beci Clayton’s remark.

- (42) (Fr.) *comme des guêtres à un lapin* (lit. like leg warmers to a rabbit) is the synonym of the previous expression;
- (43) (Rus.) *бред сивой кобылы* (lit. the delirium of a grey mare) which means 'extreme nonsense'.

In fact, all these expressions are based upon words which do not belong to the same semantic field. The Russian idiom *бред сивой кобылы* (lit. the delirium of a grey mare) meaning 'extreme nonsense' raises three questions: the first is why the referent is specifically a female horse, the second is why this animal is grey and the third is: is the term of delirium applicable to animals? The same opposition is apparent in other idioms: in reality the French chicken would be no more astonished to find a pen or a plant than a knife,<sup>2</sup> and nobody has ever seen a French cow wearing an apron or a French rabbit wearing leg warmers. All these idioms are aimed to impress the hearer through the juxtaposition of a well-known animal's image with things that animal cannot do.

## 5.2. Assonance

Some expressions are based on assonance, where the rhyme is more important than the animal itself:

- (44) (Fr.) *Qui vole un œuf vole un bœuf* (lit. who steals an egg steals a bull) 'stealing is a crime, no matter how small the object. If you can steal a little thing, you can steal anything';
- (45) (Rus.) *Суп с котом* (lit. the soup with cat) which is an impolite answer to a question 'Что потом?' (lit. What is next?) when this question seems inappropriate to the speaker.

We can observe the rhyme between the two couples of words: *œuf* vs. *bœuf* and *котом* vs. *номом*. In these expressions the animal image is not the principal referent; it is the rhyme that plays the most important role.

## 5.3. Loan word

Expressions which seem to be opaque today were motivated in the past, but this motivation is not visible from the synchronic point of view. The false etymology is often justified by the symbolism of the animal in question. In all of the previous idioms the referent is perceivable in a certain manner. However there are idioms where the animal is not real, it is only a loan word. In this case, the animal is a false referent; it is fictitious in the sense that it exists only in our imagination.

<sup>2</sup> Anyway, do chicken not always look surprised?

In the following examples the contemporary form of expression contains the image of an animal due to a misunderstanding or a misinterpretation of another word. Two cases are possible: a word stays and obtains another meaning or a word takes on another form and conserves its meaning.

There are many expressions like this in each language:

- (46) (Eng.) *the dog's bollocks* for 'the best thing ever';
- (47) (Eng.) *to go the whole hog* with its signification 'to do something completely, to its limits';
- (48) (Eng.) *to think to be the cat's whiskers* (*pa(y)jamas ; meow*) used for someone 'who think he is the best';
- (49) (Fr.) *avoir d'autres chats à fouetter* (lit. to have other cats to whip) meaning 'to have other things to do';
- (50) (Fr.) *prendre un canard* (lit. to take a duck) is used to designate 'a lump of sugar with a liquor';
- (51) (Fr.) *manger de la vache enragée* (lit. to eat rabid cow) used for 'someone who had real difficulties in his life';
- (52) (Fr.) *parler cheval* (lit. to talk horse) which means 'not to talk correctly';
- (53) (Fr.) *copains comme cochons* (lit. friends like pigs) employed to talk about 'a very close friendship';
- (54) (Germ.) *die Kuh vom Eis bringen (kriegen)* (lit. to bring a cow on the ice) signifies 'to resolve a difficult problem';
- (55) (Rus.) *заморить червячка* (approx. to underfeed the worm) a pleasant verbal expression for 'to have a little snack';
- (56) (Rus.) *кому под хвост* (lit. under the cat's tail) means that 'all the work was done for nothing'.

Let us consider some of them.

For example, in the French idiom *parler cheval* (lit. to talk horse) the word *cheval* (lit. horse) is a deformation of a Quebec word *joual* used for the French dialect in Quebec (Rey, Chantereau 1989).

Another French idiom *copains comme cochons* (lit. friends like pigs), according to the French lexicographer Alain Rey, *cochon* (lit. pig) is a manipulation of a Latin word *socius*. Neither the horse, nor the pig are not real, they are merely a misunderstanding.

Two English idioms *to go the whole hog* and *to think to be the cat's whiskers* (*pa(y)jamas ; meow*) are based on a loan word. According to Anthony Bulger book (1999), the English *hog* is a coin. The author explains that in Ireland a shilling and in America a ten-cent piece was known as *a hog* and if someone spent all the money the whole hog, it was gone. Nowadays, it means 'to spend all the money and all effort to reach a goal'.

As for the second English idiom *to think to be the cat's whiskers*, it was invented by Tad Dorgan, a cartoon writer in the twenties of the 1920s (Bulger 1999).

The *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrases and Fables* (Room 1995) says the English *whiskers* in *to think to be the cat's whiskers* are metal pieces of a radio set which when in contact with a crystal component produce sounds.

The last idiom is German:

(57) (Germ.) *das kann kein Schwein lesen* (lit. no pig can read it), used for 'unreadable and inaccurate writing'.

According to popular etymology, *Schwein* (lit. pig) is a transformation of a proper name *Swyn*.

There are two particularities for these examples. First, they are difficult to translate word for word and, second, their etymology varies from one dictionary to another.

## 6. Some thoughts about the idioms' motivation

Sometimes, the idiom's motivation seems to be logical.

The notion of trust and friendship relies on the reference of the stealing in two languages, English and German:

(58) (Eng.) *as thick as thieves*;

(59) (Germ.) *mit jemandem Pferde stehlen können* (lit. to can steal horses with somebody).

Indeed, apparently, thieves must really trust each other to commit crimes.

To talk about the notion of *truth*, English and French make reference to the image of the eye:

(60) (Eng.) *In a pig's eye!* 'not at all, under no condition';

(61) (Fr.) *Mon œil !* (lit. My eye!) expression meaning 'I don't trust what you are saying'.

These two expressions are used by someone who thinks that something is not true. It is not a simple accident that two languages have chosen the eye referent to express distrust. Indeed, perception of the world is made through this organ and then the information is interpreted by the brain.

The eye reference is also logical in the next two expressions. One can easily see the astonishment because of the appearance of eyes popping out of the head. In fact, astonishment is recognizable by the mimics:

(62) (Eng.) *Like a (dying) duck in a thunderstorm*;

(63) (Fr.) *Faire des yeux de merlan frit* (lit. To make fried whiting eyes).



Besides transparent idioms, there are a number of them, where the figurativeness is opaque. For example, to speak about 'a fearful person', the German language will use an image of hare's pads, while the French will compare a fearful person with a wet chicken:

(64) (Germ.) *Hasenfuß* (lit. hare's pads);

(65) (Fr.) *poule mouillée* (lit. wet chicken).

For something "easily", English, French and Russian will refer to recipes. Soup, cake or pie<sup>3</sup> (English), cake (French) and steamed turnip (Russian) are quasi-synonyms within the next idioms:

(66) (Eng.) *duck soup*;

(67) (Eng.) *easy as pie*;

(68) (Fr.) *c'est du gâteau* (lit. it is a piece of cake);

(69) (Rus.) *это проще пареной репы* (lit. it is simpler than a steamed turnip).

Even if these idioms are equivalent to a certain degree, bilingual dictionaries do not suggest them to the user. However, it seems that not only their meaning corresponds, but the evocative image is preserved.

The following two idioms present interest:

(70) (Rus.) *Куры не клюют* (lit. Chickens don't peck) for 'to have something in abundance (generally about the money)';

(71) (Eng.) *Chicken feed* meaning a 'too little money'.

Only the image is the same; neither the meaning nor the inner form are identical, but the connotation of chicken feed and money in both cases seems to be significant. If in the Russian expression the matter is about 'an amount of money, too big for someone', the English idiom has the opposite meaning – 'not to have enough money'. Hence, these two idioms are quasi-antonyms. The English expression is a metaphorical transfer from poor quality grain and insufficient quantity delivered to the birds. The popular etymology of the Russian equivalent is based on the image of a great amount of food, too big to be eaten even by chickens, which are always hungry.

There is no rule for creating idioms. Sometimes what seems to be logical in one language is not in another language. Animals' names are not given an equal value, which varies according to the different languages. The reason for it does not always lie in animals specific to a given country.

In English slang policemen are figuratively named pigs,

(72) (Eng.) *pigs*,

while in French they received the figurative name of *chicken*:

(73) (Fr.) *poulet* (lit. chicken).

<sup>3</sup> Thanks to Beci Clayton's remark.

The French *poulet* (lit. chicken) is explained by the shape of policemen's hats, which look like cockerel's crest. Is it only a metonymical transfer?

In French, to speak about this bird when it is alive, two names are used: *poule* and *coq*. When this animal is in your plate, it is named *poulet*. The person eating the dish does not know if the *poulet* is *he* or *she*. The human eating this animal doesn't feel any feeling about the animal. Perhaps, is it like with policemen and policewomen who are in some way asexual when they are working and people do not respect them very much? It is probable that metonymical transfer is reinforced by a metaphorical transfer.<sup>4</sup>

The following examples demonstrate that some images are automatic and unconscious; they are in some ways both hidden and opaque:

(74) (Fr.) *copains comme cochons* (lit. friends like pigs);

(75) (Fr.) *vivre comme coq en pâte* (lit. to live like a cockerel in a pastry).

These two expressions are a little strange: the first one is used for 'very good friends', although do pigs really have any notion of friendship? Usually, pigs have the connotation of being dirty, and they acquire the connotation of friendship in this idiom. The second is used to speak about 'someone who needs nothing and lives in very good conditions'. Are cockerels happy when they are going to be eaten?

## 7. Interlingual homonymy

The previous examples show that languages use different referents to name the same thing. It is rarer when the same referent is used to name different things. We call this phenomenon **interlingual homonymy**; in fact these idioms are similar to false friends. The following idioms show that the motivation may vary in different languages.

The first example is the French nominal expression and its German non-equivalent:

(76) (Fr.) *avoir une fièvre de cheval* (lit. to have horse's fever);

(77) (Germ.) *im Pferdefieber sein* (lit. to have horse's fever).

Although the image produced by these two expressions is the same, the meaning is different. While the French expression means 'to have a high body temperature', the German one is used for 'a person who is fond of horses'. In French, *de cheval* (lit. horse's) is simply an intensifier: it can be replaced by *very high*. In German, it is a metaphor.

<sup>4</sup> By the way, the feminine form exists for *poulet*. It is used to speak about a young woman who is not much respected and considered unattractive.

The second example is another French expression and its Russian non-equivalent:

(78) (Fr.) *poule mouillé* (lit. a wet chicken);

(79) (Rus.) *как мокрая курица* (lit. like a wet chicken).

The form of two expressions is not exactly the same, but the image is. The French one is opaque, it is used to name 'a fearful person' and the Russian one is literal comparison, it is used for 'someone who is wet'. While in Russian the adjective *мокрая* (lit. wet) has its literal meaning, the French adjective *mouillé* (lit. wet) carries the figurative meaning of 'fear'.

The third example concerns a pair of German and Russian idioms:

(80) (Germ.) *einen Bock schießen* (lit. to kill the goat);

(81) (Rus.) *забивать козла* (lit. to kill the goat).

The German designates 'to make a mistake', while the Russian expression means 'to win a game of dominoes'. The German idiom becomes clear if you know that the worst shot was rewarded with a goat (Wermke 2001). The Russian idiom has a lot of popular etymologies.

The fourth example is the French expression:

(82) (Fr.) *faire un canard* (lit. to make a duck)

and the correspondent non-equivalent

(83) (Eng.) *to make a duck*.

When in French it means 'to play a false musical note', the English meaning is 'to score nothing'.

The last example, the French idiom:

(84) (Fr.) *mouton à cinq pattes* (lit. a five legged sheep)

is used for 'someone who has rare, exceptional qualities'. In this expression, the fifth leg has a positive value in French, while in the Russian expression it has a negative value. It seems that the fifth leg is useless for dogs:

(85) (Rus.) *нужен как собаке пятая нога* (lit. to need something/someone like a dog the fifth leg) that means 'something of completely useless, impeding'.

Idioms (76)–(85) show that contradictory meanings may have similar referents. They show that sometimes the motivation is not the same in different languages.

The first thing we do when learning a foreign language is to search for similarities with our mother tongue. Interlingual homonyms may be a source of misunderstanding.

The following French words:

(86) (Fr.) *puce* (lit. a flea) for a little girl;

(87) (Fr.) *loup* (lit. a wolf) for a little boy.

are affectionate names for little children. A flea can hardly be considered as

something which evokes positive feelings. Also, the image of a vicious wolf and a gentle little gentle boy is not easy to understand. These two French names can at best astonish a foreigner and at worst result in a comprehension contrary to its real meaning.

In fact, sometimes the meaning of an idiom is contrary to what someone might expect. The idiom's image and its meaning are in a **conflict** in the sense that they are opposite to that which is suggested by their components. The logic behind the expression seems strange, as for the French (88) (Fr.) *faire un malheur* (lit. to do a misfortune) 'to be very successful'.

A foreigner will first think about something negative and bad. But in spite of all expectations, it means 'to be very successful'.

The English expression:

(89) (Eng.) *dog's bollocks*,  
provokes negative thoughts, but in reality it is applied to refer to something what is 'very good'.

## 8. Conclusions

Idioms are the result of the mechanism by which humans make use of the animal world in order to describe their physical, moral, social or cultural state. Idioms encapsulate knowledge, whether it is true or not. They contain what we know about an animal or what we think to be true about it. This transposition comes from a cultural code of a given historical period.

We believe that when we say something, it is because we are members of a definite speech community. We are part of history and language is like a lens through which we see the world, but this lens can be removed.

The ideas presented in this paper are only the beginning of this research. There are still a great number of issues that require clarification.

We saw that the motivation of transparent phraseological units can be explained by semantic reinterpretation. We also saw that the motivation of certain units is more complex because they cannot be understood without some basic foundation, without knowledge of the culture. We believe that the inner form, the image, laying down the meaning can be explained in terms of semantic reinterpretation if the culture is taken into account. That is why they should be studied extensively in order to explain how the literal and the figurative meanings are connected.

The link between meaning and culture is extremely tricky to observe. The first difficulty is that in a phraseological unit referent, the animal is in the background, while the impact, produced by the image of this animal is

brought to the fore. The second is that experiences and knowledge vary from person to person; they have no precise boundaries between persons within one speech community, nor between different speech communities. The third problem is a lack of reliable information in dictionaries.

Only when it is possible to encompass all human beings will we be able to arrive at objective conclusions. A detailed description of each idiom is necessary to draw pertinent conclusions. In order to understand the ways that one language motivates an idiom, it may indeed be helpful to consider several languages.

Languages focus on different referents. As a rule, languages emphasize certain features of our everyday life, while others are completely ignored. We assume that those features which are highlighted are specific to a speech community. It would seem that it is impossible to predict which of these attributes will be emphasized. It is just like recipes in Europe and United States: the measurements are different, the result is the same, different processes yield the same result.

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## Motywacja idiomów i przysłów w perspektywie kontrastywnej

### Streszczenie

Artykuł zawiera omówienie kognitywnej, kulturowej i retorycznej motywacji idiomów i przysłów. Celem autorki jest ukazanie nacechowania kulturowego badanych jednostek. Analiza obejmuje wybrane przykłady związków angielskich, francuskich, niemieckich i rosyjskich. Jednostki przedstawione są w ujęciu kontrastywnym, co umożliwia wskazanie podobieństw i różnic, występujących między jednostkami używanymi w poszczególnych językach.



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## *The sky is the limit –* **The influence of English on German phraseology**

**Abstract.** English has become the lingua franca of the modern world. The high degree of exposure to English in popular culture and the media speeds up the pace of lexical borrowing. The impact is also felt in the field of phraseology. This article is based on the corpus of the *Institut für deutsche Sprache* in Mannheim, Germany (COSMAS 2) and a corpus of German newspaper articles (1997–2010). It reveals that English is now making an important contribution in disseminating phraseological units, especially proverbs, clichés and catchphrases. These are used both in their original English forms and as loan translations. Furthermore, it has been observed that phraseological units coming from English are often creatively modified in the German language. The distribution of Anglo-American phrases and proverbs is not restricted to the German language. Phraseologists should pay attention to these developments and engage in cooperative studies on the topic.

**Key words:** *phraseology, German, English, Anglicism, loan translation, proverb, catchphrase*

### **1. Introduction**

It is a truism to say that English has become the dominant means of international communication. The language has spread so widely around the world that its native speakers are now outnumbered by its non-native speakers. Due to its role as a lingua franca English is a major source of language influence worldwide. The enormous impact of English on the German language can be felt across all levels of the linguistic system: in morphology, syntax as well as in the field of text and genre. The most widespread type of influence from English on German, however, is lexical borrowing. English loans (e.g. *Coach, Log-in, Lounge*) can be encountered in all forms of modern cultural and scientific communication. In addition, hybrids (e.g.

*fairerweise* 'in a fair way'), pseudo-Anglicisms (e.g. *Handy* 'mobile phone') and loan translations (calques) (e.g. *Gipfel[konferenz]* summit) are ubiquitous phenomena.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the topic of English influences on the German language. Among the most important investigations are the large-scale descriptive studies by Carstensen/Galinsky (1963), Carstensen (1965), Fink (1970), Viereck (1980), Yang (1990), Lehnert (1991), Glahn (2002), and Onysko (2007).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, a number of lexicographical publications, especially the dictionaries by Carstensen/Busse/Schmude (1993–1996) and Görlach (2001) should be mentioned. Recent studies by Busse (2005) and Onysko (2007) on Anglicisms in German provided evidence of a slight increase in the number of English words. However, they did not support claims for a massive influx of English words and a detrimental impact on present-day German. This is especially interesting against the background of a polarity that exists between academic and public views on the topic (cf. Onysko 2009). Whereas linguists regard language as an open system and contact-induced language change as a natural process, the general public is often concerned about the dominant role of English, which they consider to be a threat to other languages and cultures. Some people, mainly influenced by purist tendencies, feel the need to protect the German language against the infiltration by English words.<sup>2</sup>

This article focuses on phraseology. The influences of English on the German phrasicon<sup>3</sup> have not received much scholarly attention so far. The studies mentioned above concentrate mainly on simple and complex words. However, two researchers should be mentioned in this context. Firstly, Herbst (1994), in his study of film dubbing, pointed to the hidden influences that are caused by literal translations of English phrases and proverbs. Secondly, Mieder (2004a, 2004b, 2004c) examined the spread of Anglo-American proverbs, such as *The early bird catches the worm*, *An Apple a day keeps the doctor away* and *Don't put all your eggs in one basket* in the German language.

The present study includes investigations into both sentence-like units (such as proverbs) and word groups. The paper starts out with a brief description of the corpora that it is based on. Section 3 gives a definition of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the annotated bibliography by Görlach (2002).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. The publications of the *Verein Deutsche Sprache* (Association of the German Language) ([www.vds-ev.de](http://www.vds-ev.de)).

<sup>3</sup> I.e. the inventory of idioms and phrases, the set of phraseological units in the lexicon of a language community.



the phraseological unit (PU) and provides information about subtypes and properties of PUs. Section 4 is concerned with English influences on German phraseology, concentrating on borrowings in their original English forms and loan translations. Section 5 comments on the use of these imports in texts and their impact on the German language. A brief summary follows this section and concludes the paper.

## Data and method

This study utilises corpus-based approaches. Steyer (2004: 93) introduced the term consultation paradigm (*Konsultationsparadigma*) to describe the method that a corpus is used to obtain data which test a hypothesis that was made about a PU previously. This approach was adopted here: A group of expressions considered to be significant were identified in the corpus of the *Institut für Deutsche Sprache (IDS)* in Mannheim (COSMAS 2). COSMAS 2 is the largest publicly available corpus of the German language. It contains, in the part that can be publicly accessed (<http://www.ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2/>), 5,300 million words and is based on a vast variety of different genres. In addition, the data on potential phraseological Anglicisms were verified by means of a corpus of German newspaper articles, which allows for an overview of changes in the past ten years.<sup>4</sup>

A number of studies conducted for several languages have shown that the average frequency of well-known PUs is very low in corpora (Moon 1998, Colson 2007). “[T]here are often wide discrepancies between implicit native-speaker knowledge of idioms, catchphrases, proverbs and other word-combinations and their frequency of occurrence in large-scale computer corpora” (Cowie 2003: 73). The frequencies of phraseological Anglicisms, i.e. of expressions that are currently still on their way to becoming established in the German language, will probably be even lower. These insights should be born in mind when we look at the numbers of occurrences in the corpora established for the PUs discussed in this paper (table 1).

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<sup>4</sup> The corpus of the German press that I used includes the following newspapers and magazines: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Der Spiegel*, *taz*, *stern*, *Bild*, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Berliner Zeitung*, *Die Welt*, *Das Neue Blatt*, *Die Bunte*, *Brigitte*, *Tagesspiegel*, *Hamburger Abendblatt*, *Wirtschaftswoche*, *Capital*, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, *Berliner Morgenpost*, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Focus*, *Die Woche*, *Geo*, *Thüringische Landeszeitung*, *Münchener Abendzeitung*, *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Zeit*, *Handelsblatt*, *Neue Post*, *MAX*, *Magdeburger Volksstimme*, *Super-Illu*, *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, *Weltwoche*, *Neues Deutschland*, *Financial Times Deutschland*, *Kölnler Stadtanzeiger*, *Rheinischer Merkur*, *Freies Wort Suhl*, *Blickpunkt Film*, *Kicker*.

## 2. Phraseology: definition and classification

Phraseological units are multi-word items, lexicalized phrases and sentences that are characterised by semantic and syntactic stability and to a great extent by idiomaticity. Because of their connotative features they fulfil various pragmatic functions in discourse (cf. Fiedler 2007).

There are different ways to classify phraseological units. When applying a structural-semantic classification, as is often done in phraseology, we find the following types of units to be especially relevant (cf. Burger et al. 2007; Gläser <sup>1</sup>1986; <sup>2</sup>1990):<sup>5</sup>

- (a) phraseological nominations (e.g. *white lie; spill the beans*)
- (b) binomials (e.g. *odds and ends; up and down*)
- (c) stereotyped comparisons (e.g. *eat like a horse; as dry as a bone*)
- (d) proverbs (e.g. *Let sleeping dogs lie; Every cloud has a silver lining*)
- (e) winged words/catch phrases (e.g. *Speak softly and carry a big stick; to boldly go where no man has gone before*)
- (f) routine formulae (e.g. *You're welcome; as it were*)

The phrasicon of a language is generally comprised of both a national (or culture-bound) and an international stock of items. In addition to expressions that are deeply embedded in the history of a speech community (such as *to send sb. to Coventry, catch-22* or *be green with envy* to take English examples) we find units that are widely known due to common sources, such as the Bible or antique mythology. Examples are *black sheep, Trojan horse, one hand washes the other* and *to swim with the tide*. Another important reason for transculturally common phraseological units is language contact. Language-contact phenomena in bilingual speakers have been described, for example, in the phraseology of the Sorbian language (Wölke 1995), in the German language spoken by a minority in Hungary (Földes 1996) as well as in Esperanto (Fiedler 1999). As the exposure to the English language is very high for the majority of people in Germany, through education, science, business, travel, television and popular media, etc., we can expect massive influences from this source language. Furthermore, the structural similarities of English and German make processes such as calquing relatively easy.

## 3. English phraseology in the German language

The extent of English influences in the field of phraseology can be seen in the fact that examples can be easily found for most of the conventional

<sup>5</sup> The examples in brackets were taken from dictionaries of idioms (cf. bibliography).

types of phraseological units mentioned above. Nominations such as *Hot Dog*, *Blind Date* abound in everyday life. A large number of them are terms to be found in domains such as banking and financial services (*Bad Bank*; *fauler Kredit*). We encounter binomials in tourism (*Bed and Breakfast*; *Fly & Drive*), in music and entertainment (*Rhythm and Beat*; *Meet and Greet*), and computer and communication technology (*Copy and Paste*; *Drag and Drop*). The use of proverbs such as *Der frühe Vogel fängt den Wurm* (cf. *The early bird catches the worm*) or *Man kann kein Omelett machen ohne Eier zu zerschlagen* (cf. *You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs*) is common in German TV productions today (cf. Fiedler 2006: 456). Many people can be found introducing their arguments with *Das Ding ist ...* (cf. *The thing is ...*). *Am Ende des Tages* (cf. *at the end of the day*) has meanwhile found its way into the dictionary *Duden 11. Redewendungen* (2002: 192).

When we look closer at these examples, we become aware of two main types of items. The first group includes imported lexical units which can therefore be easily identified as “foreign”. The other type lack salience, the items are formally unmarked, so that their English origin cannot be recognized by everybody. Although both types of transmission can occur simultaneously,<sup>6</sup> it seems to be useful to structure the discussion on English phraseological units in German according to these two basic types.

### 3.1. Borrowings used in their original English forms

This first group of phraseological Anglicisms<sup>7</sup> is made up of items whose form and content are borrowed from English. Their importation into the German language can be caused by denotative needs or communicative traditions in the sciences, as in the case of phraseological terms such as *coming of age*, *learning by doing*, and *Tit for Tat*. The use of others might be influenced by the symbolic function of the language. English is a marker of education, status, prestige and modern life. As Knapp (1991: 27) puts it: *Der Zeitgeist spricht Englisch, und mit ihm zu sein bringt affektiven Gewinn* (The zeitgeist speaks English, and to be part of it is emotionally profit-

<sup>6</sup> For instance, *out of the blue* is used both in English and as a loan translation (*aus dem Blauen heraus*). Another example is the proverb *An apple a day keeps the doctor away*, which can be found in English as well as in different translations (e.g. *Ein Apfel am Tag macht den Arzt arbeitslos*; *Ein Apfel am Tag hält den Arzt fern*).

<sup>7</sup> The term *Anglicism* is used here as an umbrella term to denote any instance of English words, phrases or sentences borrowed or adapted from the English language (cf. Busse 2005; Onysko 2007: 90).

able – my translation, S.F.). Young people find it attractive and stylish to insert ready-made English phrases (e.g. ... *at its best; the best ... ever; also known as*) into their German sentences. They are familiar with them due to the English that they hear and read in the media. What also has to be taken into consideration is that formulaic sequences serve to facilitate language use. They decrease processing effort in speech production (cf. Conklin/Schmitt 2007).

English catch phrases often function as quotations. They allow the author to describe a situation or person in an emphatic and at the same time economical way. Metacommunicative signals such as *nach dem Prinzip/der Regel/dem Motto* (“according to the principle/rule/motto”) etc. frequently accompany these uses.

- (1) *Junge Fahranfänger und Verkehrssünder sind erfahrungsgemäß weitgehend resistent gegenüber Ratschlägen von Fahrlehrern, Polizisten und Richtern. Motto: “No Risk, No Fun”. Gegen dieses Credo kämpfen Verkehrspädagogen [...]* (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 13 Oct 2009)

(Experience shows that young drivers and traffic offenders are often resistant to advice given by driving instructors, police officers and judges. Motto: No risk, no fun. It is this credo that traffic educationalists are fighting against [...])

- (2) *Peter Müller strebte schon immer nach dem eigentlich Unerreichbaren. “The sky is the limit”, philosophiert der Eisschnelllauftrainer gestern.* (Die Welt 17 Nov 2000)

(P.M. has always been striving for the actually unattainable. “The sky is the limit,” philosophized the ice-skating trainer yesterday.)

Occasionally, we encounter ironic undertones, which can also refer to the use of the English language, as in example (4), where the German pronunciation is imitated.

- (3) *Die FTG (“friendly teachers of gymnastics”?) rückt gleich mit dem “Fatburner” an, was wir zunächst – voller Vorfreude – als “Fatburger” gelesen haben. Denn Frikadellen-Mampfen im Gleichtakt, in weiten Jogginghosen und dehnbaren Leggings, das wär’s doch. Schon gut, liebe FTG. “Relaxed” bleiben und nur keinen “Stretch”. So ein Irrtum passiert schon mal, oder um mit euch zu sprechen: “Shit happens.”* (Frankfurter Rundschau 4 Nov 1999)

(The FTG [friedly teachers of gymnastics?] comes along straightaway with the fatburner, which we had read – full of anticipation – as fatburger. Munching meat balls in step with wearing baggy tracksuit bottoms and elastic leggings would have been great. All right, dear FTG. Stay relaxed, no stress. Mistakes like these can happen to anyone, or as you would put it: Shit happens.)

- (4) *Anstatt zu üben, verbrachten sie die nächsten Stunden mit endlosem Palaver über Image, Klamotten, Manager, Plattenaufnahmen, Ruhm und Geld. "Paul McCartney verdient pro Tag 30000 Franken. Allein mit den Auführungsrechten seiner Songs." Worm hatte das irgendwo gelesen und gab es ungefiltert weiter. "Mir würden 1000 Mäuse pro Woche genügen", rechnete Büge. "Falsch. Kreuzfalsch!" protestiert Mambo, "Se sky is se limit! Du must immer pokern. Und zwar so hoch wie möglich."* (Zürcher Tagesanzeiger 18 Sept 1996)

(Instead of rehearsing, they spent the next hours with endless palaver about image, clothes, managers, recordings, fame and money. Paul McCartney earns 30,000 francs every day. Just from the performing rights to his songs." W. had read this somewhere and passed it on without having filtered out anything. "1,000 a week would be enough for me," B. calculated. "Wrong, totally wrong!" protested M. "Se sky is se limit! You always have to play for high stakes. As high as possible.)

In addition, proverbs and catch phrases can serve as discourse organizers. They are often found in recurrent positions, especially at the beginning or at the end of a paragraph. In an initial position (cf. example 5, from a text on dietary supplements) they provide a core reference for textual expansion. Authors like to take the general truths expressed in them as a starting point for their reports and arguments. At the end of a text, the authority of general experience expressed in a proverb is often employed for concluding comments or explanations (example 6):

- (5) *Die alte Gesundheitsregel gilt in Deutschland nach wie vor: **An apple a day keeps the doctor away.** Äpfel stehen hierzulande ganz oben in der Gunst der Verbraucher.* (Die Zeit 5 Nov 1998)

(The old health rule is still true in Germany: *An apple ...* Apples are here at the very top of consumers' favours.)

- (6) *SZ: Sollten Sie nicht gewählt werden, stehen Sie ohne Amt da. Ein Risiko? Daxenberger: Das Risiko ist überschaubar. Wir haben gute Umfrageergebnisse und ich habe, denke ich, einen guten Rückhalt in der Partei. Und wie heißt's? **No risk, no fun.*** (Süddeutsche Zeitung 25 July 2007)

(SZ: If you are not elected, you will stand there without a post. A risk?

D.: The risk is containable. Public opinion is good and I have, I suppose, strong support from my party. And how do they say? No risk, no fun.)

Some occurrences of Anglo-American catch phrases seem motivated by word play. For example, *The sky is the limit* is preferably used in texts on architecture or solar energy, and various versions of *Das ist nicht meine Tasse Tee* (*That's not my cup of tea*) were found in reviews of the film "Darjeeling Limited" in 2007.

### 3.2. Loan translations

Loan translations (calques) are inconspicuous. Due to their lack of salience, the general public is not always aware of their foreign origin. In studies on Anglicisms they seem to play a peripheral part.<sup>8</sup> With regard to phraseology, however, loan translations seem to represent the predominant type of Anglicisms, as table 1 reveals.

The decision as to whether a phraseological unit that is formally similar to an English expression is an Anglicism is not always easy to take (Glahn 2002: 40). Borrowing is only one possible explanation. All living languages undergo language change. It is possible that a set expression or formula was common in a former period of the language and fell out of use later. When it now occurs frequently, it is hard to say whether this is due to English influences, whether the unit has always been in existence latently, or whether its use is perhaps the result of a combination of both loan processes and indigenous developments.

As I showed elsewhere (Fiedler 2010), there are several criteria that provide evidence that a phraseological unit is a loan translation from English. The first is its use in an Anglo-American setting. This includes newspaper texts that are explicitly marked as translations from English (example 9) or those whose authors are native speakers of English or who often stay in an English-speaking country.

(9) *“Schweine können fliegen, die Hölle ist gefroren, der Schuh passt am Ende doch, und für unmöglich gehaltene Träume können wahr werden. Die Red Sox haben die World Series gewonnen!” Der sonst im Ton eher bedächtige “Boston Globe” stimmt mit ein in die Elogen auf eine Mannschaft, die in der Nacht zum Donnerstag mit dem Gewinn der amerikanischen Baseballmeisterschaft nicht nur in die Annalen der Sport-, sondern auch der Lokalgeschichte eingegangen ist. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 29 Oct 2004)*

(“Pigs can fly, hell is frozen, the slipper finally fits and impossible dreams really can come true. The Red Sox have won the World Series!” The Boston Globe, otherwise rather measured in its tones, joins the songs of praise for a team that, winning the American baseball championships on Wednesday night, did not only go down in the annals of sports but also of local history.)

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<sup>8</sup> Onysko (2007: 317), for example, excludes them from the “core areas of Anglicism”. His supplement (Anglicism index) does not include them. The *Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (2001) contains some phraseological loan translations (e.g. *goldener Handschlag* [golden handshake]; *Immer nur lächeln* [Keep smiling]).

A second criterion for establishing the English origin of a phraseological unit is the explicit marking of its “foreignness” (cf. example 10). Apart from meta-communicative introducers (e.g. *as the English say; the so-called; the proverbial*), inverted commas, italics, and capital letters can be found as signals of the foreign or new character of an expression and in this way provide evidence that it is a loan translation.

- (10) *Wie sagen doch die Amerikaner: Die Oper ist nicht vorbei, ehe die dicke Dame singt. Auch wenn es mehr als hundert Jahre dauert.* (Frankfurter Rundschau 18 June 1998; on the construction of a new opera house in Norway) (How do the Americans say: The opera ain’t over until the fat lady sings. Even if it takes more than 100 years.)

A third criterion of loan processes is variability of form. When different authors transfer an English expression ad hoc into the receiving language, their translations might differ, so that variants of the same expression compete with one another for a certain time. Examples are *gläserne Decke* and *Glasdecke* for *the glass ceiling*, *Solange die dicke Frau noch singt, ist die Oper nicht zu Ende* (*It isn’t over until the fat lady sings/The opera ain’t over ...*) with *fette Frau/Lady* as varying constituents (cf. table 1). The item *the elephant in the room*, which seems to be well on its way to becoming established in the German language at the moment,<sup>9</sup> has the following three variants: *der Elefant im Raum/Zimmer/Wohnzimmer*.

As a fourth criterion we might add the influences of English on other languages. The fact that *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (Görlach 2001: 215) includes items for *in a nutshell* in Dutch (*in aleen nutshell*, 1970s), Norwegian (*I et nøtteskall*), Icelandic (*í hnotskurn*) and Finnish (*pähkinäkuoressa*) can be considered a further indicator that the German expression *in einer Nusschale* is an English loan translation. A further example is the recent frequent use of *al final del día* in Spanish, as described by Oncins-Martínez (2008). The fact that *ne pas être ma tasse de thé* is popular in present French, as Martí Solano (2010) describes, could be an indication that the few examples of *das ist (nicht) meine Tasse Tee* which were found in the German corpora are the beginning of a phraseological trend. Examples like these make us aware how important the cooperation between linguists beyond individual languages is.

<sup>9</sup> The number of occurrences (3 in COSMAS2 and 26 in the newspaper corpus) are, however, very low considering that *Elefant im Porzellanladen* (cf. *bull in a china shop*) can be found 218 times in COSMAS2.

## 4. The use of English phraseology in the German language

### 4.1 The life cycle of a phraseological Anglicism

It is difficult to pinpoint the year when an English expression entered another language and from which time onwards it can be labelled as current or accepted. Its use in a written document can provide concrete evidence (e.g. *die gläserne Decke* was used in reports on the *Glass Ceiling Act* passed in the USA in 1991). Sometimes, famous people contribute to the dissemination of a phrase. For example, the former sportsmen Karlheinz Rummenigge and Boris Becker, the politician Friedrich Merz and the Chairman of Daimler AG, Dieter Zetsche, are known for having a particular liking for *am Ende des Tages*, which can be traced back in corpora (cf. Fiedler 2010: 167).

Let us try to throw some light on how and when individual English phrases have entered the German language recently. The first example is the expression *goldener Handschlag*, a loan translation of *a golden handshake* for "a large payment that is given to a person leaving a company or organization" (Longman p. 148), as used in the following examples:

(11) *Die Einigung mit der IBM war alles andere als ein "goldener Handschlag". Meine Laufbahn in dieser Firma, der ich mehr als mein halbes Leben gewidmet hatte, war zu einem abrupten Ende gekommen. Es brauchte eine gewisse Zeit, bis mir das dämmerte.* (*Der Spiegel* 2 Oct 2000; about the German manager Hans-Olaf Henkel)

(The agreement with IBM was anything but a golden handshake. My career in this firm, to which I had dedicated half of my life, came to an abrupt end. It took some time till I became aware of this.)

(13) *Crash statt Cash*

*"Märkte können länger irrational bleiben, als du solvent." Dieser These von John Maynard Keynes stellt René Zeyer sein Buch "Bank, Banker, Bankrott" entgegen. Seine "Stories aus der Welt der Abzocker" leben von der Beobachtung, dass oft nicht die Märkte verrückt spielen, sondern die Menschen, die sie betreiben. Das gilt offenbar besonders für Zeyers Protagonisten: Leitende Angestellte der Schweizer Finanzinstitute. In 88 Episoden aus ihrem Arbeitsalltag lässt der Autor ein Gruselkabinett entstehen, das die bekannten Vorurteile noch überzeichnet. Da gibt es zum Beispiel den Broker, der sich teuer verspekulierte und nun kündigen soll. Er lacht jedoch über diese Aufforderung und fordert statt des gebotenen halben Jahresgehalts ein paar Millionen Franken Abfindung, weil er sonst den Kunden erklären wird, wie seine Kollegen gerade Unsummen von ihrem Geld verblasen. Ein paar Stunden später bekommt er den goldenen Handschlag und einen Vertrag mit Schweige-Klausel.* (*Süddeutsche Zeitung* 7 March 2009)



(Crash instead of cash

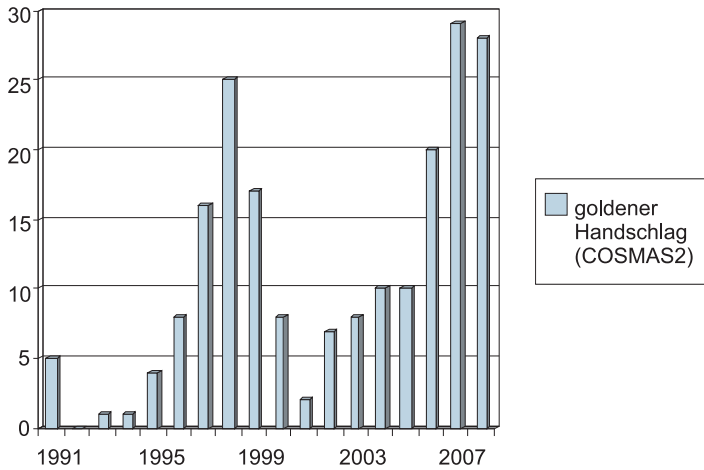
“Markets can remain irrational a lot longer than you and I can remain solvent.” This is the thesis by John Maynard Keynes that R.Z. opposes with his book “Banks, Bankers, Bankruptcy”. His “stories from the world of fleecers” are based on the observation that it is often not the markets that are irrational but the people who play them. This is obviously especially true for Zeyer’s protagonists: executives of Swiss financial institutions. In 88 episodes from their working days the author presents a horror story that even outdoes the common prejudice. There is, for example, the broker who, having speculated very badly, is told to quit. He, however, laughs at this request and demands, instead of half of his annual salary that is offered to him, several million francs as severance pay. Otherwise he will explain to his customers how his colleagues are presently blowing away huge sums of their money. A few hours later he gets the golden handshake and a contract with a gagging clause.)

Rosemarie Gläser (1986: 168–169), in her textbook on English phraseology, gives *golden handshake* as an example of an English idiom with zero-equivalence in German. The *IdS-Corpus Cosmas2* provides 282 examples of the German loan translation *goldener Handschlag* with the first in 1991 and the German press corpus 471 between 1997 and 2010 (cf. diagrams 1 and 2). The *Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (2001) includes *golden handshake* and the German loan translation. From this we can conclude that the expression leaked into German at the end of the 1980s or beginning of the 1990s and that it has meanwhile achieved a secure position in the German language.

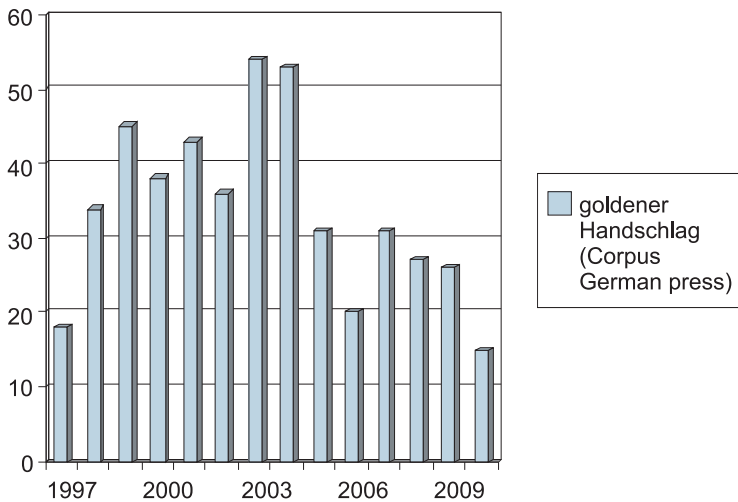
A second example I would like to discuss is the English expression *a smoking gun*, which refers to ‘a piece of evidence that proves that somebody is responsible for a crime’. It has been transferred into the German languages as *rauchende Waffe* (‘smoking weapon’), *rauchende Pistole* (‘smoking pistol’) or *rauchender Colt* (‘smoking Colt’), as the following example illustrates:<sup>10</sup>

(13) Die berühmte “**rauchende Pistole**”, den unwiderlegbaren Beweis dafür, dass die Terroranschläge vom 11. September 2001 hätten vermieden werden können, konnte der amerikanische Kongress zwar nicht präsentieren. Gleichwohl dokumentieren die Befunde einer zehn Monate langen Untersuchung [...] (*Mannheimer Morgen* 26 July 2003)

<sup>10</sup> The expression *rauchender Colt* was the most frequent among the three, which might be due to the American Western drama series *Rauchende Colts* (original title: *Gunsmoke*) which was shown on German TV in the 1960s and 1970s. References to the film in the corpora were excluded here.



**Diagram 1.** The German loan translation *goldener Handschlag* (golden handshake) in the IDS-Corpus COSMAS2 (282 occurrences between 1991 and 2008)<sup>11</sup>



**Diagram 2.** The German loan translation *goldener Handschlag* in a corpus of the German press (471 occurrences between 1997 and August 2010)

<sup>11</sup> The diagrams give a general overview of the dissemination of items in the German language over a period of about 10 years. The amount of words and newspapers in individual years in the corpora can vary.

(The famous smoking gun, the irrefutable proof that the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 could have been prevented could not be presented to Congress, however. Nonetheless, the evidence gathered in a 10-month investigation manifests that ...)

The three different loan translations occur altogether 21 times in the IDS-Corpus between 1997 and 2007 and 145 times in the German press corpus between 1997 and August 2010 (cf. diagrams 3 and 4). The diagrams show a significant peak in 2003. This was the time when news on the war on Iraq dominated the media. The expression *a smoking gun* was frequently used in reports on UN-Inspectors looking for evidence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, so that German journalists and media representative had to find an equivalent in their language.

(14) *Aber Experten sind sich schon jetzt darin einig, dass es sich bei dem Fund nicht um jene "rauchenden Waffen", jene klaren Beweise handelt, die den USA die Überzeugungsarbeit bei den Vereinten Nationen erleichtern würde.* (Leipziger Volkszeitung 20 Jan 2003)

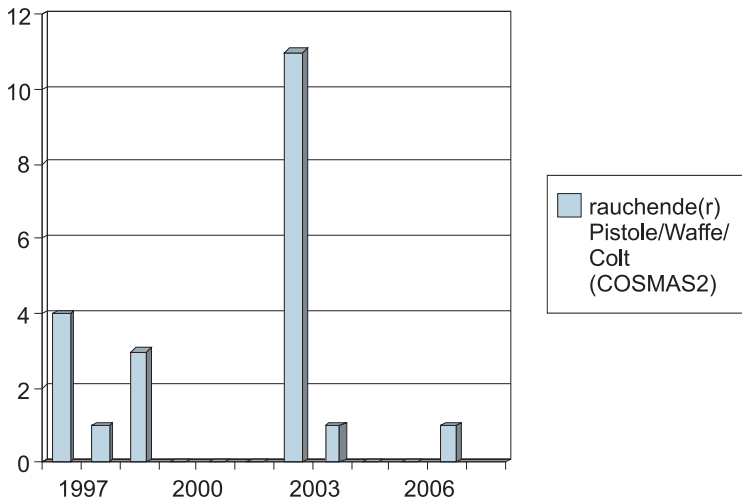
(But experts agree already that what they found is not the smoking gun, this conclusive piece of evidence that would make the US task of convincing the United Nations easier.)

(15) *Doch amerikanische Reporter bohren jeden Tag ein bisschen hartnäckiger nach: "Habt ihr jetzt Massenvernichtungsmittel gefunden?" Das wäre der "rauchende Colt", den die Amerikaner in der langen diplomatischen Schlacht um das Für und Wider eines Krieges im Weltsicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen vergeblich zu präsentieren versuchen.* (Nürnberger Nachrichten 27 March 2003)

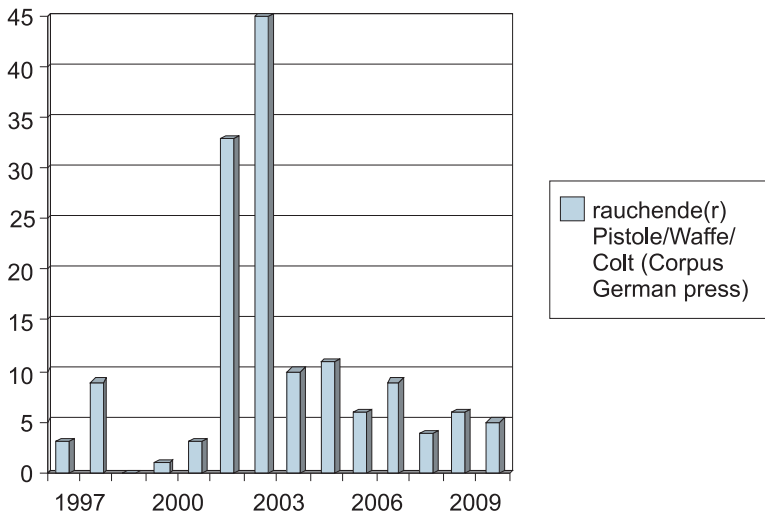
(But American reporters are probing more and more persistently every day. "Have you found weapons of mass destruction?" They would be the smoking gun that the Americans have tried to present in vain to the United Nations Security Council during their long diplomatic battle for the pros and cons of the war.)

As the diagrams show, the number of occurrences decreased significantly after 2003. Considering these relatively low numbers and the variable forms that *a smoking gun* has found, this expression is an example of a phraseological Anglicism that was used during a particular time related to a specific context, that has, however, not (yet) been accepted as a phraseological unit in the receiving language.

I have chosen a third example to show that the number of occurrences in corpora is perhaps not the only criterion that decides on the life cycle of a phraseological Anglicism. The expression *etwas ist keine Raketenwissenschaft* (cf. *sth. is not rocket science*) for 'something that can be easily managed' is an



**Diagram 3. The German loan translation *rauchende(r) Pistole/Waffe/Colt* in the IDS-Corpus COSMAS2 (21 occurrences between 1997 and 2007)**



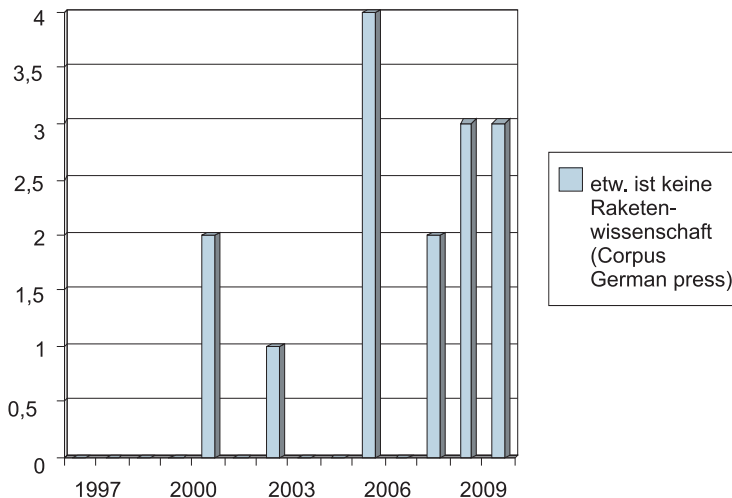
**Diagram 4. The German loan translation *rauchende(r) Pistole/Waffe/Colt* in a corpus of the German press (145 occurrences between 1997 and August 2010)**

expression that entered the German language only recently. The *IDS*-corpus includes only two examples in 2007/2008 and another one in 2010; the German press corpus includes three examples between 2001 and 2003 – all trans-

lations of English quotes (cf. example 16) – and 12 occurrences between 2006 and 2010 (cf. diagram 5).

(16) “GE-Manager haben am Ende eine Art genetisch geprägte Sichtweise”, sagte Professor Noel Tichy von der Universität von Michigan der Zeitung “USA Today”. (...) Zu den GE-Prinzipien gehört der Kampf gegen Bürokratie, die klare Artikulation von Strategien und die Fähigkeit, harte Entscheidungen schnell zu fällen. Tichy: “Das ist zwar keine Raketenwissenschaft, aber es gibt nicht viele Unternehmen, die ihre Pläne so umsetzen können wie GE.” (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 6 Sept 2001)

(GE managers finally have a kind of genetically determined point of view, told Professor Noel Tichy of the University of Michigan “USA Today” ... GE principles include the fight against bureaucracy, a clear articulation of strategies and the ability to take hard decisions fast. Tichy: Although this is not rocket science, there are not many companies that can implement their plans like GE.)



**Diagram 5. The German loan translation *etw. ist keine Raketenwissenschaft* in a corpus of the German press (15 occurrences between 1997 and August 2010)**

It is true that the figures are extremely low in comparison with, for example, *goldener Handschlag*. However, when we consider the hundreds of information sites and blogs on the Internet that choose this formula as a title (e.g. *Batteriewechsel beim Grand Cherokee* [changing batteries in the G.C.]

/HTML / Einbau von Veluxfenstern [installing Velux-windows] / Suchmaschinenoptimierung [search engine optimization] / Cannabiszucht [growing cannabis] ... ist keine Raketenwissenschaft), we might conclude that this expression has the potential to become a current German expression in the future.

#### 4.1. The impact of phraseological Anglicisms on the German language

Careful perusal of the examples that have been given so far makes it obvious that phraseological Anglicism not only fulfil denotative needs and practical communicative purposes. They are often employed as ornaments that help the author make a text more expressive, which means, for example to illustrate a fact, to attract attention, to express an ironic undertone, to evoke humour, put the listener or reader at ease, or to be euphemistic. English borrowings and loan translations are primarily used because of their connotative potential in these examples.

Not all the phraseological units entering the German language seem to bring along the full range of their meanings, however. When Chancellor Angela Merkel used *There is no free lunch* in 2008, when opening the Ozeaneum Aquarium in the German city of Stralsund, it sounds to me like a colloquial remark in the sense of 'we had to work hard for this achievement and we have to go on with our efforts'. I do not think that the whole American background of its existence, the aura of Milton Friedman's monetarist theories are active in this usage. Another example is the formula *das ist nicht meine Tasse Tee* (cf. *That's not my cup of tea*). Although we do not know exactly where the expression originates,<sup>12</sup> it is obviously embedded in the British tradition of drinking tea. These historical connotations, however, are hardly associated when the expression is now occasionally heard in Germany, where generally coffee is preferred.

In addition, we encounter structural variations, such as the addition of *noch* (still) to *rauchende Waffe*<sup>13</sup> or the affirmative use of phrases that are used predominantly negatively in English, such as *sth. is not rocket science* and

<sup>12</sup> The first example in the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates back to 1932. The expression then was *sth. is sb's cup of tea* meaning 'what interests or suits you'. The twist to indicate the opposite occurred later.

<sup>13</sup> This partly literalizes the figurative expression and makes it more transparent for the reader, as the following example shows: *Die über drei Dutzend Ermittler im Dienste des Senats sind von ihren ausgedehnten Recherchereisen, die sie rund um die Welt führten, ohne die erhoffte "noch rauchende Waffe" zurückgekommen.* (Frankfurter Rundschau 11 July 1997) (The more than three dozen investigators at the service of the Senate returned from their extended inquiry journeys which led them around the world without the still smoking gun they had hoped to find.)

*it's not my cup of tea.*<sup>14</sup> These examples show that people are not necessarily aware of the fixed and stable character of these pre-fabricated expressions. Some phraseological Anglicisms seem to have started a life of their own in the German language and people apply them according to their communicative needs.

Another sign of this trend is the playful modification of linguistic loans in the receiving language:

(17) *Vor diesem Problem stand zum Beispiel in den vergangenen Wochen ein Anleger, der 63 Jahre alt ist. Er ist von seinem Arbeitgeber mit "bronzenem Handschlag" in den Ruhestand verabschiedet worden. Die Abfindung hat den Ausstieg versüßt, doch die Folge, dass die gesetzliche Rente um 11 Prozent gekürzt wird, hat den Mann hart getroffen.* (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 30 June 2007)

(For example, this was the problem a 63-year old investor was confronted with in the last few weeks. He was given a farewell with a "bronze" handshake. The money sweetened his retirement, but the consequence that his old-age pension will be cut by 11 per cent was a shock for the man.)

Advertisements often include intertextual references to English phraseological units:

*Cut and Breakfast* (Hairdresser; cf. *Bed and Breakfast*)

*Fast Christmas!* (Flower service; allusion to the song *Last Christmas*)

*Fly Society!* (Magazine "Bunte", printed on paper cup served in airplanes; allusion to *high society*)

*Das nenne ich big bissness* ("That's what I call ..."; large-size chocolate bars "Ritter Sport"; allusion to *big business*; the German word *Biss* means *bite*)

*Man in blue* (Chris de Burgh concert)

*Hi! Potentials* (University careers in Germany; allusion to *high potential*)

Languages are able to absorb foreign material. The English phrase *a coffee to go* – an expression that seems to reflect modern life excellently – has started

<sup>14</sup> *Rosberg and das Team (...) übten Starts und Boxenstopps. "Das ist der schwierigste Teil, wenn man das Team wechselt, es gibt so viele neue Dinge zu lernen – es ist wie eine Raketenwissenschaft."* (motorsport-magazin.com/formel1/nws-92953 [17 July 2010]) (Rosberg and the team ... practised starts and pitstops. This is the hardest part, when you change the team, so many new things have to be learnt – it's like rocket science.)

– *Würdest du eine Kreuzfahrt machen?*

– (...) *Deckliegestühle und Kapitänsdiners, das ist genau meine Tasse Tee.* (Süddeutsche Zeitung 8 Aug 2005)

(– Would you go on a cruise?)

– ... Deckchairs and captain's dinners, that's exactly my cup of tea.)

a life of its own in German and meanwhile finds creative modifications, such as *Obstsalat to go* (fruit salad ...), *Glühwein to go* (mulled wine ... [served especially at Christmas markets]) or even rather free interpretations such as *Shop to go* (designating a shop at a railway station where travelling necessities can be purchased). I would like to conclude this article with a phrase that can be heard quite often these days, especially among young people who wish each other luck – *I press my thumbs*. They are very well aware of the two different kinegrams<sup>15</sup> in English and in German, *to keep one's fingers crossed* and *jmdm. die Daumen drücken* (lit. to press the thumbs for sb.) and play around with them for fun. Additionally, I would interpret the creation of this formula, *I press my thumbs*, as a kind of self-ironic comment on the growing influence of English in the German language.

## Conclusion

This article has investigated the influence of English on German in phraseology. The findings suggest that English is now making an important contribution in disseminating phraseological units, especially communicative formulae, proverbs and catchphrases. Borrowings, arising from language contact, include direct imports in their original English forms and loan translations. The latter type represents hidden influences that are sometimes difficult to detect. Not all the phraseological units entering the German language bring along the full range of their meaning, however. People apply them according to their communicative needs, so that some Anglicisms seem to have started a life of their own in the receiving language. These insights have to be taken into consideration when the alleged infiltration by English words and phrases and the threat this means to the German language and culture are discussed.

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<sup>15</sup> Kinegrams (Burger 2007: 101), also called kinetic idioms (Langlotz 2006: 123), are linguistic representations of gestures and other non-verbal behaviour, such as *to point a/the/one's finger at sb.* or *to hang one's head*.



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## Appendix

**Table 1. Phraseological Anglicisms (borrowings and loan translations)**

Phraseological unit	Number of occurrences in COSMAS2	Number of occurrences in the corpus of the German press
<i>The sky is the limit</i>	14 (1996–2000)	41 (1997–2010)
<i>No Risk, no Fun</i>	126 (1993–2008)	131 (2000–2010)
<i>There is no such thing as a free lunch</i>	18 (1995–2008)	55 (1997–2010)
<i>Shit happens!</i>	45 (1996–2008)	134 (1997–2010)
<i>goldener Handschlag</i> (cf. <i>Golden handshake</i> )	282 (1991–2008)	471 (1997–2010)
<i>am Ende des Tages</i> (cf. <i>at the end of the day</i> )	35 (1997–2007)	511 (1997–2007)
<i>Das Ding ist ...</i> (cf. <i>The thing is ...</i> )	5 (1996–2010)	26 (2000–2010)
<i>aus dem Blauen heraus</i>	9 (1998–2008)	24 (2000–2010)
<i>Ein Apfel pro Tag hält den Arzt fern</i>	63 (1995–2010)	44 (1997–2010)
<i>gläserne Decke/Glasdecke</i> (cf. <i>the glass ceiling</i> )	48 (1997–2008)	112 (1997–2007)
<i>rauchender Colt/rauchende Waffe/rauchende Pistole</i> (cf. <i>smoking gun</i> )	21 (1997–2007)	145 (1997–2010)
<i>(Und) Schweine können fliegen!</i> (cf. <i>And pigs might fly</i> )	–	9 (1998–2010)
<i>etwas ist (nicht) jemandes Tasse Tee</i> (cf. <i>This is not my cup of tea</i> )	3 (2003–2008)	6 (1997–2010)
<i>Solange die dicke Frau/fette Lady noch singt, ist die Oper nicht zu Ende</i> (cf. <i>It isn't over until the fat lady sings</i> )	9 (1996–2003)	13 (1997–2010)
<i>Man kann kein Omelett machen, ohne Eier zu zerschlagen</i> (cf. <i>You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs</i> )	4 (1992–1999)	19 (2000–2010)
<i>Etw. ist keine Raketenwissenschaft</i> (cf. <i>sth. is not rocket science</i> )	3 (2007–2010)	15 (2001–2010)
<i>der Elefant im Raum/Zimmer/Wohnzimmer</i> (cf. <i>the elephant in the room</i> )	3 (2004–2007)	26 (1999–2010)

*The sky is the limit* –  
wpływ języka angielskiego na niemiecką frazeologię

**Streszczenie**

Język angielski to lingua franca – jego częste występowanie w kulturze popularnej i mediach przyczynia się do przejmowania elementów anglojęzycznych, co obserwuje się również we frazeologii. W artykule wykorzystano dane pochodzące z korpusu COSMAS 2 (*Institut für deutsche Sprache* w Mannheim, Niemcy) i korpusu niemieckich artykułów prasowych (1997–2010). Badanie wykazało, że język angielski jest źródłem pożyczek frazeologicznych, zwłaszcza przysłów, klisz i sloganów. Są one używane zarówno w postaci oryginalnej, tj. jako cytaty, jak również jako kalki. Ponadto, w języku niemieckim zapożyczenia te często występują w zmodyfikowanej postaci.

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## A Cognitive Approach to Translating Phraseological Terms

**Abstract.** Translation of phraseological terms is a new area of research both in the theory of phraseology and translation studies. It calls for comprehension of the basic tenets of phraseology, including figurative meaning as a categorial feature, and comprehension of metaphorical conceptualisation: the relationship between metaphor and thought, the role of metaphor in science, and the function of figurative language in terminology. Most phraseological terms are metaphorical. In the cognitive stylistic view, they are theory constitutive metaphors, an integral part of both scientific theory and the respective term; hence, the importance of preserving metaphor in the target language wherever possible. A cognitive approach to phraseological terms is a tool to recognise metaphor as a technique of abstract reasoning in the formation of terminology. Its translation is not merely part of cross-cultural communication; it is a cognitive operation of the mind. Translation of phraseological terms reveals the role of cognitive theory in translation practice.

**Key words:** *phraseological unit, metaphorical term, recognisability, memorability, back translation*

### 1. Introduction: phraseological terms

Translation of phraseological units (PUs) and their stylistic properties has been in the focus of research interest for several decades, drawing on various languages, genres and periods, for instance, Shadrin (1969); Gläser (1984, 1987); Veisbergs (1997, 2006); Chamizo Domínguez (1999, 2002); Oncins (2005); Fiedler (2007); Nuryeva (2007), to mention but a few.

Translation of phraseological terms (or terminological phraseological units<sup>1</sup>) is a new area of research both in the theory of phraseology (Gläser

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<sup>1</sup> *Phraseological terms* and *terminological phraseological units* are used interchangeably in this article.

1995; Naciscione 2003, 2006; Nikulina 2005) and translation studies. It calls for comprehension of the basic tenets of phraseology, including understanding figurative meaning of PUs as a categorial feature.<sup>2</sup> Essentially, it also calls for metaphorical competence and recognition of PUs (see Pamies and Potapova 2005). On the other hand, translation requires understanding of cognitive linguistic processes in the formation of figurative terminology. Thus, translation of phraseological terms is interdisciplinary *per se* as it stands on the fringe of phraseology, terminology and cognitive linguistics.

The issue of translation of phraseological terms is even more topical in the new millennium, with novel terms, many of them metaphorical, springing up in all spheres of human activity. The simple fact is that metaphors abound in science. They are borrowed globally across languages and cultures together with new theory, and they all need to be translated as they concern the latest developments in all domains, for instance, economic issues (*black swan*, *toxic assets*, *credit crunch*, *shell bank*, *bank run*, *green shoots*, *pattern mining*, *debt-for-nature swap*, *dark pools*); EU policies (*sunset clause*, *grandfather clause*, *standstill clause*, *health check*, *gold plating*); the environment (*environmental footprint*, *emissions trading*, *carbon capture*, *green growth*) astronomy (*black hole*, *white dwarf*, *red giant*, *dark flow*, *Big Bang*); PR (*spin doctor*); IT developments (*orphaned article*, *walled garden*, *cold start*, *flash mob*, *vampire power*, *cloud computing*). All these are important metaphorical concepts, and hence important metaphorical terms.<sup>3</sup> Hundreds of new terms emerge in EU documents every month. Many of them are figurative, and they all need to be translated into the remaining 22 languages of the EU and eventually transposed into the national legislation of Member States.

## 2. Translation of figurative terminology: a theoretical framework

### 2.1. A cognitive approach

Figurative language in general and metaphor as its most powerful pattern in particular, is a challenging area in translation. However, the issue of translating metaphorical terms is even more complicated as it is directly link-

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<sup>2</sup> I believe that the phraseological unit is a stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning. For my understanding of PUs and their stylistic potential, see Naciscione (2010: 17–28, 31–43).

<sup>3</sup> There also exist many terms based on metonymic mapping or on the interplay of metaphor and metonymy, e.g. *clean hands*, which is a metonymic term or a metaphorical metonymy, to be more precise. However, translation of metonymic terms is outside the scope of this article.

ed with one of the basic questions in cognitive linguistics: the relationship between metaphor and thought, the role of metaphor in science, and the function of figurative language in terminology. This leads to the issue of the right of metaphor to be preserved in translation of metaphorical terms into another language. A cognitive insight reveals the importance of metaphorical conceptualisation in terminology<sup>4</sup> and the need to preserve metaphor in translation wherever possible. Translation of figurative terminology is a field that displays differences in the approach to figurative use across cultures and languages.

My approach to issues of translating figurative terminology is based on the findings of cognitive linguistics about the significance of metaphor in thought and language, and my own translation and interpreting experience. Metaphor has been recognised as a basic technique of reasoning that is also manifest in terminology, which is an important area of meaning construction.<sup>5</sup> Replacing a metaphorical term results in a different, non-metaphorical conceptualisation. It is not justified as it severs associations, inhibits perception and recognition of the term and hence hinders its back translation and interpreting.

## 2.2. Theory constitutive metaphors

A cognitive perspective helps us to understand the significance of abstract thought<sup>6</sup> and abstract reasoning in the formation of figurative terminology, which brings out the relevance of cognitive theory in translation practice. Figurative terms form part of the conceptual system of a language. In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphorical terms are central to scientific thought as they are theory constitutive metaphors (Boyd [1979] 1998; Kuhn [1979] 1998; Hoffman 1980; Gibbs [1994] 1999). Metaphorical conceptualisation plays a constitutive role in framing ideas and denoting abstract entities in science. As Gibbs points out, theory constitutive metaphors are indispensable parts of scientific theory ([1994] 1999: 172). The cognitive significance of metaphor in language, including terminology, cannot be overestimated.

For instance, the term *green policy* does not simply mean ecological policy, environmental policy, or environmentally-friendly policy. The metaphor

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<sup>4</sup> For metaphorical conceptualisation in terms, see Meyer et al. (1997); Vandaele (2002).

<sup>5</sup> For the notion of meaning construction, see Gibbs (2003, 2007); Panther (2005).

<sup>6</sup> For the central role of metaphor in abstract thought, see Lakoff and Johnson ([1980] 2003: 245–247).

conveys a new concept that reflects a change in policy to provide for sustainable development.<sup>7</sup> *Green growth*, a metaphorical term used in EU documents when discussing agriculture, is understood as follows: “Integrated rural development, additional climate measures, green energy, R&D, innovation, modernisation, training, green jobs, young farmers, quality policy”. This explication is given in the “Report on the Future of the Common Agriculture Policy after 2013” (2010: 15). Thus, the term is brief and precise while the definition specifies what it signifies.

In sum, a theory constitutive metaphor forms an integral part of both a scientific theory and the respective term; hence, the importance of preserving metaphor in the TL. However, even recent advanced studies of translation pay little or no attention to the translation of metaphor (see Roberts 2002: 429–442; Hatim and Munday 2004; Grabe 2002; Cao [2007] 2009; Gambier and van Doorslaer 2010), nor does research on interpreting (see Schweda Nicholson 2002: 443–456).

### 3. Trends in translation of phraseological terms

Differences in figurative use largely depend on language traditions, attitudes and theoretical assumptions. One indicator is the recognition of metaphor as a legitimate tool of expressing abstract thought. Cognitive linguists believe that recognition of figurative use is of paramount importance for the understanding of metaphor in thought, language and culture (Kövecses 2006). In many countries, linguists usually have no problems with recognising metaphor in literary discourse, especially poetry and folk songs. However, difficulties arise with recognition of metaphor in scientific discourse, specialist terminology and its translation. Failure to recognise metaphor reveals the theoretical reasons that lie behind it.

It is frequently believed that in non-literary texts there is unlikely to be any reason to replace metaphors in translation, so the risk of omitting or losing an important metaphor is negligible (see Boase-Beier 2006: 100). However, in practice loss of metaphor is much too common. Moreover, it is practised with full awareness, backed by theoretical assumptions. A great variety of approaches exist, despite achievements in cognitive linguistics: metaphor in scientific texts is no longer seen as a deviation but has been recognised as a constitutive part of scientific thinking. It follows that trans-

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<sup>7</sup> For examples of translation of the metaphor *green*, see Subsection 3.5. of this paper.



lation of phraseological terms forms part of a broader cognitive issue, that of figurative meaning construction.<sup>8</sup>

### 3.1. Existing approaches

There are four major sources of translation of terminology into Latvian<sup>9</sup> which frequently each give a different translation. Apart from that, research centres or ministries publish, using their own translations of terms, especially if an official translation has not been approved for a longer time. To make things more complicated, translations of a term in EU bodies may differ from translations of the same term in Latvia.

Translation and interpreting practice in the EU reveals a variety of approaches in dealing with phraseological terms, each indicating a different understanding of the relationship between the metaphorical concept and the term. Results vary.

- Metaphorical loan translation (e.g. in information technology); this means that the theory is borrowed together with the metaphorical term.
- Replacement by another metaphor (e.g. in information technology).
- Demetaphorisation of the term (common in Latvian, Italian<sup>10</sup>), resulting in a descriptive, oblique nonmetaphorical translation.
- Variants: two or several translations functioning at the same time.
- Replacement by a definition.
- Placing in inverted commas (common in Latvian, Spanish, Portuguese).
- A translation void, that is, the term remains untranslated, e.g. no translation has been offered for *toxic assets* in Latvian so far by IATE since 2007 when the term gained popularity.
- Long delay (common in Latvian). This means that no official translation is offered for several years. Clearly, terminologists are unable to accept a metaphorical loan translation and even find it difficult to give a descriptive translation of a phenomenon. For instance, *credit crunch* had no approved translation in Latvian for several years. Language users

<sup>8</sup> For figurative meaning construction and the role of conceptual mapping, see Gibbs (2007); Radden, Köpcke, Berg and Siemund (2007).

<sup>9</sup> IATE – InterActive Terminology for Europe, the terminology database for the European Union. IATE is an online dictionary for European Union terminology in all the official EU languages. *AkadTerm* is an academic terminology database of the Terminology Commission of the Latvian Academy of Sciences; the terms have been officially approved. *VVC* – a free internet terminology database of the National Language Centre; it gives specialist terms which have been officially approved. *Tilde* – a specialist computer dictionary.

<sup>10</sup> For the trend to paraphrase terminological metaphors in Italian, see Luminița (2003: 328–329).

got by, resorting to “a financial crisis” or “a credit crisis” instead. In 2010 a demetaphorised translation was offered by IATE: LV *kredītresursu trūkums* (a deficit of credit resources). Cf.: IT *erosione del credito* (replacement by another metaphor); DE *Kreditklemme* (replacement by another metaphor); ES *crisis del crédito* (demetaphorisation); LT *kreditamivo sąlygų sugriežtinimas* (periphrasis: “stricter conditions for receiving credit”).

- Regular, repeated replacement (common in Latvian). The translation is constantly replaced in successive documents in search of a better version of the term over years, for instance, “a framework directive” has had five successive translations in Latvian since it appeared in the first part of the 90s (see Subsection 3.4. of this paper).

From now on I will only deal with some of the most common failures to appreciate metaphor in the translation of phraseological terms.

### 3.2. Demetaphorisation of a metaphorical term in translation

The semantic and stylistic complexity of a metaphorical term presents objective difficulties. This is true of any language. It is also true that metaphors exist which do not always translate cross-culturally very well (Vandale 2002). Apart from that, there are specific circumstances, which may differ from country to country. In Latvia, for instance, translation of terminology is a new area, actually as old as the country’s regained independence, that is, about 20 years. Moreover, translation always depends on the theoretical tenets of the translator or the terminologist. Experience has it that translating metaphorical terminology into Latvian has proved to be especially difficult due to the theoretical approach, namely, a conventional understanding of terminology, which fails to account for metaphors in terms. This stems from the linguistic tradition of prescriptivism in Latvia, still lingering on from the 19th century, and the long-standing belief in Latvian linguistics that metaphor is inappropriate in scientific language, including terms. This is clearly seen in the demetaphorisation of terms in loan translation in the Latvian language. In the traditional view, terms are considered to be non-figurative, monosemous and stylistically neutral (Lingvisticheskiy Entsiklopedeskiy Slovar’ [1990] 2002; Rozenbergs 2004: 184). None of this is true today; it is an obsolete belief. However, this approach persists. Actual translation practice shows that many Latvian translators and terminologists have objections to metaphorical terms, which results in demetaphorisation, that is, loss of metaphor in translated terminology. This causes concern and difficulties in translation and interpreting practice.

Demetaphorisation of figurative terms in translation may be explained

by misguided goodwill to keep the Latvian language pure and clear, and, at a theoretical level, by a failure to recognise figurative language as a regular feature of the workings of the human mind in abstract reasoning. This is a deliberate attempt to avoid metaphor in translation by replacing it by a non-figurative word or words in an effort to “ameliorate” the metaphorical term. As a result of demetaphorisation, the image and the associative links are lost, encumbering retrieval of the original form of the SL and hence back translation and interpreting. The question remains why preference is given to non-metaphorical translation and why it is considered to be better language.

One of the metaphorical terms frequently used in the EU since 2007 has been a *health check*, meaning a health check of the CAP (the EU Common Agricultural Policy). On 20 November, 2007 the European Commission adopted *The Communication on the CAP Health Check* (2007), which examines the possibility of further policy adjustments. The metaphorical term *health check of the CAP* has been used ever since. When comparing the translation of this term into the rest of the 22 languages of the EU, we can observe a variety of approaches (see “Report on the Future of the Common Agriculture Policy after 2013” (2010)):

- 1) the metaphor has been preserved, e.g. FR *le bilan de santé*; DE *Gesundheitscheck der GAP*; IT *valutazione dello stato di salute della PAC*;
- 2) the term has been put in inverted commas, e.g. PT “*Exame de Saúde*” da PAC; ES el “*chequeo*” de la PAC;
- 3) loss of metaphor, demetaphorisation, e.g. PL *ocena funkcjonowania WPR*; BG *преглед на състоянието на ОСП*;
- 4) several translations, e.g. in Latvian:
  - a) loss of metaphor: *KLP pārskatīšana* (review / revision / re-examination of the CAP);
  - b) use of inverted commas for the metaphor: *KLP “veselības pārbaude”*.

I would argue that the loss of metaphor is unjustified, as the health metaphor is used to structure an economic policy. The image is essential for comprehension of the term. The general properties of health and illness frequently constitute metaphorical source domains due to the obvious connection between bodily experience and abstract reasoning (see Boers 1999: 49–55; Kövecses 2002: 16–17). Gibbs argues that “people’s subjective, felt experiences of their bodies in action provide part of the fundamental grounding for language and thought” (2006: 9).

Let us turn to another phraseological term: *money laundering*.<sup>11</sup> This is

<sup>11</sup> For more on translation of the metaphorical PU *money laundering*, see Naciscione (2003, 2006).

an important metaphorical concept in criminal law. It has been in regular use in legal texts for four decades. Metaphor is a salient feature in this term as it perfectly conveys what takes place – illegal, or dirty, money is put through a cycle of transactions, or washed, so that it comes out the other end as legal, or clean, money. The metaphorical loan translation has been accepted as the official term internationally, including the EU Member States. Cf.: FR *blanchiment de capitaux*; DE *Geldwasche*; SV *penningtvätt*; DA *pengevask*; NO *hvitvasking av penger*; ES *blanqueo de dinero*; PL *pranie pieniędzy*; ET *rahapesu*; HU *pénzmosás*; CS *praní špinavých peněz*; LT *pinigų plovimas*; NL *witwassen van geld*; SL *pranje denarja* etc.

In Latvian this legal term was translated by a definition in 1991: LV *ne-likumīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* (legalisation of proceeds of illicit gains) to be replaced by *noziedzīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* (legalisation of criminally gained proceeds) in 2005 (see Subsection 3.4. of this paper). All this is instead of *naudas atmazgāšana* (money laundering), which is a metaphorical loan and which is brief, clear and precise in contrast to the explanatory translation. It is also perfectly acceptable from the point of view of euphony in Latvian. It is true that it is informal and it is a metaphor but so is the metaphorical term in the SL. A definition instead of a metaphor is a case of misguided creativity; it is actually a semantic and stylistic mismatch.

Demetaphorisation is a hindrance in the acquisition and use of a term. Moreover, replacement of a metaphorical term by a definition is not only extremely cumbersome, it is dysfunctional in practice. The metaphorical term easily lends itself to derivation and compounding because it is concise. A definition or an oblique periphrasis is not flexible in text, and the translation of the term creates serious syntactic and stylistic problems, e.g. such phrases as *to launder money*, *laundering techniques*, *an anti-laundering campaign*, present almost insurmountable difficulties for translators and interpreters (especially in simultaneous interpreting). The media often ignore the prescribed lengthy translation. Legal professionals and people at large use the metaphorical loan translation in their daily practice while in written language and in official situations they are obliged to use the approved definition. A term is not created only to appear in legal texts but will invariably be used much more widely: in spoken language, media texts, the Internet.

In Latvian metaphor, replacement by a literal word combination emerges as a regular pattern in the translation of metaphorical terms. When the term is freshly borrowed, it still has a metaphorical equivalent. When it gets to the stage of approval, the metaphor is lost. If an adequate metaphorical loan translation is possible, the term should not be weeded out: it should not

be replaced by a definition, a periphrasis or a description, nor should it be placed in inverted commas.

### 3.3. Use of inverted commas for phraseological terms

One feature in metaphorical representations that strikes the eye in the Latvian media is the use of inverted commas for both lexical and phraseological metaphors. It is a linguistic tradition which reveals some socio-cultural attitudes and theoretical assumptions. Inverted commas for the term *money laundering* keep appearing in Latvian media texts: either both words (“*naudas atmazgāšana*”) or the metaphor alone (*naudas “atmazgāšana”*) is frequently used in inverted commas.

In linguistics, it is generally believed that inverted commas are used when there is a sense of uncertainty whether a word or a phrase may be completely accurate or suitable or whether it is quite a proper choice. However, this is not the case. The reason is completely different. In this example, the use of inverted commas reveals unsubstantiated fear that the reader may fail to perceive and comprehend the figurative meaning; it means failure to accept the metaphor. Use of inverted commas for metaphors reflects a different way of thinking that is prescribed by *Valodniecības pamatterminu skaidrojošā vārdnīca* (Explanatory Dictionary of Basic Terms in Linguistics), which defines inverted commas as follows, “Inverted commas indicate words which are used in a figurative meaning and which are stylistically unfit”<sup>12</sup> (Skujiņa 2007: 293). This theoretical stance has practical consequences. The requirement is enforced; it is strictly followed in schools, and journalists have to comply with it, though metaphorical use is perfectly clear without inverted commas. Thus, it is a broader question of the theoretical school of thought. The use of inverted commas for metaphors is a pattern of thought and perception that can be traced back to the prescriptive approach. It is clear that a cognitive approach is necessary both to create and to interpret a metaphor. Recognition of metaphor is a cognitive ability; hence we may expect the reader to possess some cognitive skills and ability to recognise and identify a metaphor without inverted commas.

### 3.4. Successive replacement of translation

In striving for a better translation in Latvian, new official variants are introduced for the same term as time goes by. This has been an interesting de-

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<sup>12</sup> Translated by the author – A.N.

velopment over the last two decades. For instance, when the term *a framework directive* first appeared it was translated as 1) *jumta direktīva* (an umbrella directive), which is a metaphorical replacement, emphasising the encompassing role of the directive. Then other variants followed: 2) *struktūrdirektīva* (a structural directive); 3) *ietvardirektīva*; 4) *satvardirektīva*; the latter two translations underscore the framing role of the directive; 5) *pamatdirektīva* (a basic directive), seen as a basis for national legislation. For the time being this seems to be the final variant. This approach may be seen as a good way to brush up the translator's or the interpreter's memory and the ability to follow the latest changes in translation of terminology.

### 3.5. Cross-linguistic diversity in approach

Linguistic diversity in the EU has resulted in variegated approaches to translation, including translation of figurative terminology. One of the challenges is that there is no cross-linguistic uniformity in translation of the same term, for instance, the metaphor *green*. This has acquired a range of translation variants in the EU languages, although it is widely used as a metaphorical constituent in a number of PUs and set expressions. In "Report on the Future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013", one section is entitled "A greener CAP" (2010: 10). Comparison of the document in all EU languages reveals strikingly differing approaches:

- the metaphor *green* is preserved,  
e.g. DA *En grønnere fælles landbrugspolitik*; IT *Una PAC piú verde*; FR *Une PAC plus verte*; SL *Bolj zelena SKP*; PT *Uma PAC mais verde*; NL *Een groener GLB*;
- the metaphor *green* is replaced by the non-metaphorical term "ecological",  
e.g. RO *O PAC mai ecologică*; ES *Una PAC más ecológica*; LT *Ekologiškesnė BŽŪP*; PL *Bardziej ekologiczna WPR*;
- the metaphor *green* is replaced by a descriptive phrase, avoiding the original metaphor *green*,  
e.g. HU *Környezetbarátabb KAP*; SV *En mer miljövänlig gemensam jordbrukspolitik*; ET *keskkonnasõbralikum ÜPP*; all three languages have replaced the metaphor by "A more environmentally-friendly CAP".

However, Latvian offers a different variant: LV *Videi saudzīgāka KLP*. *Videi saudzīgs* does not lend itself to translation back into English very well. The literal translation could be "more caring for the environment" (LV *saudzīgs* – EN *careful*, with *care*), a more distant translation could be "environmentally-friendly" or "environmentally sound". The two latter trans-

lations may sound more scientific but they have a different meaning from *green* or “caring” or in other words, a different conceptualisation. Moreover, the metaphorical term *green* is theory constitutive, it is a specific instance of figurative meaning construction. It is a new approach in management of the environment. This is very well seen from the explication of the new phraseological term *green growth*, given on p. 20 of the same document: “Integrated rural development, additional climate measures, green energy, R&D, innovation, modernisation, training, green jobs, young farmers, quality policy” (LV *videi saudzīga izaugsme*).

- The metaphor *green* is used; however, it is put in inverted commas in the text.

Moreover, there is no consistency in translations of the European Parliament in the same language, for example,

- 1) in the Spanish text two paragraphs contain three translations used for *green* (§ 41, § 42, p. 11):
  - a) a greener CAP – Una PAC más ecológica (replacement by a nonmetaphorical term);
  - b) green growth – crecimiento “verde” (metaphor in inverted commas);
  - c) green jobs – empleo verde (metaphor);
- 2) in Bulgarian – all three variants appear in the text.
- 3) in German:
  - a) a greener CAP – eine ökologischere GAP (replacement by a nonmetaphorical term)
  - b) green growth – “grünes” Wachstum (metaphor in inverted commas)

Thus, the concept *green* has acquired different translations, resulting in lack of consistency.

Interestingly, the European Commission has introduced a new award scheme, the “European Green Capital Award” to promote green management in EU capital cities (2009 Environment Policy Review, 2010: 16). One wonders how Latvian terminologists are going to translate the award if *green* should be translated as *videi saudzīgs* (careful about the environment, that is, environmentally-friendly). Any attempt at a descriptive translation would be a semantic and stylistic loss. Metaphor is a powerful tool in theory constitutive terms in the SL. If an adequate metaphorical translation is achieved, it continues to serve this function in the TL. A term must be concise and flexible, that is, easy to use in different contexts. A comparison of these approaches brings out the role of linguistic theory in translation practice.

#### 4. Translation of new EU metaphorical terminology into Latvian: main issues and tendencies

The trend to demetaphorise metaphorical terms is clearly seen if we have a closer look at translation of new metaphorical terms used in EU institutions (the European Commission, the European Parliament) in a number of European languages. Importantly, loss of metaphor in the official Latvian translation occurs despite the fact that a metaphorical loan translation would not compromise comprehension or euphony, for instance:

EN a grandfather clause – LV *esošo tiesību saglabāšanas klauzula* (a clause to preserve existing rights);

EN a ceiling price – LV *maksimālā cena* (the maximum price);

EN zero tolerance – LV *absolūta neiecietība* (absolute intolerance);

EN orphan land – LV *zeme bez īpašnieka* (land without an owner);

EN a sunset clause – LV *noslēguma klauzula; turpināmība* (the closing clause; continuity).

Demetaphorisation also appears in conventional metaphorical terms used in day-to-day work in the European Parliament. The issue becomes more apparent if we compare several languages, e.g. EN a key vote – LV *izšķirošs balsojums* (a decisive vote). Cf.: FR *vote clé*; DE *Schlüsselabstimmung*. Metaphor is a natural phenomenon in terms as it reflects the quintessence of the thought process; thus, it should not be done away with in translation. In practice this means that the metaphor is lost, no associations are left and the rule of back translation has been violated (see Section 5 of this paper).

At the appearance of a new metaphorical term, each language struggles in its own way, frequently ending up with a figurative translation, either a loan translation or replacement by another metaphor. As the above examples have shown, a number of Member States go against metaphor in translation of a new term. Differences emerge in the chosen path. In Latvian, in many terms the metaphorical loan is used in the initial stage, but then is usually replaced by a non-metaphorical translation which may have distant associations with the original or no associations at all. Then the stage of several successive translations usually sets in, in the search for a better way. Absence of metaphor leads to a variety of nonmetaphorical translations. I would like to illustrate the tortuous process of translating *money laundering* into Latvian. The term came to the fore in Latvia with the adoption of “Council Directive 91/308/EEC of 10 June 1991 on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering”. The text of the directive was duly translated. At first the term “money laundering” was replaced by a definition *nelikumīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* (legalisation of illicitly gained proceeds),



and used in the title of the law. However, as the English text of the directive contains several derivatives and compounds with “launder” (e.g. a launderer, a money-laundering operation), the translator has found it difficult to use the cumbersome nonmetaphorical term on all occasions in the text. As a result, no single term is used throughout the text; instead there are five variants: 1) the definition *nelikumīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* in the title, 2) the definition with the metaphorical term *naudas atmazgāšana* (money laundering) in brackets when it is first mentioned in the text, 3) *naudas atmazgāšana* (money laundering) used in cases of compounding and derivation, 4) “*naudas atmazgāšana*” (money laundering) – inverted commas used for the whole term, 5) only “*atmazgāšana*” (laundering) appears in inverted commas. This means obvious absence of uniformity. In 1997 the Latvian Law on money laundering was adopted with *Nelikumīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* in the title. *Naudas atmazgāšana* appears only once in the first paragraph in brackets after the translated term. However, the EU Directive of 2005 that was transposed into Latvian legislation in 2008 contains two changes: a) no *money laundering* is mentioned throughout the text of the Latvian Law, and a new version of the translation appears: *noziedzīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* (legalisation of criminally gained proceeds). As a consequence, translators and interpreters have to keep following all the changes instead of using an established term for an established concept. Thus the present translation of the term *money laundering* still remains “legalisation of criminally gained proceeds”.

Surprisingly, new Latvian translations also emerge for terms which have been used in EU documents for years, e.g. EN a pilot project – LV *izmēģinājuma projekts* (a test project) instead of the common existing metaphorical LV *pilotprojekts* (a pilot project) (*Transporta un tūrisma komitejas atzinums* 2010: 6).

A number of terms get no translation (a translation void) in Latvian for several years, sometimes only a description, e.g. *gold-plating* – the practice of national bodies of exceeding the terms of EU directives when transposing them into national law, which is due to reluctance to use a metaphorical loan. With the present theoretical approach, terms like *toxic assets*, *dark pools*, which have been in current use due to the financial crisis, have no hope of gaining a metaphorical equivalent in Latvian. For the time being the available terminological dictionaries give the reply “no match is found”.

A metaphorical term is not an impermissible deviation, nor is it an embellishment, so that there is no reason to avoid it. Retention of the SL metaphor is essential in all cases when it is possible. An oblique demetaphorised phrase instead of a metaphorical loan translation is a pointless impediment in translation and interpreting practice.

## 5. Basic Principles in Translation of Metaphorical Terms

Each new metaphorical term is the result of figurative meaning construction, as is its translation into the TL. However, this is frequently overlooked in practice, the same as some basic principles of psychology. First and foremost, it is recognisability. In metaphor, the pattern of figurative meaning is based on similarity that helps to identify the term in translation and interpreting. Hence the role of cognitive association formation in human memory. The ability to recognise is known as recognition memory in cognitive psychology and neuroscience. Loss of metaphor in the TL inhibits associations. Nonmetaphorical translation is often beyond recognition.

The replacement of metaphor fails to meet the essential requirement of recognisability, which helps to retrieve the loan from long-term memory by associative links. A definition or an oblique periphrastic description severs associations and impedes back translation. The approved Latvian translation *noziedzīgi iegūtu līdzekļu legalizācija* is a hurdle, to say the least.

Second, memorability implies the state of being easy to remember, the quality of being memorable in consciousness. Psycholinguistic research suggests that PUs are stored and processed in the brain as individual units. The phraseological image plays an essential role in memorisation. Human associative memory helps to establish an immediate link between the two terms, especially if the image is striking. "The memorisation process favours salient meanings" (Philip 2006: 8). The value of memorability is especially clearly seen in simultaneous interpreting when the term must be on the tip of the tongue, and it is the associations that are at work. Psychologically, continuous change results in lack of memorability that is an essential distinguishing attribute of a figurative term. The image of the phraseological term makes recall of the unit not only much easier but also more precise. As Boers (2000) points out, it is metaphoricity that makes learning and retention more effective.

Third, back translation.<sup>13</sup> The attempt to avoid metaphor results in demetaphorisation and lengthy descriptive translations. Importantly, it encumbers back translation. In all these cases the terminologist has completely forgotten about the daily need for back translation. I would argue that the process of translation or interpretation is not a one-way street. Unfortunately, the back-again pathway of the process has been largely neglected in translation

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<sup>13</sup> By back translation I do not mean a word-for-word translation of a target text (Palumbo 2009: 14) but the natural process of, for instance, EN → LV → EN, in interpreting or in translation of EU legal documentation, accounting for work performed.

of metaphorical terms in Latvian. In many cases the TL variant does not even distantly suggest the term used in the SL although the language resources are available. As a result the translated terms do not easily lend themselves to back translation. The trend has been an ongoing process.

All three are important principles, as all EU directives are transposed into national legislation which is drafted in the language of the Member State, which, in its turn, needs to be translated back into English again to make cross-language communication possible, first and foremost with Brussels. Terms need to be unmistakably recognised while periphrasis often changes a term beyond recognition.

A metaphorical loan facilitates perception and recognition both in translation and interpreting, as it reflects a metaphorical concept and therefore it is immediately accessed. It is important to draw “links from metaphorical language to metaphorical thought” (Gibbs 2002: 83). A metaphorical term reflects a figurative mode of thinking. Comprehension of a metaphorical term and its translation is a cognitive act, the same as its creation. Translation of metaphorical terms is a cognitive skill that needs to be acquired and developed.

## 6. Phraseological terms in stylistic use in verbal and visual discourse

Visual representation has become cross-cultural. We see the same advertisements, logos, and cartoons crossing language boundaries. Metaphorical understanding and translation of a metaphorical term makes this kind of visual cross-cultural communication possible while literal translation is not conducive to use of visual material, containing phraseological terms, in another language. Phraseological terms are stable and figurative, and like all other PUs they lend themselves to stylistic use, including visual representation, due to figurative meaning and imagery.<sup>14</sup> A literal frame of mind does not work in figurative meaning construction. For instance, in an advertisement (Fig. 1) the phraseological term



### Green Shoots?

Is there cause for optimism or is talk of signs of improvement just a false dawn? In tomorrow's FT, US economics editor Krishna Guha and correspondents analyse the performance and outlook for the US housing & retail sectors, and global financial markets.

Fig. 1. Financial Times, May 4 – May 10, 2009, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> For more on visual representation of phraseological image, see Naciscione (2010: Ch. 6).

*green shoots* (meaning: economic recovery/growth) has undergone stylistic use which is possible due to metaphorical conceptualisation. This is a case of multimodal use, combining verbal discourse and visual representation of the metaphorical term *green shoots* that features the dollar sign, a semiotic element – a symbol of wealth and prosperity. The dollar sign is sprouting; it is already covered with fresh green shoots. This advertisement is a classic case of a visual pun in the printed media.

Stylistic use of the term *green shoots* is widespread across the media. For example, *The Daily Telegraph* (June 18, 2008, p. 23) has published an analytical financial article with the headline “Green shoots? Strictly for the colour-blind”. Stylistically, the headline is an extended phraseological metaphor: “**Green shoots?** Strictly for the colour-blind”. Moreover, the PU *green shoots* appears in the first paragraph at the beginning of the article and is repeated at the very end of the article like a frame construction, encompassing the text of the article and extending the metaphor.

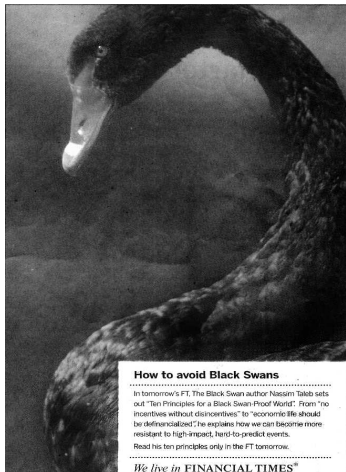


Fig. 2. Financial Times, April 7, 2009, p. 30.

Let us have a closer look at another visual representation of a phraseological term (Fig. 2). Apart from the direct ornithological meaning, *a black swan* is a polysemous PU. The first meaning of the PU is something that is impossible or cannot exist (historically, e.g. in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the European assumption was that all swans were white). The second meaning appeared in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: a huge rare unpredictable problem (the origin – Nassim Nicholas Taleb's book *The Black Swan*, 2007). It acquired regular use after the collapse of the US financial system in 2008, and since then has been used to denote a rare event of great impact that is hard to predict, one that turns into a problem.

New metaphorical conceptualisations may emerge as a result of “mappings across conceptual domains” (Lakoff and Johnson [1980] 2003: 252). This is widespread in terminology, too. It is a common phenomenon, called “migration of metaphorical terms between disciplines” (Luminița 2003: 327), that is, when a term is borrowed from one conceptual domain into another.

A non-metaphorical translation of a metaphorical phraseological term would create difficulties in the translation of stylistic use of the given term or even make it impossible:

- 1) in stylistic use in verbal discourse, e.g. extended metaphor:

This isn't just one black swan. It is a bunch of black swans that have hung out<sup>15</sup> for a while and created a giant problem. (*Time*, Feb. 9, 2009, p. 19)

- 2) in the formation of derivatives, compounds, neologisms or nonce words, e.g. "a **black swan**-proof world" (formed with the help of the productive affix -proof), which appears in the subheading of an article accompanied by another picture of a black swan (*Financial Times*, April 8, 2009, p. 1);
- 3) in visual discourse, e.g. Fig. 2 is a visual pun and a verbal extension of the image of the phraseological term *a black swan*. A nonmetaphorical translation of the caption "How to avoid Black Swans" would not make any sense: the visual representation, which is a pun, is based on a play of the direct meaning (the bird) and the terminological meaning of the PU.

Interestingly, in practice the advice of terminologists to use a descriptive, non-metaphorical translation is not always followed in Latvia, especially in two areas – by experts in their day-to-day work, e.g. criminal investigators will use the original metaphorical loan translation, and visual artists who work for the media and advertising as the image of a metaphorical term is essential for visual representation. This is clearly seen by the advertisement of the SEB Bank in Riga, Latvia, 2010 (Fig. 3).

To advertise a life assurance scheme for the child, the author of the advertisement has used the metaphorical loan translation *starta kapitāls* (EN *start-up capital*) instead of the non-metaphorical "sākumkapitāls" (initial capital) as advised by *Tilde*.

The details depicted lead us to the domain of sports. The advertisement is a visual representation of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A RACE: a helmet metonymically stands for safety, a chequered flag has contiguous associations with victory in a race, a Ferrari is associated with car racing and speed, the number 1 on the T-shirt stands for the winner of a race, while start-up capital is a phraseological term from the

Uzkrājums bērna  
nākotnei!



Fig. 3. Savings for the child's future.

<sup>15</sup> To hang out (coll.) – to last despite difficulties, keep going (*Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* 1983: 275).

domain of economics: the money needed to start at the earliest stage. The words “start-up capital” appear on a chequered flag that is displayed at the finish line. The flag is commonly associated with the winner of the race, the first driver to get past the chequered flag.

With the increasing use of visualisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, new metaphorical terms undergo stylistic use in media texts as soon as they come into use, e.g. the rise of the new phraseological term *cloud computing* in IT is already accompanied in the media by a visual representation of a cloud being locked, reflecting the fear of the enormous power of cloud computing.<sup>16</sup> The image of a metaphorical term is a salient element; thus it is essential for comprehension of the term both in the SL and in the TL in all types of discourse and contexts.

## 6. Concluding remarks

A cognitive approach to phraseological terms is a tool that helps to recognise metaphor as a technique of abstract reasoning in the formation of terminology and to comprehend figurative meaning construction across languages.

Thus, a cognitive view is essential not only to create and interpret a metaphorical term, but also to translate it into other languages. Translation is a vital part of cross-cultural communication; it is a basic cognitive operation of the mind, including creation of metaphorical loans in the translation of terminology.

I believe that translation of metaphorical terms is likely to gain greater interest in the future due to increasing pragmatic need for terms that are concise, capable of preserving the original image and of creating immediate associations, which is of great pragmatic value. The necessity is acute for more research on the salience of metaphors in terminology and their translation in general and phraseological terms in particular, as they constitute a serious challenge for both translation and interpreting.

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<sup>16</sup> See the article “An E.U. snag for cloud computing” in the *International Herald Tribune*, Sept. 20, 2010, p. 19.

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## Kognitywne podejście do tłumaczenia jednostek frazeologicznych

### Streszczenie

Tłumaczenie jednostek frazeologicznych jest nowym obszarem badań zarówno w teorii frazeologii, jak i w studiach nad przekładem. Konieczne jest zrozumienie podstawowych założeń frazeologii, obejmujących znaczenie figuratywne jako cechę kategorialną i metaforyczną konceptualizację: związek między metaforą i myślą, rolę metafory w nauce i funkcją figuratywnego języka w terminologii. Większość frazeologizmów terminologicznych to jednostki o charakterze metaforycznym. W ujęciu teorii stylistyki kognitywnej są one konstytutywnymi metaforami, integralną częścią zarówno teorii nauki, jak i odnośnych terminów. Kognitywne podejście do sfrazeologizowanych terminów jest narzędziem rozpoznania metafory jako techniki abstrakcyjnego myślenia w formowaniu terminologii. Tłumaczenie nie jest po prostu częścią międzykulturowej komunikacji – jest to kognitywna operacja umysłu. Tłumaczenie sfrazeologizowanych terminów uwidacznia rolę teorii kognitywnej w praktyce przekładowej.

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## Zoo-Symbolism and Metaphoric Competence

**Abstract.** This paper analyzes some semantic mechanisms underlying figurative lexicalized expressions in the sub-corpus of zoonymic phraseology in several languages. It focuses on the cultural motivation of idioms, in contrast with the inverse possibility: the influence of lexicon itself on world vision and culture.

**Key words:** *phraseology, zoonymic idioms, zoomorphic metaphors, linguistic relativism, zoonymy*

### 1. Introduction

The relation between idioms and cultural ethno-specificity has been a major concern for linguists since the beginning of phraseological studies, as shown by the word *idiom* itself (< gr. ἰδιωμα), whose original meaning (“particular to one language”) is still commonly used in French linguistics (Mejri 2007). The Humboldtian conception of culture/language relations has never been completely interrupted in phraseological studies, especially in Russia,<sup>2</sup> where these researches had even the helpful justification of being a *patriotic task* during the Soviet period (Mokienko 1986: 19). This approach has recovered a new interest in other European languages in the last decades,<sup>3</sup> however, some traditional concepts of this school, such as “uniqueness” have

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<sup>1</sup> This work has been developed in the frame of the Research projects: *Diccionario intercultural e interlingüístico* (I+D/MICINN HUM 2007-60198) and *Proyecto de desarrollo de un repertorio léxico intercultural y multilingüe* (Junta de Andalucía P06-HUM-02199; 2006–2010).

<sup>2</sup> cf. Mokienko (1980; 1986); Teliya (1996); Dobrovol'skij (1998); Baranov & Dobrovol'skij (2008).

<sup>3</sup> Dobrovol'skij (1998); Piirainen (1998, 2008, 2009); Filatkina (2002); Szerszunowicz (2009); Luque Durán (2005, 2007); Ferro (2005); Langlotz 2006; Pamies (2007, 2008, 2009); Sevilla (2007, 2008); Luque Durán & Luque Nadal (2008); Gibbs (1994, 2007).

been put under question by etymological studies<sup>4</sup> and by cognitive theory on figurative language.<sup>5</sup> The original idea that phraseology is the richest “mirror” of the correlations between language and culture (Teliya et al., 1998: 55) is still widely accepted but, at the same time, concepts like *national culture* or *national mentality* are criticized for their lack of precision and objectivity (Piirainen 2008: 219–221).<sup>6</sup> We can establish a cline between *uniqueness* and *universality*, and it is hardly possible to find reliable empirical examples of both extremes, due to the lack of data about the great majority of world languages. Quantitative reasons make these poles be only potential, valid until a counterexample in one language is discovered, and, therefore, of little practical interest. Almost all idioms would rather be placed along a continuum of *more or less similar images in more or less languages*,<sup>7</sup> a large category gathering the outputs of several diachronic processes (borrowings, common diachronic origin, shared cognitive patterns, shared cultural background), which do not exclude each other.<sup>8</sup> All cross-linguistic differences and similarities between idioms are not necessarily due to cultural factors (Baranov & Dobrovolskij 2008: 245; 249–250): many of these similar idioms are based on orientation sense or universal human experience (Pamies 2001; Sabban 2007; Gajos 2007). It is the case of some *widespread idioms* and *universal proverbs* (Piirainen et al. 2010; Paczolay 2005),<sup>9</sup> whose almost “natural” relation between literal and figurative meanings could justify the omnipresence of a same metaphor across languages, independently from its historical origin and dissemination process.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Mokienko (1980; 1986); Paczolay (2005, 2009); Mieder (2009).

<sup>5</sup> cf. Dobrovolskij (1998: 57–60); Dobrovolskij & Piirainen (2005).

<sup>6</sup> cf. also Čermák (2001); Sabban (2007); Baranov & Dobrovolskij (2008); Colson (2008); Szerszunowicz (2009).

<sup>7</sup> This cline is more fuzzy but not necessarily incompatible with discrete typologies, like Piirainen’s (*global/areal/regional/local* categories of widespread idioms and proverbs) (2008), or Čermák’s crossed four poles (language-specific idioms, “international” idioms, language-specific components, “international” components) (2010) or even the different typologies of *translational equivalences* or *lexicographic correspondences* (Gläser 1984; Sevilla 1993, 1997, 2008; Wotjak 1995; Corpas 1997; Nazarenko & Iñesta 1998; Dobrovolskij 2000; Mellado 2000; Timofeeva 2008; Fiedler 2007; Piirainen 2009; Paczolay 2005, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Pamies (2009a: 31). Two idioms can have the same historical origin but, at the same time, be borrowed one from the other, as demonstrated by Mieder (2009) in his brilliant research on Bible proverbs recently loaned by German from English, in spite of the existence of genuine old German variants of the same metaphors (attested in Luther’s translation), which however had little popularity, while the really conventionalized variant is a modern translation from American English.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., **eng.** *constant dropping wears the stone* **lat.** *gutta cavat lapide* is known in 39 languages including Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese (Paczolay, *Op. cit.*).

## 2. Zoonymic idioms and cultural motivation

Animals were venerated in pre-historical times, becoming zoomorphic Gods in Antique Egypt, and later companions of Divinities for Greeks and Roman mythologies, or of Saints in Catholic hagiographic representations. They also inspired allegoric fables, attributing to each of them some human attitudes, and superstitions made them bearers of luck or misfortune. This explains why, in proverbs (and idioms too), *on rare occasions animal terms may literally denote animals* (Krikmann 2001: 9). These old symbolic values were probably independent from linguistic systems while they were familiar enough for people to create (and understand) instantial allusions to it. The discursive allusions were replaced by lexicalized metaphors as their cultural motivation was becoming less transparent for all speakers, and, nowadays, the number of zoonymic metaphors in the paremio-phraseological treasure of our languages is quite enormous (Mieder 1993; Krikmann 2001: 6). Nevertheless, accurate quantitative data are not yet available, besides idioms and proverbs we should also count one-word metaphors, and not only those containing zoonyms, but also animal body parts (*tail, horns, wings, crop, hoofs, claws, jaws*), noises (*howl, bark, hoot, bray, whinny, moo, bellow, bleat*), habitat (*jungle, trees, pigsty, stable, circus, zoo, beehive, web, warren, burrow, nest, jail*), collectives (*hound, flock, shoal*), objects (*saddle, reins, spurs, horseshoes, muzzle, leash, cart*).<sup>10</sup> These words may also become components of zoosemic idioms: **sp.** *ladrarle a la luna* (\*to bark at the moon 'to discuss/protest in vain');<sup>11</sup> *romperse los cuernos* (\*to break one's horns 'to work hard/make a great effort'); *dar rienda suelta* (\*to give loose rein 'without control').

Zoonymic metaphors, whatever they are idioms (*to bring owls to Athens*) proverbs (*the owl thinks her young ones beauties*), stereotyped similes (*blind as an owl*), or collocations (*owl show*), contain good examples of how languages coincide or differ in the motivation of their figurative meanings because of a more or less forgotten cultural background. The most arbitrary are often limited to one language (e.g. **fr.** *faire un boeuf* [\*to make an ox] 'to obtain a great artistic success'); the most transparent tend more to coincide (e.g. the **PIG** associated to dirtiness or wickedness in many languages), or they differ only in the "choice" of the animal component.<sup>12</sup> Some cross-linguistic animal

<sup>10</sup> Cf. **eng.** *to get saddled with something; to hold the reins, to have the bit between one's teeth...*

<sup>11</sup> whose origin, according to Câmara Cascudo (1986: 169), would be related to the dogs waiting to be sacrificed to Hekate, a primitive Greek divinity associated to the Moon.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Pamies & Iñesta (2000); Pamies (2001); Velasco (2002, 2010); Kekić (2008: 11–112), Pamies & Cortina (2009); Tutáeva (2009); Szerszunowicz (2009).

“shifts” seem very strange, like **rs.** *вот где собака зарыта* (\*that’s where the dog is buried) = **fr.** *c’est là que gît le lièvre* (\*here is where the hare lies) = **sp.** *ésa es la madre del cordero* (\*this is the mother of the ram), all of them meaning “this is the really most important problem”. Other “zoonymic shifts” depend on external reasons of geographic habitat. In Malay proverbs we find elephants or *pelandok* (*Tragulus Javanicus* “mouse-deer”), in Tongan idioms there are sharks, “coconut crabs”, “sea owls” and other exotic bird or fish names without English translation, while lions and insects predominate in African languages, dogs, horses and cows in Estonian proverbs, camels and goats in Arabic, or crocodiles and parrots in Guaraní.<sup>13</sup> A picturesque case is the substitution of European species by animals from the New World in dialectal variants, like **pt.** *pentear asnos* \*to brush donkeys > [Br.] *pentear macacos* \*to brush monkeys (“to waste one’s time in a useless activity”) (Câmara Cascudo 1986: 47–48), or like in **sp.** *acechar como un buitre* > [Mex.] *rondar como un zopilote* & **pt.** *observar como um abutre* > [Bras.] *estar de olho como um urubu*.<sup>14</sup> The motivations of zoonymic images are heterogeneous and culture is not always relevant in the productivity of their source domain. (Dobrovols’kij 1998: 68; Sabban 2007: 598). But, generally, as Dobrovols’kij states, *non trivial differences between mental images underlying the same actual meaning have more chances to turn out to be traceable to cultural phenomena* (1998: 57). The camel is a productive source for Arabic metaphors and proverbs because of its traditional importance for the survival of peasants, shepherds and traders in the desert, not only as a transport mean but also for ploughing, clothing, milk, meat, decorative arts... There is a variety of target domains for figurative camels according to the available association of ideas, only part of them are originally “cultural”:

**Iraqi ar.:** *el-bi’ir lo yšūf hidebta-h, chan inkesrat rugbta-h* (\*if the camel could see his hump, he would break his neck); *mitl el-bi’ir, ma yadkur Allah illa b-el-zzalag* (\*like a camel, he only remembers God when he is in the mud); *mitl el-bi’ir, mayyet ‘ataš w-el-māyy fog dahra-h* (\*like the camel, he dies of thirst having the water on its back); *ma gidar ‘al-ŷŷimal, ŷa ‘a-l-ŷŷammāl* (\*he does not dare to attack the camel so he attacks the camel’s groom); *el-ba’ra tdil ‘al- bi’ir* (\*by his shit we know how is the camel) (Mehdi 2005).

**Hassani ar.:** *azwağ mn-bi’ir mgaylal* (\*evasive as a short-tailed camel);

<sup>13</sup> Reynoso (2008); Mahina (2004); Krikmann (2001); Mehdi (2006); Ould Mohammed Baba (2008); Pangrazio (1996).

<sup>14</sup> Strictly speaking (though English doesn’t distinguish), the “vulture” (*Aegyptius Monachus*) doesn’t exist in America, So, **sp.** *buitre* & **pt.** *abutre* were replaced in idioms by local scavenger birds like *Cathartes atratus* (**sp.** *zopilote* [from nahuatl]; **pt.** *urubu* [from tupí]) (Pamies et al. 2009).

*dərɔwət əl-ħāšī w-zaɔwdət lli blā šī* (\*like a young camel's hump) "the generosity of those who have nothing to give"; \*ħāllab nāgt-u v-əḍ-dāya (\*like the one who milked his she-camel inside the pond) "very stupid"; *ibəl iñarziġ* (\*like the camels of the Iñarzig) "difficult to obtain";<sup>15</sup> *ibəl kužil* (\*like the camels of the owl) "lost forever"<sup>16</sup>; *bṣī žaml-ak* (\*sell your camel) "you are too late"; *ṛkab əž-žmal lli barrak-lak əd dahar* (\*mount on the camel that life has prepared for you) "you must adapt to the actual circumstances" (Ould Mohammed-Baba 2008).

Other productive zoo-symbolic cultureemes have a single value, like the *yakaré* ("crocodile") in Guaraní, symbolizing "night time rapist".<sup>17</sup> However, in the Iraqi proverb **ar.** *rāh-el-ġamal ydawir grūn gas-aw adāna-h* (\*the camel was looking for horns and got his ears cut),<sup>18</sup> Arab culture has little to do in this zoonymic "choice": any beast with ears and no horns could have played this role. We find this proverb in Spanish, with a MULE instead of the CAMEL (*las mulas fueron a buscar cuernos y les cortaron las orejas*). One is maybe borrowed from the other, but both would be equally understood in any other culture. It also applies for proverbs: Tongan *foki ē kulī ki he'ene kua* (\*the dog returns to its vomit) corresponds to Spanish *la cabra tira al monte* (\*the goat tends to the mountain), said to criticize someone who reverts to his old [bad] habits: any "negative" attitude of a familiar animal might come in. Zoo-symbolism refers here to *experience* (though the boundary between *experiential* and *cultural* knowledge is not always so clear-cut). When an image component has a *logical* or *ontological* basis, its components can be replaced by others, preserving the figurative global meaning, and culture only participates in the *animal's choice* (Arora 1998; Krikmann 2001).<sup>19</sup> The shift may also appear in cross-linguistic borrowings.

<sup>15</sup> It was very difficult to steal a camel to this bellicose tribe who was so fond of them (Ould Mohammed, *Ibid.*).

<sup>16</sup> According to a legend, the owl's ululation is her lament for having lost her camels (*Ibid.*). It is surprising that none of the camel's verbal images coincide semantically between Mehdi's data on Iraqi and Ould Baba's collection on Mauritanian.

<sup>17</sup> Pangrazio (1996: 113–115), the lexicographer translates *yakaré* as *violador nocturno*. E.g. **grn.** *yakaré heviġá oikéro koty nandipe* \*the crocodile waits for his prey until daybreak; *aké voine he* \*Iopōrōm *yakarétava* \*I'll go to bed early says the crocodile; *yakaré ra'y pŷhare guare tejurajy asajépe oiko* \*the son of the crocodile is conceived at night, the son of the lizard at siesta's time.

<sup>18</sup> Meaning "one may lose all what he already has if he always tries to have more and more" (Mehdi 2005: 170).

<sup>19</sup> Spanish zoonymic variants meaning "fate is unavoidable" are quoted by Arora (1998), like **sp.** *el que nació para caballo ha de morir pastando* \*he who was born a horse, will die grazing; *el que nace tatú muere cavando* [Bol.] \*he who was born a *tatú* (armadillo), he dies digging (*Ibid.*); *quien nace lechón muere cochino* \*he who was born a sucker-pig dies as a swine (Mex.); *el que nace para burro no ha de ser caballo* (Mex.), \*he who was born a donkey will not be a horse; *el que nació*

E.g. **eng.** *to kill two birds with one stone*; **it.** *prendere due piccioni con una fava* (\*to catch two pigeons with one bean), **pt.** *matar dois coelhos com uma cajadada só* (\*to kill two rabbits with just one stick blow); **ukr.** *одним пострілом убити двох зайців* (\*to kill two hares with one shot); **cz.** *zabít dvě mouchy jednou ranou* (\*to beat two flies with one shot).

None of the components of this *widespread idiom* is exclusive from one language: the FLY appears also in German, Dutch, Finnish or Hungarian, the RABBIT appears also in Lithuanian, the HARE appears in Russian and Romanian, the PIGEON occurs also in Greek.<sup>20</sup> Phraseological typology may investigate, whether this allegory is universal or not. Diachronic phraseology may perhaps trace in ancient texts the common origin of its variants (proto-metaphor) and all the borrowings who led to the current items. Cognitive semantics may deduce evidences of a universal mental mechanism mapping the conceptual domain of HUNT towards the domain of EFFORT ECONOMY.<sup>21</sup> Psycholinguistics may explain how we are even able to understand invented pseudo-idioms like *?to catch two foxes with one tramp*, *?to kill two gazelles with one spear*, *?to kill two ducks with one arrow*, etc, or test whether the Jamaican Creole *siem naif we tek tik shiip tik guot* is understood by Arabs or Poles if literally translated (\*to kill the goat and the sheep with the same knife). A common psychological mechanism can explain why the Chinese proverb **chn.** *yī shí èr niǎo* (\*one stone, two birds)<sup>22</sup> coincides with an English one. Though HUNT and EFFORT ECONOMY are also “cultural”, the cognitive background of these images is similar enough. The cultural neutrality of “logical” images makes them very suitable for loans; as Baranov & Dobrovol’skij observed, cultural differences are relevant *only when conceptual metaphors do not coincide* (2008: 254–255). A clear example with ethno-specificity and cultural boundness at the same

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*para chanco del cielo le caen las mazorcas* \*he who was born a swine, the corncobs fall on him from the sky (Mex.); *el que nació para zompopo desde chiquito es culón* \*he who was born a zompopo [leaf-cutter ant], will have a big arse since his childhood (Nic.). Krikmann (2001: 13–31) quotes many zoonymic variants expressing “immutability of bad habits” in non-related languages inside the tautological proverbial scheme *X is X*. E.g., Estonian *koer jääb ikka koeraks* (\*a dog always remains a dog); *siga jääb ikka seaks* (\*a pig always remains a pig) have equivalents like Vietnamese \*a cat is always a cat; \*a monkey is always a monkey; Ossetian \*a deer is always a deer; Chinese \*dragons give birth to dragons.

<sup>20</sup> Dobrovol’skij & Piirainen (2005b) quote **gm.** *zwei Fliegen mit einer Klappe schlagen*; **nl.** *twee vliegen in een klap*, **fi.** *tappaa kaksi kärpästä yhdellä iskulla*; **hu.** *két legyet üt egy csapásra*; **lth.** *vienu šāvīu nišauti du zuikius*; **rs.** *убить двух зайцев одним выстрелом*; **rmn.** *a prinde doi iepuri dintr-un foc*; **gr.** *με ένα σμπάρο δυο τρυγόνια*.

<sup>21</sup> ANIMALS ARE GOALS and WEAPONS ARE MEANS.

<sup>22</sup> Paczolay, *Op.cit.*



time is the rich set of BULLFIGHTING metaphors in Spanish,<sup>23</sup> which, besides their already figurative *technical* meaning, are mapped onto other conceptual domains in a secondary metaphoric process, e.g., **sp.** *cortarse la coleta* \*to cut one's ponytail: 'to retire from any profession or hobby', metonymic extension of 'retire from bullfighting' (a small rear ponytail is the symbol of being a bullfighter).<sup>24</sup>

An example of "international" metaphor motivation is the paradigm of *snake* idioms. In Christian culture, the SNAKE symbolizes EVIL and DECEPTION since this animal tricked Adam and Eve into eating the Forbidden Fruit (Dobrovól'skij & Piirainen 2005) and folk superstitions reflected by proverbs also relate snakes to evil (Sevilla & Sardelli 2008). One could also be tempted to associate this negative value to an objective reality: (some) snakes are very dangerous, and even "monkey's language" specifically warns against them.<sup>25</sup>

The Biblical "curse" of the snake determines its zoo-symbolism in European languages. In fact, in Spanish and Portuguese, the word itself (**sp.** *serpiente*; **pt.** *serpente* 'snake') is avoided, as a superstitious taboo, replaced by hyponymic euphemisms like **sp./pt.** *víbora* ('viper'), **sp.** *culebra* / **pt.** *cobra* ('adder'),<sup>26</sup> or the hyperonymic **sp./pt.** *bicha* (from lat. *bestia*, 'beast') which designates also big worms.<sup>27</sup> It is therefore not surprising that metaphors like

<sup>23</sup> The apparent exception of the widespread idiom **eng.** *to take the bull by the horns*, is misleading: this expression cannot come from Spanish *corrida*, where such an action is forbidden by its rules and would be completely absurd.

<sup>24</sup> cf. Luque & Manjón (1998); Luque & Luque (2008). These authors have found dozens of bullfighting idioms applied to other domains. **Sp.** *salir por la puerta grande*: \*to exit through the big gate: 'to have a big success among the audience' (the big gate of the bullring is usually closed, it is opened only in case of a really great success of a bullfighter, as a kind of symbolic award); *estar en capilla* \*to be in chapel: 'to prepare oneself for a very important challenge' (before performing, the matador is praying for his life in the chapel of the bullring); *dar la alternativa a alguien* \*give the alternative to someone: 'to give a beginner his first opportunity to perform' (in the *corrida* there are six bulls for three bullfighters [two for each], when a *matador* performs officially for the first time, it must be within the same show than a well known veteran, as a warrant of his talent).

<sup>25</sup> The primates *cercopithecus aethiops* have a limited "language", with only three messages whose function is to warn other monkeys in case of danger, their meaning can be described as (1) 'there is a leopard in the trees'; (2) 'there is a bird of prey over the trees', (3) 'there is a snake in the grass' (literally, of course) (Struhsacker & Seyfarth 1967, Cheney & Marler 1980).

<sup>26</sup> In southern Spain the oral use of *serpiente* is still avoided, euphemistic *culebra* and *bicha* are much more frequent; in Mexican Spanish, the rattlesnake is called *víbora de cascabel* \*rattleviper (Gómez de Silva 2001). Mati Kuusi (1998) pointed out that the lack of *snakes* in Finnish proverbs is linked to this taboo.

<sup>27</sup> Italian northern dialects also use the euphemism *biscia* (Saramandu & Ionică 1997: 503). When doing his multi-lingual corpus, Krikmann observed that *it was not always easy to distinguish between 'snake' and 'worm'* (2001: 7), I suspect it was probably because of that lexicalized euphemistic strategy.

**eng.** *to cherish (/warm) a snake (/viper) in one's bosom* are identical in meaning and form in European languages:<sup>28</sup> not only because they have the same historical source,<sup>29</sup> but also because they share the same underlying *cultureme*, which is consistent with the Christian symbolism of the Original Sin, as represented in paintings, statues and bas-reliefs in all churches. The analogy of this metaphor with other expressions using the same image component is also an evidence of the productivity which defines *cultural symbols* (Dobrovolskij 1998: 56; Sabban 2007: 597),<sup>30</sup> though the whole set of *snake* idioms are rather an example of complex blending and overlapping between the “natural” cognitive and the “cultural” motivation motivations of linguistic zoo-symbolism.

- [1] **“hidden danger of treason”**: **sp.** *debajo de la mata florida, está la culebra escondida*; **fr.** *être un serpent caché sous les fleurs*; **it.** *nei fiori cova la serpe* (\*lit. \*there is/to be a snake under the flowers); *nelle belle muraglie si genera il serpe* (\*nice [city]walls generate the snake); *il vicino è come serpente, se non vede sente* (\*the neighbour is like a snake, if he cannot see he can hear);<sup>31</sup> **sp.** *un nido de víboras* (\*a nest of snakes); **fr.** *il y a anguille sous roche* (\*there is an eel under the rock);<sup>32</sup>
- [2] **“to be a liar/tricky/traitorous”**: *tener la lengua bifida*; *ser un encantador de serpientes*; **it.** *avere lingua di serpe*; **cat.** *tenir llengua serpentina/viperina*; **pt.** *ter língua de cobra*; **fr.** *avoir une langue de serpent/la langue fourchue*; *être un endormeur de serpents*; (\*to have a snake's tongue/forked tongue; to be a snake charmer);
- [3] **“to be wicked and perfidious”**: **it.** *essere un serpente (a sonagli)*; **pt.** *ser uma serpente* (\*to be a [rattle]snake); **pt.** *ser uma cobra*; *ser uma víbora* (\*to be a snake);<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> **sp.** *amamantar una víbora en su seno*; **pt.** *alimentar uma cobra no seio*; **rs.** *омогреть (/пригреть) змею на груди*; **fr.** *réchauffer un serpent (/une vipère) dans son sein*; **it.** *allevare (/nutrire) una serpe in seno*; **srb.** *čuvati guju u nedrima*. Equivalentents in other languages are quoted by Dobrovolskij & Piirainen (2005: 329).

<sup>29</sup> **lat.** *colubrem in sinu fovere*. Aesop's fable *The farmer and the viper*.

<sup>30</sup> Also called *emblems* (Langlotz 2006) or *culturemes* (Pamies 2007; Luque Nadal 2009; Luque Durán 2009).

<sup>31</sup> from Sevilla et al. (2009). This is a good example of how bad connotations prevail on denotation in the image component: real snakes (almost) cannot ear (the flutes of snake-charmers are a trick to cheat the audience).

<sup>32</sup> The word *anguille* ('eel') is also one of the euphemistic names of the snake, reversing its etymological metaphoric mapping (< lat. *anguilla*, from the I.E root \**ang<sup>w</sup>hui* 'snake').

<sup>33</sup> Krikmann found literal coincidences in several languages of the proverbial image \*the snake may change its skin but not is poison (or *but it is still a snake*), like in **gmn.** *die Schlange wechselt wohl die Haut, aber nicht die Giftzähne* (Latvian; Russian; Persian; Armenian; Georgian; Azeri, Tadzhih, Turkmen).

- [4] **“happiness is never complete”**: **sp.** *no hay cielo sin nubes, ni paraíso sin serpiente* (\*no sky without clouds, no heaven without snakes);
- [5] **“women are dangerous as snakes”**: **it.** *la donna ha la lingua più lunga di sette serpenti* (\*woman has a longer tongue than seven snakes); **cat.** *fa mes mal una dona que cent males serps; fugiu de les dones com de mala serpent* (lit. \*a woman harms more than a hundred evil snakes<sup>34</sup> / flee from women like from an evil snake); **grn.** *kuña ñaña jha mboi rendy ñande mboyare* (\*wicked women and viper’s spit are staining);<sup>35</sup>
- [6] **“to scold /protest /swear/ criticize”**: *decir sapos y culebras*; **pt.** *dizer de alguém cobras e lagartos* (\*to say toads & snakes / snakes & lizards);
- [7] **“a curse /a premeditated dirty trick”**; **pt.** *cobra mandada* {Br.} (\*ordered snake<sup>36</sup>);
- [8] **“the Devil”** **it.** *l’antico serpente* (\*the ancient snake);
- [9] **“a con invented by newspapers when they don’t have real news to publish”**: **sp.** *una serpiente de verano* (\*a summer snake);
- [10] **“to make other people run the risk of one’s own actions”**: **sp.** *con ajena mano sacar la culebra del horado*<sup>37</sup> (\*to catch the snake out of its hole with other people’s hand);
- [11] **“to become very angry”**: **pt.** *feito uma bicha* (\*converted into a snake); *como cobra que perdeu a peçonha* (\*like a snake which lost its poison)<sup>38</sup>
- [12] **“evil people never improve”**: **pt.** *de cobra não nasce passarinho* (\*a snake will not give birth to a little bird);<sup>39</sup> **fin.** *kyl kärme kärmeen siittää* (\*a snake will give birth to a snake); **gmn.** *ein Schlange legt keine Taubenei* (\*a snake doesn’t lay pigeon eggs);<sup>40</sup>
- [13] **“male homosexual”** **pt.** {Br.} *ser uma bicha /uma bicha louca* \*to be a snake /a mad snake;
- [14] **“to be very cleaver in one activity”** **pt.** {Br.} *ser um cobra /cobrão* \*to be a [/big] snake;
- [15] **“to be drunk”**: **sp.** *ir serpenteando /culebreando* (\*to be snaking);

<sup>34</sup> Krikmann quotes Finnish \**marrying a bad wife is the same than marrying a snake* (2001: 9).

<sup>35</sup> Pangrazio (1996: 75).

<sup>36</sup> The literal meaning of *mandada* (\*ordered) is here linked to witchcraft: someone ordered a snake to attack someone else, as a magic curse (Câmara Cascudo 1986: 150).

<sup>37</sup> cf. **gmn.** *mit eines andern Hand die Schlange aus dem Walde holen* (Sevilla et al. 2009).

<sup>38</sup> It seems that Brazilian species of rattlesnakes spit their poison on a leaf before drinking, and feel very angry and desperate, upset by their own helplessness (Câmara Cascudo 1986: 65).

<sup>39</sup> Sevilla et al. (2009), *Op. cit.*

<sup>40</sup> Krikmann (2001: 31, 33).

[16] **“something taboo”** *sp. mentarle la bicha* [/a alguien] \*to mention the snake [ /to someone] ‘to speak about something whose mere name produces anger or fear in the listener’;

[17] **“to be a troublemaker”**; *pt. ser um bicharedo* {Br.} (\*to be a big snake).<sup>41</sup> Muslim tradition shares the negative symbolism of the snake, also reflected by Arabic metaphors: a Mauritanian proverb says *ar. ḥanš əl-gayla llā kātəl walla maktūl* \*midday’s snake kills or must be killed (Ould Mohammed-Baba 2008); one from Egypt says *ar. elli yelā’eb et-ti’bān, la budde l-o men qarṣ* \*though he plays with the snake, he will be bitten anyway (Mehdi 2006: 203), another one from Syria says *ar. al hayya mātāt, w-jallafat ‘aqraba* \*the dead snake has made the scorpion his heir (Mehdi 2006: 328) (meaning ‘to fall from the frying pan into the fire’).

But these connotations are not universal, other cultures may ignore or contradict them. Ancient Greeks used small doses of viper’s poison as a medicine (González Zymla 2007), so Asclepio, son of Apollo and god of the Physicians, was traditionally represented holding a stick with a snake coiled around it, which became the symbol of pharmacy until nowadays. The SNAKE had also a *positive* symbolism in Asian mythology. In India, the *Naja* symbolizes REBIRTH, due to the casting of its skin, and the cobra *Mucalinda* shielded Buddha from the storm when he was sitting in meditation, as we can see in the statues around Thai temples, representing multiple-headed cobras with inflated necks like umbrellas over Buddha’s head. The connotations of the Chinese idiom *huà shé zú qiáo* / *huà shé tiān zú* \*to draw/add legs to a snake (‘to demand too many details or conditions’) are not motivated by the snake itself, it is an allusion to a folk legend in which the snake was not guilty, but the man.<sup>42</sup> Pre-Columbian *Quetzalcōātl* (*feathered snake* in Nahuatl) or *Kukulkán* (*feathered snake* in Mayan) was one of the main Mexican Gods, whose statue, often represented as a snake with a human head, protected the pyramids. The snake itself (*cōātl*) was a symbol of good omen in the Aztec calendar, as well as the “three snakes” (*eyi cōātl*) or “seven snakes” (*chicōme cōātl*). People had wooden snake figures at home as a protection device (*in īxquichtin cōcōah im pihpiyaloh tēchahchān*) (Wimmer 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Examples from other languages of “negative” idiom connotations of snakes may be found in Dobrovol’skij & Piirainen (2005b: 330).

<sup>42</sup> Three men were involved in a drawing contest in which everyone had to draw a snake, the one who would finish first will get a jar of wine. They began to draw snakes on the ground with a branch. The quickest was so in advance that he thought he could even add a few feet to his snake, but one of his rivals took the jug of wine and began to drink it. He tried to stop him: *how can you steal my wine? I was the first to finish the job!* The second replied *have you ever seen a snake with legs?* [http://edu.ocac.gov.tw/culture/chinese/CULTUREESPANOL/Lengua/lengua0302\\_31.htm](http://edu.ocac.gov.tw/culture/chinese/CULTUREESPANOL/Lengua/lengua0302_31.htm).

As for *uniqueness*, the translational point of view is probably responsible of the confusion between this concept and *cultural markedness*<sup>43</sup> while, actually, nothing prevents the most “local” cultural component from having *symbolic equivalents* in other cultures. An idiom like **rs.** *ехать в Тулу со своим самоваром* (\*to go to Tula with one’s own *samovar*) is typically *cultural* but it is however perfectly translatable: **eng.** *to carry coal to Newcastle*; **it.** *portare vasi a Samo*; *portare fiasconi a Vallombrosa*; **fr.** *vendre des coquilles à ceux qui viennent de Saint-Michel*.<sup>44</sup> As Sabban points out, culture has to do with *modes of experiencing the world, in particular modes of conceptualizing and evaluating it as offered by language, shared by members of a group or society in a specific living environment* (2007: 592). Therefore, cross-linguistic *uniqueness* is neither its sufficient nor its necessary condition. Culture embedded in language is manifested by the productivity of stable links between each “pre-linguistic” symbol and the semantic structure of several figurative expressions.<sup>45</sup> Sabban points out that the concept of *cultural boundness* is more relevant than *cultural specificity* because it allows for cross-linguistic similarities, (2008: 231), in fact, both concepts are not on the same level. The latter is based on quantitative and cross-linguistic criteria while the former has to do with qualitative and intra-linguistic criteria which may affect any degree of linguistic similarity.

### 3. From language to culture?

Phraseologists generally assume that the relation between cultural symbols and idioms is uni-directional: cultural knowledge motivates lexical meanings, not the opposite (Teliya 1996: 55–59; Dobrovol’skij 1998: 58; Sabban 2007: 598). In phraseology, this cognitive *path* affects especially the connotative level, which is sometimes more stable than the denotative one.<sup>46</sup> Never-

<sup>43</sup> For example, Bardosi (2009: 41) states that the HAND is a “national specific symbol” in **fr.** *prendre son courage à deux mains* (\*to take one’s courage with both hands) just because the hand does not appear in its Hungarian equivalent idioms.

<sup>44</sup> Szerszunowicz (2009) quotes other examples from Central Europe: **gmn.** *in den Rhein Wasser tragen*; **pl.** *wozić wodę do Wisły*; **rmn.** *cara apa-n Dunare*; **hun.** *a Dunábe vizet hord*.

<sup>45</sup> Baranov & Dobrovol’skij (2008: 250) state that a semantic component *will be considered as culturally relevant only if it has consequences in the interpretation of other systems of signs related to national culture, or if it is perceived as conditioned by these systems* (Cf. also Grzybek 1994; Teliya et al. 1998: 64; Piirainen 2007).

<sup>46</sup> E.g., the derogatory Spanish idiom *rata de alcantarilla* (\*sewer rat) is applied to a highly heterogeneous category of persons with one common point: whatever they do they are “morally disgusting” (Med 2007).

theless, this deterministic influence of culture on language can sometimes be reversed (as linguistic relativism postulated as a more general rule), and the name of the component may influence its symbolism and connotations (Pamies 2007; Monteiro 2007). If the literal meaning of this name is ambiguous, two symbols may merge into a single one which becomes polysemic.

It is the case of *eagle* and *vulture* in Arabic phraseology (both named either *uqāb* or *nser*): though they are distant cousins,<sup>47</sup> both birds inherited this confusion in their phraseological developments (cf. Pamies et al. 2009). It is still more clear for the OWL in Germanic languages, **gm.** *Eule* (**eng.** *Owl* **nl.** *uil* **sw.** *uggla* **dn.** *ugle*) confuses into a single concept two complete families of night birds, with separate symbolisms in other cultures (Pamies 2007).<sup>48</sup>

We shall focus here on the Spanish word *paloma* (< lat. vulg. *palumba*) and Russian *голубь* (*gólub'*). Both words designate all the species of *Palumbidae* including the (white savage) *dove* and also the (domestic blue-grey) *pigeon*, among other *birds* (Pamies 2008a).<sup>49</sup> These meanings are not felt as polysemic by Spaniards or Russians, for them they are a single concept, “really” one bird. This explains that they may be components of idioms with contradictory connotations. The positive values could be related to the Roman symbolic bird of Venus, the Biblical myth of Noah’s Arch,<sup>50</sup> the Christian representation of the Holy Spirit,<sup>51</sup> which in fact “should” have affected only the DOVE if it

<sup>47</sup> within the Order of *Accipitriformes*, or *Falconiformes* depending on the taxonomies.

<sup>48</sup> *Strigidae* and *Tytonidae*. The birds which were the symbol of Athena in ancient Greece, motivating **eng.** *wise as an owl*, were in fact small birds from the *Athene Noctua* genus, confused by their Germanic name with the big *Bubo bubo* and the frightening *Tyto Alba*, among others, unlike other languages which make a better distinction (**sp.** *mochuelo* vs. *lechuza* vs. *búho*; **rs.** *сова* vs. *филин*). The linguistic ambiguity of the component may explain the semiotic paradox between **eng.** *wise as an owl* and *stupid as an owl* (Pamies 2007). In Russian ФИЛИН is “astonished” and “unsociable” while СОБА is “ugly” and “bad omen” (Kut’eva 2009; Kozlova 2001).

<sup>49</sup> No matter if they are blue-grey and domestic (*paloma mensajera* = *почтовый голубь* “messenger pigeon”) or white and savage (*paloma brava* = *сизый голубь* “savage dove”). In fact, *paloma* designates more than 300 species of birds from the *Columbidae* family. The Academic Dictionary defines it as *cualquiera de las aves que tienen la mandíbula superior abovedada en la punta y los dedos libres; como la paloma propiamente dicha y la tórtola* (DRAE 1992, асер. 7). The masculine word *palomo* designates the male while the feminine *paloma* designates both sexes and the masculine *pichón* designates the offspring, whatever its sex.

<sup>50</sup> **sp.** ...*la paloma regresó a él, y he aquí, en su pico traía una hoja de olivo recién arrancada*; **eng.** ...*the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf!* (Genesis 8: 11). **rs.** ... *голубь возвратился к нему в вечернее время, и вот, свежий масличный лист во рту у него...* The Arabic idiom *ḥatāma low grāb?* (\*dove or raven?: “was it successful or not?”) is anchored on the same biblical background (Mehdi 2006: 296).

<sup>51</sup> **sp.** ...*y el Espíritu Santo descendió sobre Él en forma corporal, como una paloma*; **eng.** ...*and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove*; **rs.** ...*и нисшел Дух Святой в телесном виде, как голубь* (Luke 3: 22).

was not for this lexical confusion. The negative connotations are related to the bird's dwelling full of droppings, which in fact "should" have affected only the PIGEON. Spanish and Russian idioms or proverbs mix both contradictory values. English translation, even if literal, is forced to choose among *dove* and *pigeon*, and – in the case of idioms – their figurative meaning is the only cue for the correct choice:

**Positive: 1 [INNOCENCE] sp.** *ser una paloma sin hiel* \*be a {Dove/Pigeon}<sup>52</sup> without gall; *ser inocente (/cándido) como una paloma* \*to be innocent/candid as a {D/P}; *el juez perverso, condena a la paloma y libra al cuervo* \*the evil judge condemns the {D/P} and releases the raven; **rs.** *невинный как голубь* \*innocent as a {D/P}; *чистый как /чист аки голубь* \*clean as a {D/P}<sup>53</sup>. **2 [CHASTITY] sp.** *casta como una paloma* \*chaste as a {D/P}; *чистый как голубь* \*clean as a {D/P}<sup>54</sup>. **3 [BEAUTY] sp.** *hermosa como una paloma*; \*beautiful as a {D/P}. **4 [FREEDOM] sp.** *como paloma en el aire* \*like a {D/P} in the air; *libre como una paloma* \*free as a {D/P}. **5 [PEACE] la paloma de la paz \*the {D/P} of peace; *ser del bando de las palomas* \*to be on the side of {Ds/Ps}; *pacífico como una paloma* \*pacific as a {D/P}; *más inofensivo (/manso) que una paloma* \*harmless as a {D/P}; *de águila no nace paloma*<sup>55</sup> \*an eagle will not give birth to a {D/P}; **rs.** *голубь мира* \*the {D/P} of peace; *безобидный как голубь* harmless as a {D/P}; *кроток /кроткий /смирен как голубь* \*meek as a {D/P}. **6 [TENDERNESS]: sp.** *arrullar como una paloma* \*to coo like a {D/P}; *besuquearse como palomas* \*to kiss each other like {Ds/Ps}; *¡pichoncito mío!* \*my little {D/P}!; **rs.** *голуба* \*she- {D/P}; *голубка* \*little she- {D/P}; *пара голубок* \*a pair of little {D/P}; *как два голубя* \*like two {D/P}; *приголубиться* \*{to dove/to pigeon} each other: 'to approach tenderly, to feel tenderness'; **rs.** *ворковать как голубки* to whisper sweet nothings like {Ds/Ps}; *быть /жить как голубь с голубкой* \*to be /live like he- and she- {Ds/Ps}. **7 [CLEANNESS]: sp.** *más limpia que una paloma* \*cleaner than a {D/P}; *más blanco que una paloma* \*whiter than a {D/P}<sup>56</sup>.**

<sup>52</sup> I translate here *paloma(s)* as {Dove(s)/Pigeon(s)}, from now on {D/P}, in order to mark the ambiguity of the word.

<sup>53</sup> Here *чист* "clean" is in its turn figurative ("innocent").

<sup>54</sup> In contrast, *чист* "clean" has here another figurative nuance ("chaste"), though in Christian ideology there is no clear boundary between "purity" and chastity. Denisova & Kut'eva quote also "live" metaphors from literary texts where *голубь* has these connotations (*людей кристальной духовной чистоты*).

<sup>55</sup> *Paloma* is usually opposed to *halcón* ("hawk") in political discourse.

<sup>56</sup> The textual example quoted by Denisova & Kut'eva (*Ibid.*) *mi casa ha de ser blanca como una paloma* (G. García Márquez) ("my house will be white as a D/P", involves at the same

**Negative: 1 [DIRTINESS] sp.** *soltar un palomino*<sup>57</sup> \*to release a small {D/P} “to release droppings in one’s underpants”; *el palomo come oro y caga plomo* \*the {D/P} eats gold and shits plumb;<sup>58</sup> *caga más una vaca que cien palomos* \*a cow shits more than a hundred {D/P}; *el amor es como una paloma: viene te caga y se va* \*love is like a {D/P} it comes, shits on you and goes away; **rs.** *голубка пустит* \*to release a small {D/P} \*to release a fart.<sup>59</sup> **2 [STUPIDITY] sp.** *ser un palomino* \*to be a young {D/P}: “inexperienced and naive young man”;<sup>60</sup> *andar como un palomino atontado* \*to walk like a stunned {D/P}; *alelado como un pichón* \*stunned like a {D/P}; **rs.** *наивный как голубь* \*naïve like a {D/P}. **3 [BAD LUCK] sp.** *cagarle la paloma (a alguien)* \*to be shit by the {D/P}. **4 [THEFT] sp.** *ser como el palomo ladrón* \*to be like the thief-{D/P}; **rs.** *голубь-вор* \*{D/P}-thief. **5 [MALE HOMOSEXUALITY] sp.** *ser (más maricón que) un palomo cojo*<sup>61</sup> \*to be sissy as a lame {D/P};<sup>62</sup> **6 [IDLENESS] rs.** *голубей гонять* \*to disperse/frighten

time literal (colour) metonymic (cleanness) and symbolic (purity) meanings, which discard altogether the *pigeon* in the English translation.

<sup>57</sup> *palomino*: ‘excrement stain in the underwear of a person’ (DRAE acepción 2).

<sup>58</sup> A literary quotation (in Denisova & Kut’eva) shows these value in a non metaphoric use *las jodidas palomas son las ruina de esta ciudad* [E. Galdeano]: \*the fucking Ds/Ps are the ruin of the city.

<sup>59</sup> “портить воздух” (Baranov & Dobrovol’skij (2007: 753).

<sup>60</sup> DRAE acer. 3. A good textual example is the renowned song (quoted by Denisova and Kut’eva): *...pobre tonto, ingenuo charlatán / fui paloma por querer ser gavilán* (“poor stupid naive and talkative man: I’ve been a D/P while I wanted to be a sparrowhawk”). The derogatory context makes me interpret now *paloma* as a “pigeon”, though, as a native who knows this song since many decades, I never felt before any need to “choose” one of both birds, this analytic operation has been forced by the translation into English (and I am still not sure that this choice is the “correct” one).

<sup>61</sup> Pigeons have a strange way to waddle because of their weak and quirky feet (cf. **eng.** *pigeon-toed*), according to Palmatier (1995), their unbalanced walk probably suggested to Spaniards an effeminate attitude. Other idioms with the same global meaning, **sp.** *ir soltando plumas* (\*to lose one’s feathers), *tener pluma* (\*to have feather) are also related to birds, but the idiom *tener más plumas que un palomo cojo* (quoted by Denisova and Kut’eva) does’nt seem a reliable argument to connect them etymologically, since the latter is a recent humorous creative neologism, mixing two previously mentioned idioms: \*to have more feathers than a lame {dove/pigeon} (I never heard it before, and there is only one quotation in Google [april 2010]).

<sup>62</sup> I did not found this value in Russian, however, a derogatory slang name of male homosexuals is *голубой* (*golubój* \*light blue), etymologically related to *golub’*: both come from the indo-European root /\*ghel/ “to shine”, which has given later different (light) colour names like **gmn.** *gelb* “yellow”, **rs.** *golubój* “light blue”, but also bird names, like **lith.** *gulbė* “swan” or **lat.** *columba* (“dove”) (Chernykh 2001). However, it seems that Russian speakers never connect semantically /*gólub’*/ and /*golubój*/ in spite of their striking morpho-phonological similarity. However, the loan word *нижон* (from French *pigeon*) designates also “homosexual males” in Russian slang (Vercher 2004: 52).



the {D/P}: 'to waste one's time doing useless things'; (this value is not found in Spanish).

The antithetic values (cleanness & dirtiness) attributed to *paloma* produce a connotative ambiguity which disappears in French or English, where each of both birds has its own name: **fr.** *colombe* designates the white savage DOVE; while **fr.** *pigeon* designates the domesticated or urban PIGEON. Positive connotations correspond only to the "holy", clean and pacific *colombe* (the perfect counterpart of the satanic *snake*), and the negative ones to the dirty, coward and despicable *pigeon*, and both symbols are mutually unrelated.<sup>63</sup>

**Colombe** (positive): 1 [INNOCENCE] **fr.** *innocent comme une colombe* \*innocent as a dove; *la bave du crapaud n'atteint pas la blanche colombe* \*the spittle of the toad does not reach the white dove; 2 [PEACE] **fr.** *la colombe de la paix* \*the dove of peace; *être du parti des colombes* \*to be on the side of the doves; *l'aigle n'engendre point la colombe* \*an eagle will not give birth to a dove; *craignez la colère de la colombe* \*fear the anger of the dove ("pacific people may become cruel if they undergo too many damages"). 3 [CLEANNESS] **fr.** *blanche comme une colombe* \*whiter than a dove. 4 [CHASTITY] **fr.** *pure comme une colombe* \*pure as a dove. 5 [FREEDOM] **fr.** *libre comme une colombe* \*free as a dove. 6 [BEAUTY] **fr.** *belle comme une colombe* \*beautiful as a dove. 7 [TENDERNESS] **fr.** *doux comme une colombe* \*sweet as a dove; *ma colombe!* \*my dove!

**Pigeon** (negative): 1 [DIRTINESS] **fr.** *qui veut tenir nette sa maison n'y mette ni femme, ni prêtre ni pigeon* \*he who wants to keep its house clean, must not put there any female, priest nor pigeon; 2 [NAIVETY] **fr.** *prendre quelqu'un pour un pigeon* \*to take someone for a pigeon 'to treat him/her as if he/she was stupid'; *être le pigeon (dans une affaire)* \*to be the pigeon [in a business] 'to be cheated'; *pigeonner quelqu'un* \*to pigeon someone 'to cheat someone'; *faire des pigeons*; \*to make pigeons 'to cheat people'; *le pigeon est au colombier* \*the pigeon is in the pigeon-house 'he is being cheated'; *être naïf comme un pigeon* \*to be naïve as a pigeon; *se faire avoir comme un pigeon* \*to be cheated as a pigeon. 3 [THEFT] **fr.** *plumer le pigeon* \*to pluck the pigeon ('to take to someone else everything he had'); *il ne faut pas laisser de semer par crainte des pigeons* \*we must not stop to sow for fear of the pigeons.

<sup>63</sup> In contrast with Spanish or Russian, **fr.** *colombe* includes only a part of the *columbidae* family, like *leptofila*, *columbina* or *metriopelia* genres, and also (probably because of their colour) white turtle-doves and albino pigeons; while **fr.** *pigeon* includes other species of the *columbidae* family, especially *columba* genus, urban or domesticated species like *columba palumbus* or *columba livia*.

English behaves like French in this point: the DOVE appears in positively connotated expressions, like **eng.** *the dove of peace; to be a dove; or an eagle does not hatch a dove*, and the figurative PIGEON is ‘a stupid person that deserves to be cheated’ as in **eng.** *pigeon drop* or *to pluck a pigeon*. This opposition is especially evident in the “connotative minimal pair” **eng.** *to be a dove* (‘pacifist’) vs. *to be pigeon-livered* (‘coward’), whose contact point is here the fact that none of both birds fights (Palmatier 1995).

In the last decades, the pigeons have become a serious problem in many cities, but their Spanish ambiguous name makes it difficult to convince people not to protect and nourish them. Journalists are thus spreading a new metaphor: *ratas del aire/ratas del cielo*<sup>64</sup> (which were loaned from **eng.** *rats of the sky/rats of the air*), to justify the fines imposed by local authorities to their “supporters”.<sup>65</sup> Another interesting contrast is the apparent contradiction of the HUNT domain in French, where we find *pigeon* instead of *colombe*: it could be a euphemism to avoid confessing to chase (/eat) the “Holy Spirit’s bird”. This would explain the presence of this component also in **fr.** *tir au pigeon* (**eng.** *clay pigeon shooting*), where the purchased bird was a dove not a pigeon, or in the proverb *point de pigeon pour une obole* (\*you don’t get a pigeon for a farthing), coming from La Fontaine’s fable about an innocent dove saved from being eaten by a villain.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps there is also a relation between this euphemistic use (to call the hunted doves *pigeons*) and their association to stupidity (< “easy to catch”), consistent with the general connotative distribution. In Spanish, *paloma* also needed to be less ambiguous in the semantic field of HUNT, for the same reason, so the French word *pigeon* was borrowed as **sp.** *pichón*. The current sport *clay pigeon shooting* is called **sp.** *tiro pichón* (from **fr.** *tir au pigeon*) though the hunted birds were doves. It is interesting to notice that Russian also imported the French *pigeon* only for (human) derogatory meanings: *пужон* means ‘dude, dandy; coxcomb, pretentious person’ and also ‘homosexual man’ (Vercher 2004: 52), but does not designate the bird.

<sup>64</sup> This recent idiomatic neologism, borrowed from English, has quickly gaining popularity, there are already 15200 and 3880 quotations – respectively – in Google search engine [March 2010].

<sup>65</sup> The newspaper *El Mundo* ([www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2010/01/03/andalucia\\_malaga/1262515093.html](http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2010/01/03/andalucia_malaga/1262515093.html)) published that the local authorities of Malaga punished a woman with a fine of 3756 € for nourishing pigeons in the street. In a web blog, many people expressed opinions criticizing this decision, the majority defended not only the lady but also the *palomas*. The few bloggers who disagreed used in their arguments the (foreign) neologic metaphor *ratas del cielo / del aire*. [www.meneame.net/story/multan-3.756-euros-mujer-alimentar-palomas](http://www.meneame.net/story/multan-3.756-euros-mujer-alimentar-palomas). Retrieved: 12 March 2010.

<sup>66</sup> *La colombe et la fourmi*. On the conversion process from fables to idioms and proverbs, in general, see Mokienko (2000: 233), Soto & González (2009).

Therefore, the strong similarity between these Spanish and Russian idioms, and the striking contrast to their English/French equivalents, are not due to cultural reasons, but to linguistic properties of their zoonymic component. In this case, a linguistic fact becomes the cause of a cultural symbolism instead of its consequence, illustrating how the perception of reality can be influenced by linguistic categorization (as the relativistic hypothesis defended): *languages are more to us than systems of thought-transference. They are invisible garments that drape themselves about our spirit and give a predetermined form to all its symbolic expression* (Sapir 1921: XI: 1).

#### 4. Conclusions

A. Zoonymic metaphors are so abundant and heterogeneous that they provide examples of almost all the phenomena ruling metaphoric motivation and productivity.

B. Conceptual metaphors include *culturally bound* idioms, which, in their turn, may be *ethno-specific* or not, while the distinction *unique* vs. *universal* metaphors is independent from motivation types, which are qualitative.

C. The dependency of figurative language from cultural symbols may sometime be reversed: the word designating the symbol may affect the symbol itself. This apparent paradox may be explained by the fact that, if culture includes folk beliefs, it also includes beliefs on language itself. Figurative idioms seem a good domain to study this feed back between language, thought and reality.

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## Zoosymbolika i kompetencja metaforyczna

### Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zbadanie semantycznych mechanizmów, które motywują figuratywne zleksykalizowane stałe połączenia wyrazowe w subkorpusie frazeologizmów faunicznych, tj. związków, które mają w swoim składzie nazwy zwierząt. Materiał, który został wykorzystany w analizie, pochodzi z kilku języków. Autor artykułu skupia się na kulturowej motywacji idiomów, przedstawiając również możliwość zajścia odwrotnego procesu, tzn. wywierania wpływu przez sam leksykon danego języka na obraz świata i kulturę.

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## **Proverb Introducers in a Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Perspective. A contrastive study of English and Polish tags used to introduce proverbs**

**Abstract.** This paper is an attempt to compare the forms and usage of proverb introducers in English and in Polish. It has often been observed that the word *proverb* is used less often to introduce proverbs in English than its equivalents in other languages, and its relatively low frequency in the British National Corpus as compared to the frequencies of its equivalents in the corpora of Polish or Czech (cf. Čermák 2004) seems to support this claim. The use of the word *proverb* is likely to be related to the status of proverbs and language-specific ways of speaking, therefore an attempt is made here to discuss the use of *proverb* and its Polish equivalent *przysłowie* with reference to English and Polish cultural history.

**Key words:** *proverb, introducer, Polish, English, cross-cultural*

### **1. Introduction**

Research on proverbs is impressively extensive: many books have been published on the use of proverbs by famous writers, on the employment of proverbs in advertising and psychological tests, as well as on the use and origins of individual proverbs. In linguistics, however, proverbs seem to be a marginal topic. The low profile of the proverb in linguistics may partly be explained by the general disinterest in relations between language and culture in much of modern linguistics and the low status of proverbs in contemporary learned culture. As Obelkevich (1994) observes, in England, proverbs were expelled from the learned culture in the eighteenth century, and have never regained the position they enjoyed in Middle English and Early Modern English. It seems likely that a similar tendency can be observed in other European countries, where the development of science and technology

was accompanied by the loss of importance of traditional wisdom. However, proverbs do continue to be important tools of communication in modern societies, and their usage provides valuable material for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies.

It has been noted by linguists that when proverbs are quoted in English, they are rarely labelled as such, i.e. metalinguistic tags used to introduce them rarely contain the word *proverb*; instead, native speakers of English seem to prefer to use such tags as *as the old saying goes* or *you know what they say* (cf. Goddard 2009). In other languages, e.g. Polish or Czech (cf. Čermák 2004), proverbs are more likely to be introduced by means of metalinguistic tags containing the equivalent of the word *proverb*, (e.g. Pol. *jak mówi przysłowie* 'as the proverb says'). Čermák provides two explanations for the apparent avoidance of the word *proverb* in English: "(1) language users are not able to assign proper labels to the forms they use, (2) they purposefully avoid the word for a reason impossible to specify", and adds that "Czech speakers do not seem to have such difficulty in identifying a proverb and its linguistic label as the English speakers do". I believe that the reported "difficulty in identifying a proverb" and the avoidance of the word *proverb* in English can be explained with reference to England's cultural history.

The aim of the present paper is thus to investigate the way proverbs are introduced in English and Polish, and to examine the use of the word *proverb* and its Polish equivalent *przysłowie* with reference to the cultural history of Poland and England. The study is corpus based. It draws material from the British National Corpus (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>) and the IPI PAN corpus of modern Polish (<http://korpus.pl/>).

## 2. Proverb introducers: a short characteristics

Proverb introducers are words and phrases used by speakers to signal that they are going to use a proverb or that they have just used it. In English they include such expressions as *according to the proverb*, *as the old saying goes*, *they say*, etc. In Polish, proverbs are introduced by such metalinguistic tags as *jak mówi przysłowie*, *zgodnie z przysłowiem*, *zgodnie ze starym powiedzeniem*, etc. Proverbs are also introduced by conjunctions, e.g. *but* (Pol *ale*) or adverbs, e.g. *sometimes* (Pol *czasami*). In both languages, metalinguistic tags may precede as well as follow proverbs; sometimes tags are also inserted in the middle of the proverb text.

### 3. Proverb introducers in English

As already mentioned, contemporary tendencies in the use of proverb introducers in English have been studied by Čermák (2004). He selected 20 proverbs with high frequency in the British National Corpus, examined metalinguistic qualifiers used to introduce them and compared the results he obtained with his findings for Czech. The proverbs he used in his analysis are:

**Table 1. Proverbs used in Čermák's study**

	Proverb	Frequency in the BNC
1.	<i>You can't have your cake and eat it</i>	42
2.	<i>There is no such thing as a free lunch</i>	36
3.	<i>Prevention is better than cure</i>	36
4.	<i>Chickens come home to roost</i>	31
5.	<i>Every cloud has a silver lining</i>	22
6.	<i>Better late than never</i>	18
7.	<i>Discretion is best part of valour</i>	15
8.	<i>All's well that ends well</i>	14
9.	<i>Forewarned is forearmed</i>	13
10.	<i>A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush</i>	13
11.	<i>Let bygones be bygones</i>	12
12.	<i>Practice makes perfect</i>	12
13.	<i>Don't look a gift horse in the mouth</i>	12
14.	<i>Like father like son</i>	11
15.	<i>An eye for an eye</i>	11
16.	<i>An apple a day keeps the doctor away</i>	11
17.	<i>Once bitten twice shy</i>	9
18.	<i>Two heads are better than one</i>	8
19.	<i>Charity begins at home</i>	8
20.	<i>Too many cooks spoil the broth</i>	8

Čermák's study shows that in both English and Czech, proverbs are introduced by four broad classes of tags. He grouped the English ones as follows:

- (1) nouns, such as *axiom, proverb, maxim, adage, saying, rule, principle, fact, message, conviction, phrase, argument, cliché* (often followed by *that*, e.g. *message that*)

- (2) verbs, such as *remember, conclude, comment, decide, assert, point out, counter*
- (3) phrases, such as *as they say, mind you, so it is said, they say that, on the basis/premise that, to quote X, or*
- (4) other, mostly adverbs or conjunctions, such as *always, really, but, though, if – then, definitely, well, so.*

Less frequent or more extended introducers include such expressions as *commenting, he decided, coining the phrase, the grim fact that..., but the idea was that...* or references to their authors, such as in *All's well that ends well, to quote Shakespeare.*

The top 5 introducers in Čermák's study are: *saying* (7x), *always* (7x), *they say that* (5x), *decide* (5x), and *principle* (4x), while "the obvious candidate, being a direct name English has here, namely *proverb*, has only a marginal frequency (1x), being superceded by *saying* (7x), or, to a lesser extent, by *maxim* (2x), *adage* (2x), *axiom* (2x) and the like". The top 5 Czech introducers which he identified are: *heslo* (*slogan* 30x), *příslovní* (*proverb* 16x), *platit* (*hold* 14x), *ale* (*but* 14x), *zásada* (12x). In both languages nominal introducers turned out to be more common than all the other types.

There are also numerous cases of the use of proverbs without any introducers (about 80%), a tendency which seems more common in English than in both Czech and Polish. Interestingly, Čermák's findings are remarkably consistent with Honeck's (1997) illustration of "proverbs in action" in English. Honeck describes four situations of proverb use, three of which contain no metalinguistic qualifiers, and one containing the introducer *remember*. None of the examples of proverb tags which Honeck has selected to discuss the way proverbs are used in English contains the word *proverb*. Instead, he chose such tags as: *Well, you know what they say*, and *As the saying goes* (Honeck 1997: 16).

#### 4. The use of the word *proverb* in the English corpus

There are 99 occurrences of the word *proverb* in the British National Corpus (100 million words), not all of which are used to introduce actual proverbs. In 4 cases the word appears in texts discussing the use of proverbs in medicine; in 2 cases it is listed next to other phraseological units in linguistic papers. This leaves us with 91 occurrences of the word referring actual proverbs or proverb use. Some of those cases are comments on someone's use of proverbs, e.g. *Lewis Carroll used an English **proverb**, He paused, letting the crowd dwell on the **proverb**..., His favourite **proverb** was..., ... realized the truth ... of the **proverb***. Others refer to the meaning of some proverbs, e.g. *I still don't*

*understand what that **proverb** means, if there wasn't a **proverb** to fit then it was time someone wrote one, Needs must, this well-worn **proverb** goes right out of the window, Haydon realized the truth, he said, of the **proverb**, Who goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing.*

Interestingly, in 42 cases the word *proverb* is used to introduce a foreign proverb, eg.: *There is a Danish **proverb**..., so runs a Burmese **proverb***, or *As the Chinese **proverb** says..., As a Chinese **proverb** has it*. This may suggest that foreign proverbs are more likely to be introduced as proverbs than native ones, the reason being perhaps that in the case of foreign proverbs, which may be unknown to the addressee(s), speakers may feel the need to give them the appropriate label.

It seems that in English, proverb introducers typically precede the proverbs they are used with (Čermák 2004). Expressions containing the word *proverb* which are used in this position include:

- [as] the proverb says /said (6x)
- as a proverb has it (5x)
- there's a proverb (5x)
- we have the old proverb that [states] (3x)
- the proverb [that] (2x)
- an/one old proverb runs (2x)
- according to the proverb (1x)
- remember the old proverb (1x)
- in the words of the proverb (1x)
- a [Chinese] proverb has it that (1x)
- as a Spanish proverb puts it (1x)
- An American Indian proverb cautions (1x).

Tags which follow proverbs include:

- says [said] the proverb (5x)
- as/like the proverb says (2x)
- runs/ran a proverb (2x)
- so runs a Burmese proverb (1x)
- as the old Jewish proverb has it (1x).

There are also more elaborate introducers, as in: *I go right along with the never look a gift horse in the mouth proverb* or *His favourite proverb must be....* In the BNC there are also some allusions to proverbs, e.g. *as the fish in the proverb*.

In addition to the noun *proverb*, proverbial expressions are introduced with the adjective *proverbial*, which has a higher frequency in the BNC than the word *proverb*: 161 occurrences, and the adverb *proverbially*, which however is much less frequent: only 19 occurrences. Examples from the BNC include:

- *This is not the **proverbial** free lunch.*
- *He looked greener than the **proverbial** grass to her.*
- *Naturally, there is the **proverbial** robin – well, robins to be precise.*
- *It is prophets who **proverbially** have no honour in their own country.*

The adverb *proverbially* is both less frequent in the BNC and less often used to refer to actual proverbs. In many cases it is used to introduce commonly held opinions, which seems to be the case in: *Venetian drivers are **proverbially** supposed to be the worst in Italy.*

There are three nouns in the BNC whose meaning is similar to that of the word *proverb* and whose frequency in the corpus is comparable, i.e. *adage* (115x), *saying* (a *saying* 48x, *old saying* 59x) and *the maxim* (94x). They are also (but not exclusively) used to introduce proverbs, e.g.:

- *Indeed, the old **adage**: ‘spare the rod and spoil the child’ has much wisdom.*
- *The old **adage** ‘you only get what you pay for’ doesn’t always apply.*
- *Thus his conduct very well illustrates the **maxim** ‘Look before you leap’.*
- *It is an old **saying** that you cannot tell a book by its cover.*
- *But there is a **saying**, is there not: ‘Man proposes, and God disposes!’.*

Such tags may also be used to introduce other linguistic items, for example *a saying* may refer to expressions used by individuals or groups of people, e.g.: *In the Billy Graham team we had a **saying** But that was yesterday.*

Čermák’s analysis of the use of such introducers as *proverb*, *adage*, *as they say*, *principle*, *they say*, *saying* in the whole corpus, not only with the twenty proverbs discussed above, shows that of all these, the word *proverb* is the most standard introducer of proverbs, in the sense that it almost always refers to proverbs, while the other ones also frequently occur with idioms and other types of expressions. A notable exception is the word *adage*, whose primary function also seems to be that of proverb introducer.

## 5. Proverb introducers in Polish

Polish proverbs analyzed in the present study have been selected from the list of 56 proverbs published in Szpila (2003). Szpila’s list includes proverbs which he found to be most common among students of Jagiellonian University in Krakow in Poland. Many proverbs from his list do not appear in the IPI PAN corpus, so only those which are evidenced in the corpus have been selected for the analysis. The English equivalents of the proverbs listed below are quoted after Pająk’s *Dictionary of Proverbs and Sayings. English-Polish. Polish-English* (2007). The equivalents which are actual proverbs are written in italics to distinguish them from translations, which are not italicized.



**Table 2. The Polish proverbs selected for the analysis**

	Proverb	Frequency in the IPI PAN corpus
1.	<i>Nie ma tego złego, co by na dobre nie wyszło</i> (Every cloud has a silver lining)	44
2.	<i>Mądry Polak po szkodzie</i> (lit. A Pole is wise after the event)	35
3.	<i>Gdzie dwóch się bije, tam trzeci korzysta</i> (lit. When two people fight, the third one benefits)	32
4.	<i>Jedna jaskółka wiosny nie czyni</i> (One swallow doesn't make a summer)	12
5.	<i>Raz na wozie, raz pod wozem</i> (He that falls today may rise tomorrow)	12
6.	<i>Nie wszystko złoto, co się świeci</i> (All that glitters is not gold)	11
7.	<i>Darowanemu koniowi nie patrzy się w zęby</i> (Don't look a gift horse in the mouth)	11
8.	<i>Prawdziwych przyjaciół poznaje się w biedzie</i> (A friend in need is a friend indeed)	11
9.	<i>Lepszy wróbel w garści niż gołąb na dachu</i> (A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush)	10
10.	<i>Niedaleko pada jabłko od jabłoni</i> (The apple doesn't fall far from the tree)	8
11.	<i>Czym skorupka za młodu nasiąknie tym na starość trąci</i> (What youth is used to, age remembers)	7
12.	<i>Kwiecień plecień bo przeplata, trochę zimy trochę lata</i> (April weather, rain and sunshine both together)	5
13.	<i>Nie czyni drugiemu, co tobie niemiłe</i> (Do to others as you would have them do to you)	3
14.	<i>Bez pracy nie ma kołaczy</i> (He that will not work, shall not eat)	3
15.	<i>Jak sobie pościelesz, tak się wyśpisz</i> (As you make your bed, so you must lie on/in it)	3
16.	<i>Mądrej głowie dość dwie słowie</i> (One word is enough to a wise man)	2
17.	<i>Mowa jest srebrem, a milczenie złotem</i> (Speech is silver, but silence is golden)	2
18.	<i>Dopóty dzban wodę nosi, dopóki mu się ucho nie urwie</i> (The pitcher goes often to the well, but it is broken at last)	1
19.	<i>Nosił wilk razy kilka, ponieśli i wilka</i> (At length the fox is brought to the furrier)	1
20.	<i>Jak się wejdzie między wrony, trzeba krakać jak i one</i> (When in Rome, do as the Romans do)	1

The variety of tags used to introduce the analysed proverbs is rather wide: over 60 different expressions, and only 7 cases of proverbs used without any introducers. The top 7 introducers are: *przysłowie* 'proverb' (26x), the conjunction *ale* 'but' (23x), *zasada* 'rule' (16x), *porzekadło* 'old saying/proverb' (8x), *powiedzenie* 'saying' (8x), and *mówi się* 'they say' (8x), *można powiedzieć* 'you can say' (7x). As in the case of English and Czech proverb introducers, Polish tags can be grouped under four main headings:

- (1) nouns: *przysłowie* (proverb), *porzekadło* (proverb, old saying), *powiedzenie* (saying), *zasada* (principle), *maksyma* (maxim), *reguła* (rule), *hasło* (slogan), *refleksja* (reflection, afterthought), *wniosek* (conclusion), *stwierdzenie* (statement), *założenie* (assumption), *prawda* (truth), *dewiza* (motto);
- (2) verbs: *okazało się* (turn out), *pamiętaj* (remember), *zapomniał* (forget), *stwierdzał* (state), *powtarzam* (repeat), *mówimy* (say);
- (3) phrases: *mówi się* (lit. it is said), *jak to mówią* (as they say), *w sumie* (all in all), *jak widać* (as can be seen), *wiadomo że* (lit. it is known that), *no cóż* (well);
- (4) others, mainly conjunctions and adverbs: *ale* (but), *ponieważ* (because), *bo* (because), *wszak* (after all), *więc* (so/therefore), *skoro* (since), *choć* (although/even though), *często* (often), *ponoć* (supposedly), *podobno* (supposedly), *może* (maybe), *czyli* (so), *jednak* (but/yes), *przecież* (but/yes).

As in Čermák's (2004) study, also here "it seems that semantics of proverbs may influence the choice of introducers in some cases". For example, Čermák observes that "the co-occurrence of the verb *decide* with the proverb *Discretion is best part of valour* in almost 50 percent does not seem to be due to chance only". Among the Polish proverbs analysed here, there are some for which the noun *przysłowie* (and, more generally, nominal tags) is a common introducer, e.g. *Mądry Polak po szkodzie* (lit. A Pole is wise after the event) is introduced with the noun *przysłowie* (9x), *porzekadło* (3), *zasada* (3), *powiedzenie* (2x), *maksyma* (1x), *hasło* (1x), *refleksja* (1x), *wniosek* (1x), and the proverb *Gdzie dwóch się bije, tam trzeci korzysta* (lit. When two people fight, the third one benefits) is introduced by *przysłowie* (10x), *zasada* (5x), *założenie* (1x), *stwierdzenie* (1), *refleksja* (1x). There are also proverbs in the corpus which are never introduced with the word *przysłowie*, e.g. *Lepszy wróbel w garści niż gołąb na dachu* (A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush) and *Nie wszystko złoto, co się świeci* (All that glitters is not gold). In the case of these two the absence of the word *proverb* in their introducers may be accidental and related to their low frequency, however, the proverb with the highest frequency among those analysed here, *Nie ma tego złego, co by na dobre nie wyszło* (Every cloud has a silver lining), is introduced by a tag including the word *proverb* only once. Instead, it is introduced by numerous conjunctions and adverbs, such

as *ale* (8x), *więc* (4x), *choć* (3x), *skoro* (2x), *w sumie* (2x), *ponieważ* (1x). Thus, some connection between the proverb's meaning and its introducers does seem to exist but the present findings do not provide sufficient and reliable data for this kind of analysis.

## 6. The use of the word *przysłowie* in the Polish corpus

The word *przysłowie* has a relatively high frequency in the Polish corpus: 788 occurrences per 250 million words, i.e. 315 per 100 million words. It needs to be mentioned here that in an inflectional language like Polish, the frequency of equivalents of such English words as *proverb* or *saying* has to be established on the basis of the frequencies of all their inflectional forms. The IPI PAN corpus searches for each of the inflectional forms separately, thus, 788 is a sum of the frequencies of all singular forms of the word, i.e. *przysłowie* (552x), *przysłowiu* (47x), *przysłowiem* (69x) and *przysłowia* (120x). The last form, *przysłowia*, can be both singular and plural in Polish, but the plural instances have been disregarded in the present analysis, mainly because they are less frequent and are less often used to introduce proverbs.

There are numerous tags with the word *przysłowie* in the IPI PAN corpus, e.g.: *jak mówi przysłowie* (as the proverb says) is used 25 times, its slightly old-fashioned synonym *jak powiada przysłowie* (as the proverb says) occurs 9 times, *zgodnie z przysłowiem* (according to the proverb) has 10 instances, *jak w przysłowiu* (as in the proverb) has 7 occurrences, and *stare przysłowie mówi* (an old proverb says that) has 5 occurrences. The word *proverb* is used with such modifiers as *stare* (old: 69x), *polskie* (Polish: 64x), *znane* (well known: 34x), *ludowe* (folk: 27x). There are also numerous cases of foreign proverbs introduced with the word *proverb* preceded by an adjective referring to their country of origin, eg. *chińskie przysłowie* (a Chinese proverb).

In most cases such introducers precede the proverbs they are used with, but occasionally the tag is inserted into the proverb text, as in:

- *Ryba, jak mówi przysłowie, psuje się od głowy* (lit. Fish, as the proverb says, begins to stink at the head)
- *Żadna praca, jak mówi przysłowie, nie hańbi* (lit. All work, as the proverb says, is honorable)
- *Diabeł, jak mówi przysłowie, tkwi w szczegółach* (lit. The devil, as the proverb says, is in the details)
- *Dobrymi chęciami piekło jest wybrukowane, mówi przysłowie* (lit. Hell is paved with good intentions, says the proverb)

- *Muzyk gra, jak mu płacą, mówi przysłowie* (lit. A musician plays as he is paid, **says the proverb**)
- *Lepiej późno niż wcale, jak mówi przysłowie* (lit. Better late than never, **as the proverb says**).

The word *przysłowie* has a less frequent and a little old fashioned synonym in Polish: *porzekadło*, used 324 times in the corpus. Other nominal expressions with similar meanings include: *stare powiedzenie* (an old saying: 66x) and *takie powiedzenie* (the/the following saying: 134 occurrences), *ludowe powiedzenie* (folk saying: 6x), *mądrość ludowa* (folk wisdom: 14x), *stara prawda* (old truth: 57x).

The Polish equivalent of the adjective *proverbial*, i.e. *przysłowiowy* (and all its inflectional forms) has an even higher frequency than the word *przysłowie*: there are 2.074 occurrences in the 250-million corpus, i.e. 829 occurrences per 100 million words (as compared to only 159 occurrences in the British National Corpus). In Polish, adjectives are inflected for number, gender, and case, so the English word *proverbial* corresponds to the following forms in Polish: *przysłowiowy* (317x), *przysłowiowego* (222x), *przysłowiowemu* (9x), *przysłowiowa* (143x), *przysłowiową* (403x), *przysłowiowej* (185x), *przysłowiowe* (386x), *przysłowiowym* (296x), *przysłowiowych* (85x), *przysłowiowymi* (28x). The IPI PAN examples of the use of the adjective *przysłowiowy* with proverbs include:

- *W polityce zachowywał się zwykle w **przysłowiowy** sposób – jak stoń w składzie porcelany* (lit. In politics he usually behaved in a **proverbial** manner – like a bull in a china shop)
- *Jesteśmy jak **przysłowiowy** szewc bez butów* (lit. We are like the **proverbial** shoemaker without shoes).

However, the adjective *przysłowiowy* is also frequently used to introduce idioms and other non-proverbial expressions, e.g.:

- *... który łapie **przysłowiowy** drugi oddech* (lit. who catches the **proverbial** second breath)
- ***przysłowiowy** domek z ogródkiem* (lit. the **proverbial** house with a garden)
- *Piłkarze grają za **przysłowiowy** uścisk dłoni prezesa* (lit. Footballers play for the **proverbial** handshake of their chairman).

The Polish equivalent of the adverb *proverbially*, i.e. *przysłowiowo*, has a rather low frequency in Polish: 26 occurrences per 250 million words, i.e. 10.4 occurrences per 100 million, which is even fewer than the in the case of its English counterpart, which has 19 occurrences in the BNC. The adverb tends to precede idioms and colloquialisms rather than actual proverbs, as in: *Wymienione zabiegi mogą pomóc bezrobotnemu, który posiada wykształcenie i kwalifikacje, ale nie potrafi ich **przysłowiowo** ‘sprzedać’* (lit. The mentioned procedures may

help the unemployed who has the right education and qualifications but does not know how to **proverbially** ‘sell’ them).

Likewise, expressions such as *jak to mówią* (lit. as they say), *mówi się* (lit. it is said) and *powiedzenie* (saying) are not only used to introduce proverbs. They precede various types of phrases, e.g.:

- *Zabrakło, jak to mówią zdrowia* (lit. We didn’t have, **as they say**, enough health)
- *Każdy nowy dom, jak to mówią, “pracuje”* (lit. Every new house, **as they say** “works”)
- *W taki sposób mówi się o zwierzętach* (lit. In this way **they talk** about animals)
- *Jest takie powiedzenie, że wszystkiemu winni są cykliści i dziennikarze* (lit. There is a **saying** that cyclists and journalists are to blame for everything)
- *Jest pośród muzyków jazzowych takie powiedzenie: chcecie posłuchać dobrej muzyki? To ja sobie sami nagrzejcie* (lit. There is a **saying** among jazz musicians: do you want to listen to good music? Make it yourselves).

Thus, it seems that the most reliable proverb introducers in Polish are *przysłowie* and *porzekadło*, much like in Czech, where the most common ones are *příслови* and *pořekadlo* (Čermák 2004).

## 7. Proverbs and cultural values

Proverbs appear to have always been used in human communication (Honeck 1997), but their role and status have been subject to change. Biblical proverbs have traditionally enjoyed high reputation, but attitudes towards folk proverbs have alternated from great enthusiasm to condemnation. Generally speaking, in England, folk wisdom encapsulated in proverbs had ranked high until the Enlightenment when it started to be perceived as inconsistent with the new emphasis on rational thinking and empirical evidence. In Elizabethan England, when “truth and wisdom ranked above facts and figures, proverbs had unquestioned authority; to educated people they were not folkloristic curiosities but part of their cultural capital” (Obelkevich 1994: 227). Elizabethans collected proverbs and used them as ornaments on their tapestries, plates, knife blades, and sundials. In schools, proverbs provided moral advice and were used to teach Latin (Crystal 2006: 425). “The sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries were the two great proverb-making centuries of the English language” (Wilson 1994: 178). Morris Palmer Tilley’s *Dictionary of the Proverbs Used in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1966) contains over 2000 references to proverbs and proverbial phrases found in

Shakespeare, a list which, although remarkably inclusive, is, according to Wilson (1994), still incomplete. However, most of the proverbs Shakespeare used have by now been forgotten.

In the late seventeenth century, enthusiasm towards proverbs began to wane, and a century later, Lord Chesterfield told his son that “a man of fashion never has recourse to proverbs or vulgar aphorisms” (cf. Obelkevich 1994: 230).

The publication of John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), which stressed limitations of human knowledge, initiated a period which proved to be very influential in shaping English culture, or, perhaps more appropriately, ‘Anglo’ culture, as Wierzbicka (2006) calls it. The term ‘Anglo’ culture refers to common values and cultural norms found in the countries where English is the primary language, i.e. the UK, the USA, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Wierzbicka 2006). This ‘cultural baggage’ is reflected in English vocabulary, fixed expressions, grammar and speech practices, and includes the respect for facts, the ideal of accuracy, and the concept of ‘being reasonable’, all of which go back to the Enlightenment (Wierzbicka 2006; 2010). The Anglo respect for facts and empirical evidence is well evidenced in the English language: words and expressions which were originally used in scientific discourse became part of everyday English, e.g. *actually, accurate, accuracy, to be exact, exactly, to be precise, precisely* (Wierzbicka 2006: 31–32). As Wierzbicka writes, “given the central role of science in modern Anglo culture, it is understandable that scientific discourse has become in this culture, for many intents and purposes, the model of “good speech”: rational, dispassionate, factually based, precise, and accurate” (2006: 30). It does not seem coincidental then that proverbs were expelled from learned culture precisely when such values began to predominate. Proverbs became taboo, and the taboo on the use of proverbs has probably led to the avoidance of the word *proverb* in English.

Obelkevich (1994: 239) claims that, “today its [the proverb’s: A.R.] reputation among educated people is lower than at any time since the seventeenth century (...) [u]sed in any straightforward way – apart from the occasional allusion – proverbs are taboo”. Somewhat ironically, the expulsion of proverbs from educated language was accompanied by the appearance of new proverbs in English: proverbs which encapsulated the new values and ways of thinking, e.g. *Facts are facts, Facts are stubborn things, Facts don’t lie*. Obelkevich (1994: 236–7) mentions that Romanticism witnessed a partial re-discovery of proverbs, and Lord Chesterfield’s earlier critique of proverbs was then said to have been carried too far, but the renewed interest in proverbs soon declined. Naturally, proverbial wisdom has retained its authority

outside educated circles, and has continued to be part of everyday communication, in particular in situations when audience was composed of “ordinary people”, i.e. speeches of politicians, advertisements, popular literature and films. However, generally speaking, the status of proverbs has remained low since the Enlightenment. As Obelkevich argues:

Educated people have many reasons not to use proverbs, even if they rarely need to spell them out. (...) proverbs put the collective before the individual, the recurrent and stereotyped before the unique, external rules before self-determination, common sense before the individual vision, survival before happiness. And with self-fulfillment goes that everyone has (or should have) their own unique, ever-changing experience of life, and that that experience should be expressed in freshly chosen words on every occasion. To use proverbs would deny the individuality of both speaker and listener. (...) It does not matter that they can be used with a wit and subtlety unsuspected by their cultural despisers, nor that their critics may in practice tie themselves up in knots of jargon, or use fewer proverbs but more clichés; still less does it matter that in viewing proverbs as a linguistic ‘other’, associated with peasants, plebeians and the petty-bourgeois, they ignore their historic role in elite culture itself: the avoidance of proverbs remains one of the articles in the modern linguistic faith”. (Obelkevich 1994: 240)

Even though the influence of scientific discourse on ordinary language is not an exclusively Anglo phenomenon, it seems to be stronger in English than in other languages. For example, as Wierzbicka (2006: 31) notices, “there are no words corresponding to *accurate* and *accuracy* in German or French (although there are words corresponding to *exact* or *precise*)”. In Poland, the philosophy of the Enlightenment had a different reception and a different ‘flavor’ than in England (Kostkiewiczowa 2001). In Poland, it was combined with the ‘Sarmatist’ ideal of political anarchism, which originated in Baroque and was intended to protect the rights of the nobility. As Davies observes, in eighteenth-century Western Europe, the anarchic views found in Poland were completely unfashionable and often misunderstood. “During the Enlightenment, ‘Anarchie’ was used as a term of abuse, a synonym for chaos and terror; and in the nineteenth century, the former Republic continued to be the object of retrospective derision” (Davies 2005: 246). Thus, while the philosophy advocating the primacy of reason over emotions did reach Poland, its influence on Polish society, which still found the ideals of Baroque very attractive, was not as great as it was in England. The English Enlightenment placed much greater emphasis on empirical knowledge and rational thinking than the Polish one did. Polish cultural patterns owe more to the ideals of Baroque than the Enlightenment, an influence which has frequently been noted by scholars (Jasienica 1988; Hryniewicz 2004). Baroque gave priority

to spontaneity, light-heartedness and emotions over rational thinking. Hryniewicz (2004: 208) argues that the cultural patterns and values represented by Baroque were so influential in Poland that they played the role of a filter in shaping attitudes towards other cultural trends: those similar to Baroque were received enthusiastically, while those which fostered different values were less eagerly accepted or rejected.

Thus, the popularity of Romanticism and its philosophy in Poland may partly be explained by the epoch's similarity to Baroque, manifested in the primacy of emotions and spontaneity over rational thinking. As Wierzbicka observes, "[i]n the romantic poetry which played a fundamental role in shaping the Polish national ethos, *serce* 'heart' is opposed to the scientist's *szkiełko i oko* 'magnifying glass and eye', as a source of 'live truth' versus the domain of 'dead truths', and this opposition has retained an important place in the Polish ethnotheory" (2003: 54). This attitude is reflected in the numerous variants of the proverb *Gdzie serce każe, tam rozum iść musi* (lit. Reason has to follow in the heart's footsteps) and the famous proverbial quotation from the Polish Romantic writer, Adam Mickiewicz, *Miej serce i patrzaj w serce* (lit. Have a heart, and look in your heart) (cf. Rozumko 2009).

## 8. Conclusion

In both languages proverbs are introduced by a variety of metalinguistic tags, the most standard of which are the words *proverb* and *adage* in English and *przysłowie* and *porzekadło* in Polish. There are also other high frequency proverb introducers, such as *they say* in English or *jak to mówią* in Polish, but these are also frequently used with non-proverbial expressions. In English, proverbs are often used without any introducers, a tendency which is less common in Polish. The English word *proverb* has a significantly lower frequency than its Polish equivalent *przysłowie*, the ratio being 99 to 315 (occurrences per 100 million words). In the case of the adjective *proverbial* and its Polish counterpart *przysłowiowy*, the difference is even more significant: 159 occurrences in the English corpus and 829 in the Polish corpus. It seems that the rather low frequency of the words *proverb* and *proverbial* in English can be explained with reference to England and Poland's cultural history. The cultural 'baggage' of English has its roots in the Enlightenment, which placed emphasis on empirical knowledge, facts, precision and accuracy, and gave priority to scientific ways of speaking. Polish culture, in turn, owes more to the ideals of Baroque and Romanticism, which, possibly more in Poland than in other countries, stressed the importance of emotions and feelings, ra-



ther than rational thinking and empirical evidence. It thus seems legitimate to suppose that the cultural climate of Poland has traditionally been more favourable towards folk wisdom encapsulated in proverbs than the cultural climate of England. This in turn may be the reason why in Polish proverbs and proverbial expressions are more frequently labelled as such than they are in English.

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**Operatory metatekstowe wprowadzające przysłowia  
w międzyjęzykowej i międzykulturowej perspektywie.  
Analiza kontrastywna angielskich i polskich wyrażeń  
wprowadzających przysłowia**

**Streszczenie**

Artykuł jest próbą porównania form i użycia wyrażeń wprowadzających przysłowia w języku angielskim i polskim. Słowo *proverb* jest używane rzadziej do wprowadzania przysłów w angielskim niż w obcojęzycznych ekwiwalentach analizowanych operatorów. Tę obserwację potwierdza relatywnie niższa częstotliwość użycia go w the British National Corpus w porównaniu z wystąpieniami jego odpowiedników w korpusach polskim i czeskim. Użycie słowa *przysłowie* jest prawdopodobnie związane ze statusem przysłowia i charakterystycznymi dla danego języka sposobami mówienia, dlatego autorka podejmuje próbę omówienia użycia wyrazu *proverb* i jego polskiego ekwiwalentu *przysłowie* poprzez odwołania do angielskiej i polskiej historii kultury.

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## **Some Remarks on Cross-Linguistic Equivalence of Polish, English and Italian Pragmatic Idioms with Faunal Constituents**

**Abstract.** The aim of the present paper is to discuss Polish, English and Italian idiomatic faunal expressions of pragmatic character with a view to creating the typology of cross-linguistic equivalents of the units at issue. Routine formulae, ranging from word-like structures to sentence-like structures, excerpted from various lexicographic works, both mono- and bilingual, constitute three corpora of idioms, all of which contain animal terms, either generic, such as *animal* or *fish*, or names of given species, for instance *cat*. All the units analyzed perform a number of pragmatic functions, which are discussed in detail, so that it would be possible to determine whether, and if yes, to which extent, the pragmatic functions of faunal interpersonal idioms overlap in Polish, English and Italian.

**Key words:** *faunal, idiom, pragmatic, equivalent, contrastive linguistics*

### **1. Introduction**

Currently the cultural component is regarded as a vital element of the majority of studies on phraseology. One area of interest, particularly significant in a contrastive perspective, is animal phraseology, in which the cultural perception of given species is reflected. Faunal idioms have been widely studied from the point of view of linguistic picture of the world (Chlebda 2007), in some cases with a view to presenting discussions of pictures of animals in European languages (Rakkusan 2000) as well as in such distant languages as German and Japanese (Ueda 2004). The stereotypes of animals reflected in phraseological units of two or more languages have been compared, for instance, the picture of an owl in Polish, English, German and Italian (Szerszunowicz 2003), the phraseological depiction of the fox in Polish, English and Italian (Szerszunowicz 2004a).

In fact, so far less attention has been given to units of pragmatic character which contain faunal constituents. The aim of the study, which is to be treated as one of preliminary character, is to shed light on pragmatic idioms containing animal names which are used in Polish, English and Italian. The units excerpted from mono- and bilingual lexicographic sources are analyzed with a view to developing a typology of cross-linguistic equivalents of the units at issue.<sup>1</sup> Three corpora of pragmatic units containing faunal constituents have been collected.<sup>2</sup> The Polish corpus is composed of 31 units, the English contains 29 items and the Italian one as many as 43 idioms of pragmatic character.

## 2. Pragmatic idioms

Pragmatic idioms, also called routine formulae or communicative phrases,<sup>3</sup> are conventionalized word combinations which are used in recurrent situations by users of a given language. Pragmatic idioms constitute a group of ready-made, situation-dependent units used in a number of communication contexts.

As Piirainen states (2008: 215), they are tools of communication and their most important function is the constitution of speech acts, so they are “part of a larger complex of stereotyped action patterns and social interaction”. Therefore, pragmatic phraseological units constitute a very important subgroup from the point of view of communication, since the knowledge of interpersonal idioms is indispensable for a language user to function in a given culture. Pragmatic phraseology reflects scripts which function in a given culture, so a contrastive analysis of the units at issue also enables an insight into differences in particular cultures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, faunal phraseology is underrepresented in collections of communicative phrases, such as, for instance, *Function in English* by Jon Blundell, Jonathan Higgins and Nigel Middlemiss (1993), *A Thematic Guide to English Interactional Gambits* by Grzegorz A. Kleparski and Anna M. Pietrzykowska (2010) or *A Dictionary of Language Functions* by Zofia Kopestyńska (1991).

<sup>2</sup> General bilingual dictionaries have to be consulted, since there are relatively few Polish-English dictionaries of idioms, with many more English-Polish ones. There are also only a few Italian-Polish phraseological dictionaries (WIW, FI, LIW, IW). No Polish-Italian phraseological dictionary has been compiled yet. Italian-English and English-Italian works, both lexicographic and phraseographic, have also been consulted (IEL, G, CID).

<sup>3</sup> Other terms used are: *sememic idioms*, *conversational routines*, *social formulae*, *conversational formulae*, *functional idioms*, *politeness formulae*, *verbal stereotypes* (cf. Pastor 1997: 171).

<sup>4</sup> On differences conditioned by cultural scripts in proverbs see: Rozumko (2009).

Moreover, it should be emphasized that in the case of foreign language learners developing the ability to use pragmatic idioms is a prerequisite to having a good command of the language studied because of their role in the process of communication. Moreover, routine formulae are inextricably linked with conversational styles; therefore, the ability to use them properly is necessary for proper intercultural communication (Kramsch 1998: 46–49). Furthermore, one should not underestimate the importance of research on pragmatic idioms for translation. To facilitate both, a proper phraseographic description of the units in question is necessary. That is why contrastive research studies on various aspects of pragmatic idioms are so important both in terms of theory and practical applications.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.1. Pragmatic idioms as a subgroup of phraseological units

As Piirainen states (2008: 215), fixed word combinations cover a large continuum of phrasemes. A number of classifications of phraseologisms have been developed, in the majority of which pragmatic units tend to be distinguished. Chitra Fernando presents the following characteristics of interpersonal idioms: they are “overtly or covertly marked for interaction”; they are discourse-oriented expressions; they are a means of structuring conversation; they may be fixed lexically invariant forms; they are metaphorical and imaginal in different ways than ideational idioms; they tend to carry small amount of information; they are often restricted to certain routinized situations” (1996: 153–155; 160). It should be emphasized that pragmatic idioms can be fully idiomatic, partly idiomatic or non-idiomatic (Lüger 2007: 452–453). In fact, the units analyzed constitute a very specific group of units in terms of classification and description, since

strings classified as **formulae** are problematic because of their discursive function: they are specialized pragmatically. They generally conform to lexicogrammatical conventions of English, although a few are effectively truncated utterances. They are generally compositional semantically, although some similes and proverbs are obscure or metaphorical. (Moon 1998: 21–22)

As to division of phraseological units of pragmatic character, Moon (1998: 22) distinguishes four subtypes, the first of which is simple formula, described as “routine compositional string that nevertheless have some special discursive function or are iterative or emphatic, as well as syntagmatically

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<sup>5</sup> An example of such research study is the analysis of politeness in Polish and English (Jakubowska 1999).

fixed". A good example of a simple formula is *you know what*. The next subtype, sayings, comprises quotations, catchphrases and truisms, for instance, *home, James, and don't spare the horses*. There are two more subtypes, i.e. proverbs, "traditional maxim with deontic function", and similes, institutionalized comparisons.

Pragmatic idiomatic units can be divided into subgroups, for instance, Ross distinguishes social formulae, gambits and expressive formulae. Coulmas (1981) presents a typology comprising five classes: discourse structuring formulae, politeness formulae, metacommunicative formulae, emotional attitude formulae and delaying formulae, while Gläser (1986) distinguishes as many as fifteen groups of pragmatic fixed units. Balzer und Piñel (2010) present a detailed typology composed of six main groups: expressive formulas (7 types), commissive formulas (2), directive formulas (8), queastive formulas (2), assertive/representative formulas (5), verdictive formulas (4).

It should be stressed that pragmatic idioms perform various functions. Lüger (2007: 450) distinguishes four main functions of the units at issue, i.e. phatic function, performed by greetings, farewells, thanks, good luck wishes, etc.; expressive function, performed by apologies, invectives, curses, etc.; directive function, performed by formulae of encouragement, warnings, etc.; cognitive function, performed by formulae of praising, etc.

Pragmatic idioms are used both in informal and formal varieties of languages (cf. Fernando 1996: 20).<sup>6</sup> However, faunal pragmatic phraseology, likewise the vast majority of units containing animal terms in general, is typical of informal spoken language (Szerszunowicz 2004b). Numerous expressions registered in dictionaries are marked *colloquial*, it is worth adding that in some cases also as *vulgar*.

Although boundaries of pragmatic idioms are not clear, with greetings, congratulations etc. constituting the core element, it can be assumed that "only a few routine formulae are figurative in the sense that elements of culture can be found in their source domain" (Piiirainen 2008: 215). In a contrastive perspective it is interesting to analyze units with faunal constituents, elements rich in symbolic meaning, and to observe how they function within the units as well as to compare them with their cross-linguistic equivalents.

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<sup>6</sup> It is worth stressing that interpersonal idioms are particularly numerous in spoken discourse (cf. Inoue 2007).

## 2.2. Faunal constituents of pragmatic idioms

In analyses of phraseological thematic groups the constituents which researchers tend to focus on are body parts, colours, proper names and animal terms. It should be emphasized that thematic groups are composed of units of various motivations. All the above mentioned constituents are rich in connotations, which can be exploited in phraseological units. For instance, animal symbolism motivated some pragmatic idioms in the languages analyzed.

A good example in case is the Italian phraseologism *in bocca al lupo!* (lit. into the mouth of the wolf; 'Good luck!'). The connotation of the name *lupo* ('wolf'), 'wolf is a dangerous animal', is actualized in the unit. The origins of the unit can be explained by the ancient concept that, as Piirainen puts it (2008: 215), "an unconcealed wish of good luck brings misfortune and one can outwit the fate by wishing something bad".<sup>7</sup> In turn, the response required, *crepi!* (lit. may he die!), also of figurative character, expresses a wish regarding the wolf. It is an example of the use of the magic function of language, i.e. the use of the words should cause the death of the wolf.

Many pragmatic idiom containing faunal constituents convey vivid imagery, which gives them specific markedness. Phrases such as the English unit *that cat won't jump* or the Polish *zdechł pies* (lit. the dog has died) evoke a picture, based on concrete imagery. The units at issue tend to be informal, in some cases even classified as vulgar. They are emotionally marked; therefore, they perform a very important role in the process of communication.

Some constituents are used in a particular unit because of different reasons. Factors of form complications, such as rhyming, alliteration, onomatopoeia etc., can determine the presence of given faunal constituents in particular phraseological units. For instance, the Polish unit *albo rybka, albo pipka* (lit. either a fish, or a pussy<sup>8</sup>), meaning 'one should decide on something; one cannot have two things at the same time' (USJP, III: 1099),<sup>9</sup> contains two rhy-

<sup>7</sup> Cf. pragmatic units without faunal constituents, e.g. Ger. *Hals- und Beinbruch!* (lit. broken neck and leg!; 'good luck!); Pol. *skręć/złam kark!* (lit. twist/break your neck!; 'Good luck!'), *złam/połam ręce (i nogi)!* (lit. break/arms (and legs); 'good luck!').

<sup>8</sup> The Polish word *pipa* has as many as three meanings registered in lexicographic works, i.e. 'woman's private parts'; 'the woman as an object of sexual interest'; 'a clumsy, helpless person'; 'a thin pipe with a tap, by means of which beer is poured' (USJP, III: 150).

<sup>9</sup> The variant of the unit at issue is *albo rybki, albo akwarium* (lit. either fishes, or the aquarium; USJP, III: 1099).

ing words, i.e. *rybka – pipka*. Another example is the Polish phraseologism *karaluchy do poduchy, (a szczypawki do zabawki)* used as a good night wish with humorous markedness. In Italian the question frequently asked by children *Che devo fare?* (lit. What shall I do?) rhymes with the answer *Piglia una mosca e falla ballare* (lit. Catch a fly and make it dance). All the examples listed show how factors of complication determine the presence of faunal constituents if given units.

Another interesting example of exploiting a faunal term as a constituent of a pragmatic unit is observed in the Polish euphemistic unit *o kur zapiał* (lit. oh the cockerel has crowed). The unit discussed, which has a characteristic intonation contour, is used instead of a Polish vulgar word *kurwa* (lit. whore ‘fuck’) and it is motivated by the phonetic similarity of the curse *kurwa* and the faunal term *kur*. It is worth adding that the word *kur* is marked as old-fashioned lexicographic works (e.g. USJP, II: 364).<sup>10</sup> The English lexical equivalent, which exploits the same mechanism, could be, for instance, *shuuuuuugar*.

It is worth observing that in some cases blending of motivations occurs. For instance, the English pragmatic idiom *Are you a man or a mouse?*, used as an encouragement, exploits alliteration and rhythm as well as the stereotype of the mouse perceived as a timid, small and weak animal<sup>11</sup> contrasted with the stereotype of a man viewed as a strong being, occupying the top place on the hierarchy; thus, reflecting the attitude called aristocratism by Zdzisław Kempf (1985). The example discussed shows how factors of complication blend with the cultural motivation of the unit at issue.

Moreover, some pragmatic units containing faunal constituents are borrowings, i.e. loan phrases from other languages. For example, the Polish pragmatic unit of verdictive character *tu leży pies pogrzebany* (lit. there is the dog buried) is a calque of the German idiom *da liegt der Hund begraben*.<sup>12</sup> It should be added that the German idiom at issue does not function as a borrowing either in English or Italian.

<sup>10</sup> The name *kur* appears as a constituent of other phraseological units in which it is not used because of its phonetic value, e.g. *czerwony kur* (lit. red cockerel) ‘fire’.

<sup>11</sup> Such a stereotype of the mouse is reflected in the English phraseological units *as timid as a mouse*.

<sup>12</sup> The German unit *da liegt der Hund begraben* is mentioned in a number of reference books as base for the Polish calque. Cf. (WSFJP: 528).



### 3. Cross-linguistic equivalents of pragmatic units with faunal constituents

The units are classified into groups according to the degree of equivalence with a special focus on the status of faunal term. The first group is composed of total / full equivalents, the second group contains partial equivalents which are those showing differences in structures and constituents, but having the same meaning. Within the latter group two subgroups are distinguished, i.e. units containing a different animal term from the one which is part of the source language unit and units without a faunal constituent. The third one is composed of non-phraseological equivalents, either single words performing the same function or a sentence-like structure of loose character.

Before the typology of units is presented, it should be stressed that a given pragmatic idiom containing an animal term may have more than one equivalent, both phraseological and non-phraseological. Moreover, it has to be taken into consideration that pragmatic units containing animal terms tend to be emotionally loaded and they very often convey imagery. Therefore, substituting such fossilized combinations with the target language phraseological units of non-pictorial character or non-phraseological units results in loss of expressiveness in translation. The equivalence of the units at issue is heavily context-dependent.

#### 3.1. Full equivalents

The first group is made of full equivalents (also called total equivalents, i.e. units which are identical or very similar in their structures, constituents, meaning, stylistic markedness, etc.),<sup>13</sup> which, in fact, should be called quasi-equivalents (Dobrowol'skij 200: 802; Fiedler 2007: 118; Szerszunowicz 2009). This term seems to be a more suitable one, being more precise than full equivalent, as one can assume it is highly improbable to find units whose parameters do not differ in two or more languages compared if a detailed analysis is conducted. In fact, there are hardly any items belonging to the subgroup at issue among the units analyzed. One of them is the pair

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<sup>13</sup> It is worth pointing out that a series of bilingual dictionaries containing units having close equivalents have been compiled for a number of languages, i.e. Polish-English (WR), Polish-Italian (MAW), Polish-German (WR), Polish-Bulgarian (MW), Polish-French (KZ), Polish-Spanish (RLL), Polish-Russian (CH). In fact, the vast majority of the units included in the dictionaries are idioms.

composed of the Italian idiom *Hai visto il lupo?* and the English one *Have you seen the wolf?*

It is surprising, since numerous faunal units have total equivalents in the languages compared. For instance, multiaspectual correspondence is found in figurative units motivated by the stereotype of farm animals, such as the donkey, the pig, and the cow as well as synanthropic animal, like the dog and the cat (cf. Szerszunowicz 2005). The names of the animals mentioned appear in structures realizing the schemata A/AN (ADJECTIVE) + ANIMAL NAME. The units are carriers of negative evaluation, which results from attributing bad characteristics, such as stupidity, to the animals. Numerous units with faunal constituents which have full equivalents in the languages analyzed as well as in other European and some non-European languages are of biblical or mythological origins or come from masterpieces of literature.

### 3.2. Partial equivalents

The subgroup at issue contains partial equivalents which are those showing differences in structures and constituents, but have the same meaning. Within the groups three subgroups are distinguished, i.e. units containing an identical faunal name, units whose constituents are different animal terms from the one which is part of the source language unit and equivalents without a faunal constituent.

#### 3.2.1. Idiomatic equivalents containing a faunal constituent

Some faunal pragmatic idioms have cross-linguistic equivalents which also contain animal terms. There are equivalents whose faunal element is identical to the one in the source language unit as well as those whose animal constituent is different from the one in the source language unit.

The occurrence of faunal constituents in both the source language pragmatic idiom and its cross-linguistic equivalent is very important in terms of imagery conveyed by the units compared. In some cases the animal term is substituted with another one, belonging to the same class, and, irrespective of the substitution of the faunal element, the pictorial image of the units compared is similar. Other equivalents exploit completely different imagery than in the target language and they do not contain similar faunal elements.

##### 3.2.1.1. Idiomatic equivalents containing an identical or similar faunal constituent

The first subgroup is composed of units which have identical or a very similar meaning and contain the same faunal constituent in the languages

analyzed. In fact, likewise in the case of the previous group, hardly any units analyzed meet the criteria to be qualified.

An example of such equivalents is the pair composed of the English phrase *A little bird told me* and the Polish unit *wróble o tym na dachu ćwierkają* (lit. sparrows are chirping about it on the roof), which differ semantically, yet, can be used in similar contexts.

### 3.2.1.2. Idiomatic equivalents containing different faunal constituents

Some pragmatic units of idiomatic character have cross-linguistic equivalents which contain different animal terms. Such units do not have the same structure and tend to convey different imagery, which is of great importance in terms of imagery.

To illustrate this type of relation between the source language unit and the target language unit, the idioms used to emphasize the essence of the problem in Polish and Italian will be analyzed. The Polish unit, a calque from German, *tu leży pies pogrzebany* has the Italian equivalent *qui casca l'asino!* (Q: 34; CA: 417), meaning literally 'the donkey falls here'. The units are given as equivalents in bilingual lexicographic works (e.g. WSWP I: 445).

To sum up, it should be stressed that such units are close equivalents unless word play occurs in a given text or the faunal constituent is the key component of the picture in the text, which is of importance for some reason. For instance, an accompanying illustration can refer to the faunal constituent, giving the possibility of activating the literal meaning.

### 3.2.3. Idiomatic equivalents without faunal constituents

Numerous Polish, English and Italian pragmatic idioms with animal terms have cross-linguistic fixed equivalents performing the same function which do not contain any faunal constituents. However, the target language units are of phraseological character, which is important in terms of cross-linguistic equivalence. It should be stressed that the subgroup is composed of various units, which show different degrees of equivalence in a contrastive perspective.

#### 3.2.3.1. Figurative idiomatic equivalents without faunal constituents

A number of pragmatic idiomatic expressions with faunal constituents have cross-linguistic equivalents which are fixed figurative phrases conveying the same meaning, which do not contain any animal terms. Such equivalents tend to differ greatly in components, structure and imagery; yet, they perform the same function in the languages compared, which means that they can

be treated as functional equivalents. Stylistic markedness of corresponding units can be either similar or different and the latter relation may affect significantly their cross-linguistic equivalence.

As to pragmatic idioms, whose equivalents do not contain faunal constituents, a good example in case is the English idiom *Has the cat got your tongue?* whose Polish equivalent *Czy masz język zawiązany na kokardę?* (lit. have you a bow tied on your tongue?) exploits completely different imagery. Irrespective of the differences, the function of the two units is the same and they can be considered functional equivalents. Another English idiom, used to comfort a person left by a partner, *there are (plenty) more (good) fish in the sea* (CID: 144; ODI: 109; ODEI: 545) has an idiomatic Polish equivalent *tego kwiatu pół świata* (half a world of such flowers). In fact, one more unit can be treated as a functional equivalent of the English idiom. The phrase at issue is *nie jeden chłopiec na świecie, nie jedna róża w bukiecie* (lit. [there is] not [only] one boy in the world, [there is] not [only] one rose in the bunch WKPP: 422). In fact, it should be stressed that it can be used with reference to a boy who left the partner, not about a girl.

In some cases there is a rich variety of equivalents of a given source unit in the target language, which differ in imagery. For instance, numerous pragmatic phraseological units are connected with drinking alcohol, in the Polish culture there are phrases used to invite guests to have a drink (cf. Drabik 2010: 195). Among well-known Polish toasts, which are not so numerous (Jędrzejko 2007: 261), some belong to faunal phraseology, for instance the unit *ryba/ rybka lubi pływać* (lit. a little fish, a fish likes swimming). According to *Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego*, the phrase used to invite somebody to have an alcohol drink while eating a fish dish (USJP, III: 191).<sup>14</sup>

The unit reflects the fact that in Poland one of typical dishes accompanied by alcohol drinks is fish, herring in particular. In fact, the units tends to be treated as a toast irrespective of what kind of dish served. Both in English and Italian the Polish unit has phraseological equivalents, which differ in imagery. It is worth pointing to the fact that neither English or Italian phraseographic sources register full equivalents of the Polish unit at issue.

Moreover, it is worth adding that bilingual Polish-English and Polish-Italian dictionaries do not contain the unit *ryba/ rybka lubi pływać* (e.g. WSPA, USPW). In Polish phraseology there are two more faunal units which can be used as toast: *trzeba zalać robaka* (lit. one should pour over the worm) and

<sup>14</sup> A presentation of ritual phrases connected with drinking alcohol in used in novels by Tadeusz Konwicki and their French equivalents in translations of his books is presented by Elżbieta Skibińska (2008).

*raz kozie śmierć* (lit. the goat dies once). In fact, both of them can be used as verbal expressions as well as pragmatic units.

However, in bilingual dictionaries they are registered as units of the former type without any mention of the latter use: Pol. *zalewać robaka* (lit. to pour over the worm), Eng. *to drown one's sorrow* (WSPA: 954); It. *bere l'alcol* (lit. to drink alcohol) (USPW: 1126); Pol. *raz kozie śmierć* (lit. the goat dies once), Eng. *you (can) only die once, right?*, It. *bere o affogare* (lit. to drink or to drown) (USPW: 456). The analysis shows that the bilingual sources consulted do not present the actual potential of the two units analysed.

One more problem regarding the subgroup of partial equivalents of faunal pragmatic units is their stylistic markedness. It should be stressed that in some cases significant stylistic differences in corresponding units can occur. In fact, the vast majority of all units analyzed belong to colloquial varieties of the languages compared. Yet, their markedness may still differ, for example, the Italian phrase *in boca al lupo* (lit. in mouth of the wolf) has a quasi-synonyms in the Italian language. One of them, *in culo alla balena* (lit. into the ass of a whale), requiring the answer *speriamo che non caghi* (lit. let's hope it does not defecate), is classified as vulgar. Another unit, *in groppa al riccio* (lit. on a hedgehog's back), followed by the phrase *con le mutande di ghisa* (lit. wearing underpants of cast iron), is colloquial. The two faunal informal good luck wishes definitely differ from the Polish corresponding unit *złam kark*, which is also of informal character; yet, it is not vulgar.

To sum up, it should be stressed that the idiomatic character of the cross-linguistic equivalent is by no means to be treated as the decisive factor of considering the unit an adequate counterpart of the source language phraseological unit. An in-depth analysis of the actual use of a given unit is necessary in order to find the most proper cross-linguistic equivalent, which may be, for instance, non-idiomatic one, since the idiomatic phrase may have to be excluded because of differences in vital parameters, like stylistic value.

### 3.2.3.2. Non-figurative idiomatic equivalents without faunal constituents

It is worth observing that some pragmatic units containing faunal constituents have equivalents which are fixed and they perform the same function as the source language units, but they are of non-figurative character. The main difference between the source language units and their cross-linguistic counterparts is the lack of imagery of the latter, which affects their equivalence.

Moreover, additional factors may affect the equivalence of the source language unit and the target language equivalent. For example, the Polish unit *Już po ptakach* (lit. Already after birds) has an English phraseological

equivalent registered in *Wielki słownik polsko-angielski*. The dictionary consulted contains a phraseological equivalent, *it's over and done with* (WSAP: 928); it should be noted that no Polish-Italian dictionary contain the unit *już po ptakach* (PSPW; USPW). The example shows the image component or its lack affect the equivalents of the two units analyzed.

Moreover, the Polish unit in question has a variant *Już po ptokach*, in which the standard Polish faunal component is substituted with a Silesian counterpart of the word. The presence of the dialectal form gives the phrase a special stylistic value. Therefore, the difference between the Polish unit and its equivalent is affected by the neutral character of the English phrase, contrasted with the substandard element of the Polish idiom.

The analysis of the examples leads to the conclusion that from the functional point of view such units are – or more precisely may be – equivalent in the cross-linguistic perspective. However, the difference in the stylistic markedness of the target language unit and their cross-linguistic equivalent may be significant.

### 3.3. Non-idiomatic equivalents

The analysis shows that some faunal pragmatic units do not have cross-linguistic equivalents of idiomatic character. Two subgroups can be distinguished, the first of which is composed of single-word equivalents, while the other comprises loose word combinations carrying the same meaning as the idiom in the source language.

#### 3.3.1. Single-word equivalents

A number of phraseological units, including pragmatic idioms with faunal constituents, have single-word equivalents.<sup>15</sup> In fact, this subgroup of equivalents is composed of various types of cross-linguistic counterparts of phraseological units (cf. Szerszunowicz 2008), which differ significantly in the degree of cross-linguistic equivalence. In some cases word equivalents can exploit a similar imagery as the one evoked by pictorial idioms. However, the biggest group of single word equivalents are ones of non-pictorial character.

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<sup>15</sup> Having a single-word equivalent does not exclude having the equivalent composed of a loose combination of words. For instance, the idioms described have also other equivalents in the Polish language, i.e. Eng. *in a pig's eye!* – Pol. *już to widzę!* (lit. I just see it); It. *in bocca al lupo!* – Pol. *Złam kark!* (lit. break your neck).

For example, the English unit *in a pig's eye* has a few Polish equivalents included in lexicographic works, one of which is a single-word equivalent *Akurat!* Similarly, the Italian idiom *in bocca al lupo!* (lit. into the mouth of the wolf!), which requires the response *crepi il lupo!* (lit. May the wolf die!) have single-word equivalents in the Polish language (*Powodzenia!* lit. good luck), to which one answers *dziękuję* (lit. thank you). In fact, the answer *nie dziękuję* (lit. [I do] not thank you) is also common in informal Polish.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, the change is greater in case of stylistically marked units such as the Polish idiom *wsio ryba*, whose English single-word equivalent can be the word *whatever*. The Polish idiom contains the word *wsio*, which is a loan from Russian ('everything, all'). The presence of the component *wsio* gives the unit a special stylistic quality, which is not found in the English equivalent. Similarly, the Polish equivalent of the English faunal idiom *painting the cat*, used as the answer to the question *What are you doing?* the person addressed finds annoying (LNSA: 224), can be neutral *nic* ('nothing') or *nico* (nothing with 'o' added), which is stylistically marked.

As mentioned before, one should take into consideration the fact that it is possible to find also corresponding multiword combinations of non-idiomatic character, which in some contexts could be suitable equivalents of the idioms analyzed. For example, the Polish idiom *wsio ryba* may be translated as *it doesn't matter* which or *whatever*, depending on the context. There are many examples of the phenomenon discussed and it should be added that in some cases the cross-linguistic equivalent can be either a single word or a multiword construct, the base of which is the single word equivalent. For instance, the word *whatever* can be amplified by additional elements, as a result of which a string is created (e.g. *whatever you want*).

The group of units is specific, as a single word substitutes a word combination. The fact may be of importance in many cases. The differences in stylistics are also observed, since in the majority of cases single words tend to be less emotionally marked; in other words, they tend to be neutral in comparison with faunal pragmatic idioms.

### 3.3.2. Word combinations as equivalents

Some pragmatic idioms have equivalents which are word combinations of loose character. Such units do not have corresponding fixed expressions in the target language. Therefore, the function the pragmatic idioms perform in the source language is to be realized in the target language by means of

<sup>16</sup> The element of negation is inserted into the phrase so as not to jinx it.

a descriptive character. The choice of words used to form the equivalent is context-dependent and can vary significantly.

For instance, the English unit *who's she – the cat's mother?* can be used in two situations, i.e. “as a mild reproof, especially to a child for impolite use of the pronoun *she* when a person's name would have been more well-mannered” (ODI: 258); “expressing the speaker's belief that a woman or a girl has a high opinion of herself or is putting on airs” (ODI: 258). In fact, the Polish equivalents are not idiomatic (respectively: *Nie mówi się ona.* lit. One does not say *she*; *Wydaje się jej, że jest nie wiadomo kim.* lit. It seems to her she is nobody knows who).

The Polish pragmatic idiom *A to pies?* (lit. And is this a dog? ‘and it counts for nothing?’ WSF: 355), exploiting the connotative potential of the name *pies* (‘dog’), has non-phraseological equivalents in the languages compared (Eng. *And it counts for nothing?*; It. *E questo non è importante?*). The Polish units contain the constituent *pies* connoting inferiority etc.; thus, it implies that the thing it refers to has been treated as a matter of little importance.

Definitely in the case of loose word combinations the loss of stylistic value occurs. The units discussed above are idiomatic and they convey a surplus of meaning, which the equivalents of loose character do not possess. In the process of translation compensation techniques are to be implemented, so that the loss could be compensated in the text.

### 3.4. Pseudo-equivalents of faunal pragmatic units

A false-friend, an apparent friend or a pseudo-equivalent is “a word that has the same origin and general appearance as a word in another language, so that learners mistakenly assume that both have the same meaning and uses” (McArthur 1996: 366). In fact, the term *false friend* is used mostly with reference to lexical units, far less frequently to phraseological ones (Daszczyńska 1987; Orłoś 2003; Szerszunowicz 2006). The tendency to focus on lexical unit is also reflected in lexico- and phraseography: a number of dictionaries of lexical false friends have been compiled, but relatively few of them include phrases.<sup>17</sup>

False friends are also found among pragmatic phraseological units, for instance, in English the faunal pragmatic idiom *has the cat got your tongue?* is used when a person (who tends to be a child) is too shy or afraid to say

<sup>17</sup> For example, in the case of Polish, the following dictionaries of lexical false friends have been compiled: Polish-Bulgarian (SAPB), Polish-Russian (SWPB), German-Polish (MST), Czech-Polish (O), Polish-English and English-Polish (R, EPD), Polish-Croatian (SAPCH). In fact, as few as two of them contain some phraseological units (EPD, O).



something. The question is used in order to encourage the person to speak. In the Italian language the pragmatic idiom *ti è morto il gatto?* (lit. has your cat died?) is used in a different situation, mainly, the question is asked when a person looks sad, is in a bad mood or is dressed in dark colours.

Irrespective of differences in imagery, due to the occurrence of the same faunal constituent (Eng. *the cat* / It. *il gatto*), these two pragmatic idioms can be associated by non-native language users with the idioms they know in their mother tongue. As a consequence, the idioms at issue can be decoded wrongly and misinterpreted.

Similarly, the Polish unit *tu leży pies pogrzebany* (lit. the dog is buried here), a loan unit from the German language, meaning 'this is the essence of the problem', has an Italian pseudo-equivalent which contains the constituent *gatta* ('cat') (It. *(qui) gatta ci cova!* lit. the cat is hiding here; Q: 224; P: 163; CA: 417). The meaning of the Italian unit is 'there is something suspicious about it, something hidden, things are not really as they are presented'. The similarity of structure as well as constituents may result in language learners' treating the units compared as synonyms.

In additions, it is worth mentioning that another Italian unit *qui casca l'asino!* (lit. the donkey falls here) included in the phraseographic works consulted (Q: 34; CA: 417), the meaning of which is similar to that of *(qui) gatta ci cova!*, is also a phraseological false friend of the Polish unit *tu leży pies pogrzebany*.

To conclude, it should be stressed that the group of phraseological pseudo-equivalents of pragmatic units with faunal constituents is composed of a relatively small number of units. Yet, this subgroup of equivalents deserves special attention, since they are particularly important from the point of view of foreign language teaching and bilingual phraseography. Determining pragmatic false friends renders it possible to produce a proper phraseographic description of the units at issue, drawing the dictionary users' attention to their apparent similarity.

#### 4. Cross-linguistic equivalence of phraseographic description in phraseography

As it has already been pointed out, faunal phraseographic units tend to be underrepresented in bilingual lexico- and phraseographic sources, which has far-reaching consequences, which are especially important in terms of translation and foreign language teaching. The analysis conducted shows that many commonly used phrases are not included in the dictionaries. In

fact, such units should be included in phraseographic dictionary and the description of the phrases at issue ought to enable dictionary users to learn how to use a given phrase properly, providing them with sufficient information on the use of a given unit.<sup>18</sup>

The pragmatic phrase is to be explained with detailed information regarding its use, with clearly presented function of the entry unit. Cross-linguistic equivalents – in some cases there may be only one equivalent or no counterpart of phraseological character at all – should be given along with examples, preferably authentic ones, illustrating the actual use of the entry phrase. Stylistic markers are of great importance for the phraseographic description of pragmatic phraseological units, too. The entry should also contain the information regarding use restrictions of a given phrase. Moreover, it is advisable to contain the cultural component in the entry (cf. Rodger 2006). Its inclusion facilitates the development of the dictionary users' intercultural competence.

Such a presentation of pragmatic units containing faunal character provides the user with sufficient information on the use of a given phrase, which are not given in a standard bilingual Polish-English or Polish-Italian dictionary. In such lexicographic works the description of the unit, if registered, is limited to providing the cross-linguistic equivalent, usually only one. General dictionaries do not provide enough space for a detailed description of the units at issue, which is necessary in a contrastive perspective.

Therefore, pragmatically oriented bilingual or multilingual works have different potential in terms of phraseographic description. The fact that they contain only one type of phraseological units, which constitute a selection of phraseologisms of a given language, renders it possible to provide more detailed phraseographic information in each entry.<sup>19</sup> This approach to bilingual description will be illustrated with proposals of entries of a few selected faunal pragmatic units.

#### 4.1. Case one: *albo rybki, albo akwarium*

The first unit chosen as an example entry is *albo rybki, albo akwarium* (lit. Either fishes, or the aquarium). The phrase in question is included in monolingual dictionaries of the Polish language as well as phraseological

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<sup>18</sup> The theoretical principles of the compilation of a Italian-Polish phraseological dictionary are presented in the work by Aleksandra Pronińska (2005).

<sup>19</sup> Another type of units frequently chosen as material for dictionaries is similes. There are monolingual dictionaries of similes (SP), bilingual (LIA) as well as multilingual (SČFI).

dictionaries (USJP, III: 1099; WSFJ: 678). However, it not registered in the bilingual lexico- and phraseographic works consulted (WSPA; SFAPPA), which justifies the choice of the unit at issue as an example of trilingual entry.

**Albo rybki, albo akwarium** (lit. Either fishes, or the aquarium) used to encourage somebody to take a choice, suggesting one cannot have two things at the same time.

**E.G.:** Nie możemy realizować obu projektów. Musisz się zdecydować: albo rybki, albo akwarium.

*informal, colloquial*

**VAR.:** Albo rybka, albo pipka

**ENGLISH:** You can't have your cake and eat it.

You can't have it both ways.

**ITALIAN:** Non si puo avere una bottiglia piena e la moglie ubriaca.

In fact, in the other two languages, i.e. English and Italian, equivalent phrases are of proverbial character. It is worth mentioning that in some other European languages proverbs conveying similar meaning also exist. They convey different imagery, for instance, in French the function is performed by the proverb *On ne peut pas avoir le beurre et l'argent du beurre* (lit. One cannot have the butter and the money for the butter). The German equivalent of the units discussed is the proverb *Man kann nicht den Fünfer und das Brötchen haben* (lit. One cannot have the fiver and the bun).<sup>20</sup>

#### 4.2. Case two: *Ryba/Rybka lubi pływać*

As mentioned before, the unit *ryba/rybka lubi pływać* is not included in bilingual lexico- and phraseographic works II: 191).<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it is worth presenting the entry of the unit in question.

**Rybka lubi pływać** (lit. Fish likes swimming) the phrase used to invite somebody to have an alcohol drink while eating a fish dish

**E.G.:** No, śmiało. Wypijmy po jednym. Rybka lubi pływać.

**VAR.:** Ryba lubi pływać.

*informal, colloquial*

→ trzeba zalać robaka (lit. one should pour over the worm)

→ raz kozie śmierć (lit. the goat dies ones)

**ENGLISH:** Cheers! To your health!

<sup>20</sup> The Swiss German variation of the phrase is *Me chan nöd Föifer und s Weggli*.

<sup>21</sup> A presentation of ritual phrases connected with drinking alcohol in used in novels by Tadeusz Konwicki and their French equivalents in translations of his books is presented by Elżbieta Skibińska (2008).

**ITALIAN:** Chin chin! Salute e figli maschi!

**CULTURAL INFORMATION:** The unit, known from the antiquity (Lat. *Pisces natate doces, Post pisces vinum misces*) reflects the fact that fish goes well with alcohol. In Poland one of typical dishes accompanied by vodka is herring. In fact, in many cases the unit tends to be treated as a toast irrespective of what kind of dish served.

The idiom presented belongs to the sphere of idiomacity which is culture-bound,<sup>22</sup> so differences in eating and drinking customs influence fixed phrases of a given language in many aspects (Pinnavaia 2010). In many cases they may also convey evaluation, which can be culture-specific (cf. Szerszunowicz 2010). Pragmatic phraseology connected with eating and drinking is definitely the area, in which the cultural element can be traced, which is of particular interest in a contrastive perspective.

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis conducted shows that faunal pragmatic idioms constitute a group of units which are very interesting in a contrastive perspective. The group analyzed is composed of units of different motivations. As mentioned before, pragmatic idioms encompass a number of units performing various functions, which means that they are very important in the process of communication. Significant differences have been observed in Polish, English and Italian units. In fact, very few units have quasi-equivalent in either one or two languages compared, with a bigger number of partial equivalents, especially those conveying different imagery. The analysis showed that the vast majority of units analyzed are not included in bilingual lexico- and phraseographic works.

Taking into consideration the importance of the pragmatic unit in communication, the idioms discussed have to be included in such works. It should be stressed that their phraseographic description, in both mono- and bilingual works, facilitates the process of translation and foreign language learning. The proper description is necessary so that one could learn how to use a given unit properly. The analysis of Polish, English and Italian pragmatic units containing faunal constituents shows that they pose difficulty in translation. Pragmatic idioms are of great importance for communication; thus, from the point of view of foreign language teaching learners need to

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<sup>22</sup> On cultural aspects of lexicographic descriptions see Luque Durán (2007); Pamies Bertrán (2007); Luque Durán, Luque Nadal (2010); Pamies Bertrán et al. (2010).

know them and be able to use them in order to have a good command of the language. To sum up, it should be emphasized that an in-depth analysis of faunal pragmatic idioms is necessary for proper phraseographic description, which has very important implications for translation, foreign language teaching and lexicography.

## Abbreviations

Cz. – Czech	Ger. – German	lit. – literally
Eng. – English	It. – Italian	Pol. – Polish

## References

### A. Dictionaries

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## Uwagi o międzyjęzykowej ekwiwalencji polskich, angielskich i włoskich idiomów pragmatycznych z komponentami faunicznymi

### Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest analiza polskich, angielskich i włoskich faunicznych idiomów, które mają charakter pragmatyczny, i przedstawienie typologii ekwiwalentów badanych jednostek. Związki, wyekscerpowane z różnorodnych opracowań leksyko-graficznych, zarówno jedno-, jak i dwujęzycznych, tworzą trzy korpusy jednostek. Analizowane frazeologizmy używane są w różnych funkcjach, które autorka omawia w ujęciu kontrastywnym, co pozwala na wskazanie podobieństw i różnic pomiędzy poszczególnymi językami. W artykule przedstawiono ponadto propozycję opisu frazograficznego wybranych związków.

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## Who Is Responsible for Discord – the Apple, the Stone or the Bone?

**Abstract.** In the Croatian language a new phraseological unit, so far not registered in lexicographic works – *kamen razdora* (lit. the stone of discord) – has been coined. The unit came into existence as a result of contamination (combination) of two other phraseological units registered in phraseological lexicography – *jabuka razdora* (lit. the apple of discord) and *kamen smutnje* (lit. the stone of offence), which have equivalents in Polish. The aim of the analyses is to research the contexts in which the new fixed units of irregular meaning appear. Questionnaires done among native language users render it possible to analyze their present range of occurrence.

**Key words:** *phraseological unit, equivalent, context, Croatian, Polish*

### 1. Introduction

The phraseological stock of each language is in several ways continuously growing. Many new idioms have often been created out of the so-called occasional idioms, desemanticized compounds which only after a prolonged and continuous use acquire the status of a “real” idiom, and an established desemanticized compound. Examples of idiom items being borrowed from other languages are not rare, and we are witnessing also the appearance of new idioms being the result of idiomatic games, i.e. ellipses, content expansion of existing idioms, contamination of elements of the already established desemanticized compounds etc. Therefore, in the first place we can talk about the stock expansion, although examples of idiomatic compounds, which slowly cease being used passing from active to passive stratum, are also noticeable.

It may be underlined that the idiomatic stock is rarely being expanded by idioms of biblical and antique origin. These are mostly compounds which

entered the language long ago and settled there, but it is noticeable that also among them there are examples which leave the active stratum of language and do not find their place in dictionaries of idioms. Therefore, some of these idioms have no confirmation in dictionaries, while others, in spite of active usage, have not been idiographically recorded.

Briefly, changes in composition and structure of the idiomatic stock are a permanent and very interesting process which attracts the attention of researchers.

At the same time, it is questionable how much the speakers are aware of the source and origin of such compounds, even if they are using them actively and in their correct meaning. The same question may be posed for those idioms which are considered exclusively national.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The stone of discord – *kamień niezgody*

Instigated by the observed novelties at the idiomatic level, we have researched the representation and usage examples of a rather new and relatively desemanticized compound which has not been registered in Croatian dictionaries. This is the compound “the stone of discord” – *kamen razdora*. The research on the use of the idiom shows an increasing frequency in language and its occurrence in the majority of functional styles.

The idiom means the source (the cause, the reason) of discord (quarrel, disagreement, misunderstanding), the main (basic) obstacle for *somebody* on the way to *something*.

There is only one example in Croatian language in which this idiom relates to a person:

- The five-year-old-son became the “stone of discord” (“Kamen razdora” postao petogodišnji sin (Vjesnik, 12.2.2008.))

Judging by other examples, it is obvious that the idiom is used in the description of an inanimate object (a thing, an event, an institution) causing a certain disagreement, conflict or misunderstanding.

- Control over telecommunication cabling is the *stone of discord* between the main partners and the state in the information technology business. (Nadzor nad DTK-om je pak *kamen razdora* između glavnih partnera i države u informatičkom poslu. (G))

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<sup>1</sup> Also evidenced through various research conducted among native speakers, and based on checks of information whether native speakers know the origin of a particular national idiom, i.e. whether they are able to explain their etymology (cf. Kodrić, Vidović Bolt 2009).

- Manistra – *the stone of discord* – (Manistra – *kamen razdora* (G-blog))
- Besides, this preliminary contract was *the stone of discord* and the reason why any construction was blocked – of the Bandić or Čačić model (Taj predugovor je inače bio *kamen razdora* zbog kojeg se blokirala bilo kakva gradnja – Bandićeva ili Čačićeva modela. (G))

In the Polish language there is also an idiom of the same lexical composition and same meaning – *kamień niezgody*, and it is also omitted from the dictionary. This compound is obviously also related to some inanimate object, as no example is found that it would point to something alive.

- Chyba na zawsze pozostanie tajemnicą, w jaki sposób ta drobna, niepozorna kobieta dokonała rzeczy niemożliwej: *kamień niezgody* pękł i ludzie przebaczyli sobie wszelkie urazy. (G)
- Komorowski dodał, że zbrodnia katyńska i katyńskie kłamstwo to *kamień niezgody* między naszymi krajami.' (www.pszl.pl; 8.5.2010.)
- Nie trzeba przypominać, że jednym z *kamieni niezgody*, który wywołał rozłam Kościoła w XVI w., była praktyka odpustów. (G)

It is, of course, the question, where this idiom comes from in both Slavic languages. Considering its lexical composition, it can be concluded that the analyzed idiom is the result of contamination (combination) of the two phraseographically confirmed idioms – the **apple of discord** (*jabuka razdora* (jabłko niezgody) and the **stone of intrigue** (*kamen smutnje*) or the **stone of stumbling** (*kamen spoticanja*) (*kamień obrazy*).

### 3. The apple of discord – *jabłko niezgody*

The idiom the **apple of discord** (*jabuka razdora*) is confirmed in the Matešić *Frazeološki rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* (1982: 208) (Croatian or Serbian Dictionary of Idioms) where the idiom is interpreted to mean 'cause, reason, motive of a intrigue or conflict'. It is also verified by its appearance in the Croatian-German Dictionary of Idioms (*Hrvatsko-njemački frazeološki rječnik*) edited by the same author (1988: 183), and in the Croatian-English Dictionary of Idioms (*Hrvatsko-engleski frazeološki rječnik*) by D. Vrgoč and Ž. Fink-Arsovski where it is explained as 'object of dispute (conflict), disputed object' (2008: 284). In the Croatian Dictionary of Idioms (*Hrvatski frazeološki rječnik*) by A. Menac, Ž. Fink-Arsovski and R. Venturina (2003: 97) the idiom is even explained by the idiom – stone of discord, subject of dispute (fight, argument) – **kamen smutnje, predmet spora (svađe)**'.

The Croatian idiom *jabuka razdora* (**the apple of discord**) has its equivalent in the Polish language in the idiom of the same lexical composition and identical structure *jabłko niezgody* (**the apple of discord**). The analysis of Polish lexicographic works does not give a clear answer, and few dictionaries register the idiomatic unit *jabłko niezgody* (Skorupka 1996: 298, Dereń, Polański 2009: 187).

In both cultures the apple is connected to the biblical motif, i.e. Adam and Eve and the original sin of men. In the Book of Genesis a fruit which opens eyes to a human creature making him understand the difference between good and evil is mentioned. From all the fruits in the Garden of Eden, the man was only prohibited to pick and eat from the Tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, there is no explicit indication that it is in fact an apple. So, the apple is a symbol of good and evil, dispute and reconciliation. Hall (1998: 131) mentions that the apple was “perhaps borrowed by early Christian artists from the classical image on the golden apple of Hesperides”.

In spite of the various symbolics of the apple (Nowakowska 2005: 120) and possible patterns of interpreting its etymology, this idiom, which has already gained international character, is undoubtedly of antique origin, as in its semantic sediment is the well-known myth about the apple the goddess Eris threw at the wedding of the sea goddess Thetis and king Peleias. Namely, Eris was furious for not being invited to the wedding, but she was denied the invitation for exactly the reason of not spoiling the celebration with her presence and mood for the young couple and guests. So, appearing uninvited, she threw a golden apple with the inscription: *καλλίστη* – “to the most beautiful one” on the table, which became the immediate cause of conflict among the three goddesses who competed for the title of the most beautiful one – Hera, Aphrodite and Athena. Zeus should have judged which one of them is the most beautiful, but he invited Paris to it, as he did not want that any of them would hold it against him.

At the first moment, Paris decided to divide the apple in three parts. Hera told him that he would be the master of Asia, Athena as the goddess of wisdom that he would win in all battles and be the most handsome man and Aphrodite promised him the most beautiful wife describing therewith Helen, daughter of Zeus and Leda who hatched from a swan’s egg and was married to Menelaus, the king of Sparta. She also promised him to influence Helen so that she would love him back. So eventually, Paris decided for Aphrodite and gave the golden apple to her. This is considered to be the immediate cause of Trojan War which broke out as Paris abducted Helen. This mythical scene is a frequent motif on paintings and has been immortalized by Frans

Floris (1519–1570) on his painting called “Paris gives the golden apple to Aphrodite”.

Croatian examples show that this idiom rarely refers to a person. Only one example has been recorded where the **apple of discord (jabuka razdora)** is a person and though the Croatian football player Niko Kranjčar who changed his club from the Zagreb Club Dinamo to the Hajduk of Split:

- In many ways has Niko Kranjčar been significant for Croatian football. He was the apple of discord between north and south, when he changed from Dinamo to Hajduk (Niko Kranjčar je mnogim stvarima obilježio hrvatski nogomet. Bio je jabuka razdora između sjevera i juga, kada je iz Dinama prešao u Hajduk. (JL, 5.9.2009.))

Therefore, it is understandable why the authors of the Croatian-English Dictionary of Idioms under the meaning of this idiom have indicated ‘object of discord (intrigue), intrigued object’ (2008: 284), so they have precisely indicated that this is something inanimate which causes conflict.

The idiom is most often accompanied by the verb *to throw (baciti)* or *throw into (ubaciti)* whereby the mythological motif of apple throwing is invoked:

- So Saddam has succeeded to throw the *apple of discord* between Russia and America, two permanent members of the Security Council... (Tako je Saddam uspio ubaciti *jabuku razdora* između Rusije i Amerike, dviju stalnih članica Vijeća sigurnosti, u kojem raspoložu snagom veta. (Vjesnik, 18.9.2002.))
- It was only around Christmas time when Civetta thought the time might have come to throw a real apple of discord among the peasants (Tek o Božiću pričinu se Civetti da je nadošlo vrijeme baciti među seljake pravu jabuku razdora. (V. Nazor, Veli Jože))

There are also examples found in which the idiom appears as a gerund:

- The publication of the war veteran’s register is only a *throwing of apple of discord* among the Croats (Objava registra branitelja samo je bacanje jabuke razdora među Hrvatima. (G))
- This is only *throwing of apple of discord* among the Croats. (To je samo bacanje jabuke razdora među Hrvatima. Svatko je sad optužen. (G))

It appears also with verbs *to introduce, to become (unositi, postati)* whereby the beginning of the described conflicts, discords or misunderstandings is indicated:

- The logistics author Zdravko Mamić, is also aware of this fact, and therefore trying to introduce the *apple of discord* among the “whites” (Svjestan je toga i autor logistike Zdravko Mamić, pa svojim izjavama nastoji dodatno unositi *jabuke razdora* među ‘bijeje’. (SD, 29.5.2009.)
- The archipelago in South Atlantic, discovered in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, from uninhabited pile of rocks..... has become an *apple of discord* .... among Western countries.... (Otočje u Južnom Atlantiku, otkriveno u 16. stoljeću, od nenaseljene hrpe kamenja u hladnom moru petstotinjak kilometara istočno od Ognjene Zemlje postalo je takva *jabuka razdora* da je zbog njega vođen prvi rat između dviju zapadnih država, saveznica SAD. (Večernji list, 23.2.2010.))

The examples of usage in the Polish language confirm the research results in which the Croatian idiom has been discovered. An exception is the lack of confirmation for the use of idioms with the verb *rzucić*.

The Polish idiom also relates to something inanimate (sometimes even an abstract notion) which is the subject of discord and misunderstanding:

- “*Jabłkiem niezgody* pomiędzy Oskarem i Pawłem są gry komputerowe. Paweł zawsze uważa, że gry, które posiada, są lepsze.” (G)
- Komputer w naszym domu to istne *jabłko niezgody*, bo ciągle się o niego kłócimy. (G)
- I nieładnie że kościół nie widzi tego że ten krzyż jest *jabłkiem niezgody* i niewiści między ludźmi. (G)
- *Jabłkiem niezgody* jest kwestia dziewictwa. Z Pisma dość jasno wynika, że kobieta powinna zachować czystość do ślubu. (G, <http://www.dyskusje.katolik.pl/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=17379&start=0>)
- Na *jabłko niezgody* nie było miejsca, dlatego też, gwiazdy uśmiechały się do siebie, wymieniały komplementami.

#### 4. The stone of intrigue (stumbling) – *kamień obrazu*

Another idiom, which in the process of contamination (combination), has served to create the Croatian idiom “*stone of discord*” ‘*kamen razdora*’ is the idiom *the stone of intrigue (stumbling) kamen smutnje (spoticanja)*. Matešić (1982: 227), like Vrgoč and Fink-Arsovski (2008: 304), indicates the idiom **kamen smutnje (spoticanja)** (the stone of intrigue/stumbling) as a ‘cause, trigger of conflict (discord)’ whereby they obviously consider both nouns to be versions (i.e. version elements). In the *Hrvatski frazeološki rječnik* (2002: 105) the idiom is also explained like ‘cause of intrigue (conflict, discord, misunderstanding), the main (principle) obstacle to someone for something’.



In the creation of the Polish idiom *kamień niezgody* equivalent to the Croatian *kamen razdora*, among the already mentioned compound (apple of discord) *jabuka razdora/jabłko niezgody* obviously the idiom (stone of discord/intrigue) *kamień obrazy* (same as *kamen smutnje*) has been used. The idiom *kamień obrazy* in the meaning ‘the cause, reason of offence’ is indicated by Skorupka (1996: 315) and Godyń (1995: 83), and in the dictionaries of more recent editions by Dominów and Dominów (2010: 82) and Dereń and Polański (2009: 198). Koziara (2001: 84) confirms that this is a compound characterized by extraordinary established stability.

In spite of their identical meaning, there are obvious structural, lexical and etymological differences. The unit is of biblical origin, based on the quotation from the Letter to Romans (9,32///9,33) and the First Letter of St. Peter (2,8):

Why? Because *they did* not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

As it is written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and the rock of offence, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone”.

And: “A stone of stumbling and a stone of offence”. They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

The stumbling stone is in the Bible also the symbol of God who called himself a “stone of stumbling”, respectively “the rock of staggering” (Is 8,14) (Fouilloux et al. 1999: 97). The rock represents force and strength, which is also deduced from biblical symbols (cf. Peter the Rock).

If the representation of both optional elements is observed, it is obvious that there are actually no differences in usage. They indeed do function in the language as completely synonymous nouns.

The same applies to the idiom **apple of discord** (*jabuka razdora*) which suggests something inanimate, events, objects, items, processes, etc. The form *stumbling stone* (*kamen spoticanja*) is very often used in political discussions on some key issues like votes of the Croats who emigrated and live now in other countries:

- *The stumbling stone* the vote of diaspora (*Kamen spoticanja* glasovanje dijaspore (Sportnet.hr, 20.8.2010.))

or the debt of Ljubljanska banka to Croatian clients and after ex-Yugoslavia fell apart:

- Ljubljanska banka the last *stumbling stone* (posljednji *kamen spoticanja* (www.banka.hr, 28.7.2010.)).

Decisions of some local authorities or some national governments are also described as *stumbling stones* whereby the names of cities or countries respectively stand exclusively in a metonymical role (Zagreb – the authorities of the City of Zagreb, the Czech Republic – the Government of the Czech Republic):

- Zagreb (the stumbling stone between Čačić and Vesna Pusić) (Zagreb – *kamen spoticanja* između Čačića i Vesne Pusić (ezadar.hr, 14.4.2009.))
- The Czech Republic the only stumbling stone for the Lisabon Treaty? (Češka jedini *kamen spoticanja* za Lisabonski sporazum? (ezadar.hr, 7.10.2009.))

There is an interesting example where even the Third Sonata in H-minor by Chopin appears like an obstacle described by the idiom the *stone of stumbling*:

- And in the end there was the great Third Sonata in H minor by Chopin, the *stone of stumbling for many piano players...* (I na kraju tu je bila velika Chopinova Treća sonata u h-molu, *kamen spoticanja* za mnoge pijaniste, koju je umjetnik odsvirao u kompaktnoj cjelini, ostvarenoj i razrađenoj izvedbom koju obilježava mudrost zrelog iskustvu. Urnebesnom odobravanju publike gost se zahvalio s dva dodatka. (Vjesnik, 23.2.2000.)).

And obviously, books are frequently the *stone of intrigue*:

- The Lord of the Rings ..... the indicated book is a real *stone of intrigue* ..... (Iako je *Gospodar prstenova* naizgled lagana i zabavna literarna tvorevina, prava istina je da je navedena knjiga pravi *kamen smutnje* i potencijalni uzročnik niza neugodnosti po čitatelja djela. (G))
- Speaking about the creation of the Anthology, ..... unless it becomes the “stone of intrigue” (Govoreći o nastanku Antologije, autor Ante Stamać rekao je da je tri godine radio na njoj u tajnosti, kako ne bi bila “*kamen smutnje*”. (G))

This idiom appears also in the work of Antun Kanižlić (1699–1777), Croatian poet and Jesuit, in the title *The Stone is Causing Great Intrigues (Kamen pravi smutnje velike)*:

- The largest work of Kanižlić, *The Stone is Producing Great Intrigues*, (1780), written in 11 parts divided into chapters is a theological and religious-historical dissertation. (Najopsežnije Kanižličjevo djelo, *Kamen pravi smutnje velike*

(1780), napisano u 11 dijelova podijeljenih na poglavlja, teološka je i crkvenopovijesna rasprava. (G)

More seldom there are examples in which the idiom relates to a person:

- I do not want to be the *stone of intrigue* among the always unison Lindo team (Kao pravi lindovac ne želim, a ne mogu ni zamisliti, da budem *kamen smutnje* i razlog razdora među uvijek složnim ansamblom. (Dubrovački list, 28.6.2010.))
- Vojković further on the *stone of intrigue* in the HSLS (Vojković i dalje *kamen smutnje* u HSLS-u (G))

However, there are often both elements present the *intrigue* and the *stumbling*, whereby importance and difficulty of the problems is described:

- The wooden fruit-vending-stall near the Bi Village camping reception became the new *stone of intrigue and stumbling*.... (“Drveni štand za prodaju voća nedaleko od recepcije kampa Bi Village postao je novi *kamen smutnje i spoticanja* u ionako narušenoj komunikaciji između vlasnika kampa i Općine Fažana.” (G))
- I would not want that the fence around the church and its reconstruction be the *stone of intrigue and stumbling*.... (Ne bih želio da ogradni zid oko crkve te sama njezina obnova budu *kamen smutnje i spoticanja* jer nam zaista nikome to ovog trena ne treba. (Zadarski list, 28.8.2010.))

Examples of usage of the Polish idiom *kamień obrazy* are correspondent with the examples of usage of the equivalent Croatian idiom *kamen spoticanja (smutnje) (stone of intrigue (stumbling))* as it refers only to something inanimate.

- Dla innych to prawdziwy *kamień obrazy* – źródło licznych podziałów i wynaturzeń doktrynalnych, takich jak na przykład teologia sukcesu. (www.kosciol.pl)
- Samodzielna, nieskonsultowana z władzami inicjatywa Episkopatu była dla przywódcy PZPR przejawem samowoli i nielojalności, istnym *kamieniem obrazy*. (G)
- Drugi powód jest jeszcze bardziej znamienny: *kamieniem obrazy* stało się wpuśczenie na łamy Elżbiety Isakiewicz jako skrajnej prawicy i antysemitki. (G)

## 5. The bone of discord – *kość niezgody*

Besides the mentioned idioms, both phraseographically confirmed and unconfirmed, the *stone of intrigue* – *kamen razdora* respectively the *kamień niezgody* – in Croatian language it is often used a dessemanticised established compound of a noun structure *the bone of discord* which does not have a printed lexicographic confirmation, but it shares the meaning with the analysed idioms.

Matešić (1982: 264) registers the idiom *to throw a bone among (between) someone (baciti kost između (među) koga)* in the sense of ‘to make someone to quarrel, introduce discord, dissent or fight among some persons’. Vrgoč and Fink-Arsovski (2008: 351) omit it, but they indicate the idiom *to throw a bone to someone (baciti (dobaciti) kost komu)* which is exactly because a different case is required, it is also different in its meaning, and means ‘to satisfy someone with some trifle’.

In the Polish language there is a completely equivalent idiom used – *kość niezgody*. However, Skorupka (1996: 350) indicates it as the idiom *rzuścić kości niezgody*, making notice thereby to the idiom *jabłko niezgody*. In recent Polish dictionaries a verbal idiom including the elements *kość* i *niezgoda* has not been indicated. Only a pure noun form of the compound *kość niezgody* has been indicated in the dictionary by Lebda (2005: 105) and Dereń and Polański (2009: 229) meaning ‘cause, trigger, source of conflict, intrigue’. A bone is the most durable part of the body and therefore the symbol of strength and vigour (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 2007: 309). It is most often mentioned in magic and other occult rituals and rites, where it symbolises death, new beginning, purification etc. However, the bone symbol may be connected with the meaning of the idiom which is identical to the meaning of the discussed idioms, but, considering the unawareness of mythological or biblical connections, a conclusion is to be made that the experience and the knowledge of the world have been the stimulating impulses, i.e. that they are reflected through the image of throwing a bone among animals (mostly dogs) prepared to fight for it.

So, it is possible to determine that this is another “idiomatic game”, an example of substitution of the first noun element in the idiom *apple of discord/stone of intrigue (jabuka razdora/jabłko niezgody)* (and *kamen razdora/kamień niezgody*) with the noun *bone*, respectively, *kość*.

At the same time, it is not excluded that in the Croatian language an expansion of the phraseographically confirmed idiom *to through a bone (among) someone* occurred, by adding a noun compound *discord (razdor)* in the genitive case.

In Polish on the other hand, when forming the noun idiom, beside the already mentioned substitution, reduction also occurs, as well as deletion of the verbal element *rzucić* and alteration of the first noun element (*kości* – *kość*). Namely, as the *throwing of bones* bears the symbolic of creating intrigue among the confronted parties, such a compound is also logically justified.

Their frequency is confirmed by examples where idioms appear with verbs *to throw* or *to throw into*, respectively *rzucić*.

- Famous Croatian journalist Ivica Žuro, has thrown a *bone of discord* among the management of the SDP..... (Glasoviti hrvatski novinar Ivica Žuro, ubacio *kost razdora* među rukovodstvo SDP-a (...) (G))
- We are sorry that a new *bone of discord* has been thrown or misunderstanding to the so much needed connection of ..... (Žao nam je što je bačena nova *kost razdora* ili nesporazuma na toliko potrebnu povezanost turističke ponude s eno-gastro uslugama, te kulturom stola i življenja. (Vjesnik, 1.8.2004.))
- (about the waterfront – promenade in Split)..... But it has not swallowed the *thrown bone of discord*. (Točku usijanja označila je prijava UNESCO-u. Protivnici (ili manipulatori), koji nisu ni znali kakva će Riva danas osvnuti, tvrdeći da se kamen zamjenjuje tehno-betonom, bili su uvjerenja da će UNESCO-va komisija zaustaviti radove. Ali ona nije progutala bačenu *kost razdora*. (Vjesnik, 7.5.2007.))
- Who is throwing the *bone of discord* among the war veterans... (Tko baca *kost razdora* među branitelje, ne zanima ih previše. (Dnevnik, 7.4.2010.))
- Absurdalną decyzją *rzucili kość niezgody* między polskie społeczeństwo. (G)
- Najlepiej *rzucić* w eter *kość niezgody*, aby zamieszać w wykreowanym partyjniackim systemie. (G)
- Katyńska *kość niezgody* w relacjach Warszawy i Moskwy zostanie pochowana razem z prezydentem Kaczyńskim (G)
- Nowa *kość niezgody* w komisji hazardowej: stenogramy (G)
- Mało jest pozycji na rynku księgarskim, które by w sposób zwięzły, treściwy i merytoryczny, a zarazem niezwykle ciekawy i całkowicie naukowy przybliżyły czytelnikowi istotę problemu teorii ewolucji oraz podstawy wiary w stwarzanie. Taką potrzebę niewątpliwie zaspokaja niewielka książka *Kość niezgody. Czy teoria ewolucji jest prawdziwa?*, której autorką jest brytyjska biolog, pochodzenia australijskiego, Sylvia Baker. (<http://stwarzanie.wordpress.com/2009/06/13/sylvia-baker-kosc-niezgody/>)

There is only one Polish example where the idiom refers to something inanimate:

- Czeczeni – *kość niezgody* Rosjan i Polaków (G)

## 6. Conclusion

All the analysed idioms have a common meaning; they are mostly used in a description of some object, event or appearance which causes a conflict, while only occasional examples refer to persons. It is obvious that in the formation of the idiom *stone of discord* (*kamen razdora*) and *kamień niezgody* the key role was played by an idiomatic game, based on contamination (combination) of the idiom *apple of discord* and *stone of stumbling*, respectively in Polish *jabłko niezgody* and *kamień obrazy*. Correspondingly, it may be assumed that the idiom *apple of discord* has influenced the creation of the idiom *bone of discord* (both directly and indirectly) and the idiom *jabłko niezgody* the creation of the idiom *kość niezgody* by means of substitution of the first noun element with the noun *bone*, respectively *kość*. All the indicated idioms are characterized by extraordinary frequency in both languages.

The presented idioms are very frequent in headlines for their metaphoric and picturesque style, attracting the attention of recipients. Thus they confirm the attractiveness as one of the “strong positions of the text” (Katnić-Bakaršić 2000: 60).

- *The apple of discord* between North and South (*Jabuka razdora između sjevera i juga* (JL, 6.9.2009.)
- Premises and empty bank account *stone of stumbling of the HSU* (*Prostor i prazan račun kamen spoticanja HSU-a* (SD, 21.2.2010.)
- Decentralization – the *stone of intrigue in Macedonia* (*Decentralizacija – kamen smutnje u Makedoniji*)
- Allergens – the *stone of intrigue* in food control (*Alergeni – kamen smutnje u kontroli hrane* (Vjesnik, 17.7.2008.))
- The issue of the name of Macedonia still a *stone of intrigue* (*Pitanje imena Makedonije još uvijek kamen smutnje* (G) 13/11/2007)
- Moskiewski *kamień obrazy* ([www.onet.pl](http://www.onet.pl), 26.1.2006.)
- Osteoporozza – *kość niezgody* ([www.osteoporozza.pl](http://www.osteoporozza.pl), 6.3.2010.)
- Katyńska *kość niezgody* zostanie pochowana (<http://www.polskieradio.pl/wiadomosci/swiat/artukul154266.html>; 13.4.2010.)

Despite the fact that idioms are motivated in different ways, these compounds are used in utterly identical contexts and function as examples of synonymy in the phraseology of both languages. Considering the fact that the idioms are entirely desemanticized, the speakers tend to disregard their origin and even their image, focusing their attention only on the meaning, i.e. the message they convey.

In the future, it would be interesting to follow whether new idiomatic games, in which the idioms analysed here participate, will appear. Simultaneously, further fate of the presented compounds should be monitored. In the first place, it implies re-examining future lexicographical confirmation of idioms not confirmed by now.

There is no doubt that this research has also confirmed that phraseology is a live body in which some interesting processes are permanently taking place and resulting in new compounds in the phraseological stock. Not being aware of them may, of course be the *stone of discord/kamen razdora/kamień niezgody*, but also an *apple of discord/jabuka razdora/jabłko niezgody* and a *bone of discord/kost razdora/kość niezgody* and a *stone of intrigue/kamen smutnje* or *stumbling/spoticanja/kamień obrazy*.

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## Kto odpowiada za niezgodę – jabłko, kamień czy kość?

### Streszczenie

Język chorwacki stosunkowo niedawno wzbogacił się o jeszcze jeden stały związek wyrazowy, na razie frazeograficznie niepotwierdzony – *kamen razdora*. Badania nad użyciem tego idiomu wskazują na jego rosnącą frekwencję w języku i występowanie w zasobie leksykalnym większości stylów funkcjonalnych. W artykule porównano odpowiedniki polskie, tj. frazeologizmy *kamień obrazu* i *jabłko niezgody*, mające poświadczenie w nielicznych słownikach frazeologicznych języka polskiego. Celem analiz jest zbadanie kontekstów, w których pojawiają się nowe nieregularne znaczeniowo stałe związki wyrazowe. Przeprowadzenie ankiety wśród rodzimych użytkowników języka pozwoliło zbadać obecny zasięg występowania omawianych jednostek.



**PART III**

**CULTURAL STUDIES, EDUCATION  
AND PHRASEOLOGY**



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## **Phraseology in Poles' Language Education**

**Abstract.** The paper is devoted to the presentation of the contemporary Polish language education with a special focus on phraseology discussed with reference to the changes which have occurred over the last twenty years, i.e. since the time of the statehood change. The analysis of the core curriculum which is valid now as well as Polish textbooks functioning on the market it possible to conclude that phraseological education encompasses three aspects. The communicative aspect refers to the education focused on the development of productive-receptive skills, connected with reception and creation of texts. The cognitive aspect concerns linguistic knowledge transmitted to students. The cultural aspect consists in introducing students to culture through phraseology. A change has occurred in the education regarding phraseology in the last twenty years in Poland consists in shifting from language education, communication- and cognition-oriented, to linguo-cultural communication, in which the communicative and cultural components dominate.

**Key words:** *language education, phraseology, communicative/cognitive/cultural aspect*

### **1. Introduction**

In the contemporary Polish schools language education has a pragmatic, practical orientation. It is the effect of many years of the development, which has been very dynamic over the last twenty years (i.e. since the time of the statehood change).

The general political transformation begun in 1989 became the basis for changes in the Polish educational system. The 1990s ushered in a national debate about the quality of Polish schools as disconnected from real life, non-functional, engaged in encyclopedia-like teaching, and ignoring the interests of students. The advocates of reform claimed that the tempo and the direction of general social changes made learning and using informa-

tion skills more important now than theoretical knowledge. Reforming the Polish educational system proceeded in two directions – structural reform and curriculum reform. The aim of the first was to work out a new set of divisions for general education. The aim of the second was to determine new educational objectives.

As a result of the structural reform a new type of school was introduced – the *gimnazjum* (junior high school). This school, targeted for 13–16-year-olds, provides general education in a three-year cycle. The contemporary Polish educational system is divided into four stages: stage I – primary school (grades 1–3), stage II – primary school (grades 4–6), stage III – junior high school (grades 1–3) and stage IV – post-*gimnazjum* school (high/secondary school). The syllabus reform was presented in a document called *Core curriculum for general education* (CC 1999). This document presents a very general approach providing objectives for each educational stage, the tasks of the school and educational areas, such as subjects, blocks of subjects and educational goals. *Core curriculum* aims to guarantee the uniformity of the Polish educational system and, at the same time, offers some autonomy for creators of the detailed syllabi.<sup>1</sup>

Phraseology has a long tradition in Polish language education. The aim of this paper is to present the specific character of the contemporary Polish language education with a special focus on phraseology discussed with reference to the changes which have occurred over the last twenty years as a result of school reform. First, we briefly outline the conception of Polish language education included in *Core curriculum*. Secondly, we demonstrate the way of functioning of phraseology in the contemporary Polish as mother-tongue teaching education. Lastly, we highlight changes which took place in the way of treating of phraseological issues, and outline tendency concerning the future.

## 2. Language education as a part of mother-tongue education in Poland

*Core curriculum*<sup>2</sup> emphasizes the role of mother-tongue education as the basis of students' general development throughout their school education.

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<sup>1</sup> Readers interested in a more complete panorama of the Polish educational system, especially in teaching Polish as a mother tongue, can find more information about it in many papers, for example: Berlińska (1998), Awramiuk (2002), Miodunka, Przechodzka (2007), Kłakówna (2007).

<sup>2</sup> The first *Core curriculum* was published in 1999 (CC 1999). During the last ten years it was completed and modified. In 2008 the new version of *Core curriculum* was published. Contents

First of all, language education within the scope of the school subject Polish aims to develop communicative competence, understood as teaching speaking, listening, reading and writing in different communicative situations as well as the development of individual interests in language as an element of national heritage. The students get the store of the knowledge important for reading cultural texts and creating their own texts. Describing the language system should serve to support linguistic performance. The knowledge about one's mother-tongue language is treated as a help for learning other languages as well as a source of knowledge about different ways of seeing and interpreting the world. The language education relates to all dimensions of Polish education; traditionally, it is the knowledge about literature and other texts of culture, knowledge about language, theory of literature and genres. In the latest *Core curriculum* (CC 2008) these areas are ordered in the following groups:

- I. Reception of utterance and using information included in it.
- II. Analysis and interpretation of cultural texts.
- III. Production of utterance.

Originally, each educational stage has to fulfill different functions in language education. Primary school should identify pupils' language interests and needs, *gimnazjum* – not neglecting to develop communicative competence – introduce the first systematizations, and high school constitutes a peculiar introduction into individual fields of knowledge.

In Poland, language education was associated with teaching grammar or – more generally – with some knowledge about language. Before the reforms, language issues were taught in a relatively wide range, but rather theoretically, without links to other aspects of Polish language education, such as literary and cultural education, or even speaking and writing exercises. The reform has brought about the change understood as many original didactic conceptions. New conceptions have come among the traditional ones, breaking off with school clichés in both methodology and the choice of content in language education. The program *I like it!* (Jędrychowska, & al. 2001) is an example of the new trend. The practical dimension of a communicative model underlies the innovative character of this program. Speech acts created with specific speaker's intentions to communicate are the centre of interest during lessons. Grammar is treated as a tool supporting the pragmatics of

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of teaching programs were written down as learning outcomes, with defining requirements for the end of each educational stage (CC 2008). At this point in time, attaching special significance to learning outcomes takes places in many educational systems in Europe. It includes academic education, too.

speech-acts. Education about chosen systematic phenomena (phonetic, inflectional, lexical, word formation, and syntactic) takes place while using language – the act of speech bringing about a certain situation. The main aim of language education – developing communicative competence in different communicative situations – is realized by initiating communicative situations during lessons and, thus, learning language while using it. In current Polish teaching programs for each educational stage the importance of developing the communicative competence is emphasized. The authors of Polish teaching programs declare (in the introductions to their programs) developing communicative competence as a primary goal. The contact with real language and using language seem to be more important than getting to know the rules of grammar.

### 3. Phraseology in Polish textbooks

In the contemporary Polish school phraseological education encompasses three aspects: communicative, cognitive and cultural, but only the two first constitute the traditional core of language education in Poland; yet, they are not in the same form.

The communicative aspect refers to the education focused on the development of productive-receptive skills, connected with reception and creation of texts. The cognitive aspect concerns linguistic knowledge transmitted to students. The cultural aspect consists in introducing students to culture through phraseology. Phraseology, constituting reflection of national culture, gives the ideal opportunity of integrating knowledge of language with literary-cultural education.

Participation phraseology issues at separate educational stages of teaching Polish as a mother-tongue is diversified. At I and II stages the communicative aspect dominates, usually limited to cognition of more and more thematic ranges and acquisition of new phraseologisms. The cognitive and cultural aspects are revealed at III and IV educational stages.<sup>3</sup> In this paper all aspects will be discussed one by one, with a special consideration for phraseological exercises included in current textbooks to *gimnazjum* and high school. There are many different educational programs (along with their methodical frame) for teaching mother-tongue at each educational stage. Out of necessity, we limit ourselves to some selection of textbooks (see: references – textbooks).

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<sup>3</sup> More about recommendations how to introduce phraseological issues in school, especially about terminology, see: Maćkiewicz (2002).

### 3.1. Communicative aspect

Phraseological units fulfill an important role in the development of productive-receptive skills, connected with the reception and creation of texts, because they are one part of language lexicon. In the case of phraseological units developing communicative competence means among others gradual increasing (both in active and passive lexicon) the number of units acquired, paying attention to their stylistic diversification and synonymy in relation to words and other phraseological units, as well as normative issues.

Phraseology is not a very frequent topic in the newest *Core curriculum*. In *gimnazjum* students should know how to use a phraseological dictionary and how to use phraseological units properly in various communicative situations (CC 2008: 9). In high school students are expected to understand the whole text meaning, which involves understanding meaning of specific words, phraseological units, sentences, and groups of sentences forming the paragraph (CC 2008: 11). Reception-production competences of students are evidently emphasised.

Hiding phraseology does not mean this area is omitted or ignored. It is just the opposite, phraseology treated as a part of lexical system of natural language is hidden in Core curriculum behind the general notations concerning the development of communicative competence, such as using the rich resource of language forms, understanding the text sense, creating cohesive and correct language utterances, adapting the language forms to its functions. Phraseological issues are present during lessons and in teaching programs, too (especially in the programs for *gimnazjum*). Phraseologisms are discussed as language means of expression useful in communication, they serve crystallization, enriching expressions, filling humour, making utterance more vivid. There are many exercises in textbooks developing the store of phraseological units and training the ability to use them. The phraseological exercises focused on communicative aspect are as follows:

- 1) explaining the meaning of given phraseological units (see: Mrowcewicz 2003: 7; Kaszewski, Trysińska 2009: 12);
- 2) connecting divided parts of phraseologisms (e.g. *wziąć... coś po lupę, spocząć... na laurach*) or sentences with phraseologisms (e.g. *Spóźniłem się o parę minut... więc niepotrzebnie robisz z igły widły*), finishing proverbs, supplementing incomplete phraseological units (see: Kowalikowa, Żydek-Bednarczuk 2002: 74);
- 3) exercises concerning collocations, it means the choice of matching words (e.g. *wierutne kłamstwa*, but not *\*wierutne bzdury, zabytki* or *wyzwiska*) (see: Gruszczyńska 2003: 45);

- 4) collecting phraseological units belonging to a defined thematic range or containing the same word (e.g. phraseologisms with the word *papier* 'paper': *cienki jak papier, blady jak papier, papier jest cierpliwy, mieć dobre papiery*);
- 5) writing texts full of phraseological units (see: Orłowa, Synowiec 2001: 65);
- 6) editing a text with removing or introducing phraseological units; analyzing their stylistic effect (see: Gruszczyńska 2003: 43–44);
- 7) correcting phraseological mistakes, such as: contaminations (*\*Na pochyle drzewo i Salomon nie naleje*), transformations of idiomatic forms (*\*stawać między młotem a kowadłem*), pleonasms (*\*cofnąć się do tyłu*), wrong meanings (see: Chwastniewska et al. 2002: 27);
- 8) establishing stylistic affiliation of given phraseological unit (e.g. colloquial, formal, official); replacing idiomatic forms with stylistically diversified phraseological units (see: Herman 2009: 104);
- 9) replacing words or phrases with synonymous phraseological units and vice versa (e.g. instead of *klamstwo szybko wychodzi na jaw – kłamstwo ma krótkie nogi; pisał jak kura pazurem – pisał brzydko*) (see: Wierzbicka-Piotrowska 2001: 74);
- 10) exercises with phraseological dictionaries (see: Nawarecki, Siwicka 2006: 124).

Many results of the examinations of students' knowledge of phraseologisms at different educational stages, from primary school to candidates for study (Mikołajczuk 1997; Koczela 2004; Karwatowska, Szypra-Kozłowska 2005; Tarary 2007), show students' little understanding of the provided expressions. Students have also many problems with correct using and adapting phraseologisms to communicative context. It is clearly seen that the more seldom phraseological units are used (the lower frequency they have in common texts), the more susceptible to deformation and to the phraseological mistakes committed by the students they are.

### 3.2. Cognitive aspect

Phraseology constitutes also a branch of knowledge about language and as an object of linguistic research has developed some theoretical knowledge, which is transmitted to students in school. Originally, language knowledge (also thus concerning phraseologisms) should be exploited in texts analyse and in developing communicative skills of students, which is underlined by both teaching programs and methodical guidelines (see: Muszyńska, Grzymała 2006: 16; Bobiński, Orłowa, Synowiec 2001: 45, 96–102).



Despite the fact, the current *Core curriculum* does not familiarize students with any compulsory terminology concerned the phraseology, the Polish educational tradition recommends that students attending a Polish school should know what the phraseology research area is, they should know the definition of phraseological unit as well as the classification of units based on formal (grammatical) and semantic (on account of rank of word collocation) criteria.<sup>4</sup> The parts of speech which could be treated as a core of phraseologisms are in the centre of attention of the formal division. The cores are as follows: for a nominal phrase – the noun or adjective (e.g. *biały kruk* 'curiosity, usually rare book'), for a verbal phrase – verb (e.g. *dolewać oliwy do ognia* 'to fuel discord'), and a phrase understood as a sentence (e.g. *wyszło szydło z worka* 'the cat's out of the bag'). The semantic classification is based on word collocation: idiomatic forms (idioms) are semantically irregular combinations of words – equivalents of single lexemes and they have a fixed form, by contrast, the words, grammatical forms or word order in the *związki łączliwe* can be changed in some scope.

The exercises concerning the cognitive aspect in current textbooks are as follows: division of phraseological units into nominal phrases, verbal phrases and phrases or into idioms and *związki łączliwe*, defining the type of given phraseologism and – what is closely connected with the normative and communicative aspects – indicating mistakes such as transformation of idiomatic forms or incorrect changes in *związki łączliwe*. Sometimes phraseologisms are used for developing syntactic awareness. Polish phraseologisms like a verbal phrase represent some syntactic patterns, opening around them empty places to be fulfilled with others words. Exercises from school textbooks require a syntactic analysis and noticing incorrect collocations (see: Gruszczyńska 2003: 41). Many textbooks contain classic knowledge about structure of phraseological units which function inside them as right terminology, but do not appear in separate exercises devoted to the realisation of cognitive aims. Then the thorough analysis of the scope of knowledge on phraseological units, notions from phraseology and types of phraseological exercises, as well as the scope of phraseologisms taken into account in textbooks for the Polish language by several publishing series made by Synowiec (2009) shows, that terminology concerning the phraseology used in textbooks is not always defined and not always constitutes the cohesive terminological methods.

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<sup>4</sup> The traditional division comes from Stanisław Skorupka's classification and despite the fact that there are many more functional and logic descriptions and theories in the modern Polish linguistics, they rather do not reach schools and textbooks.

### 3.2. Cultural aspect

The presence of phraseological units in school is also connected with students' developing knowledge about human, world and culture. Phraseology, being the reflection of culture, creates an excellent opportunity to integrate knowledge about language with literary-cultural education. The cultural aspect connects two previously mentioned aspects in a natural way, because all efforts of discussion about phraseologisms constitute – deliberately or not – the action having an impact on the development of the lexical scope, also favours the functionalization of linguistic knowledge. The cultural aspect means the introduction into the past world, as well as the contemporary world.

Using formal phraseology is treated as evidence of affiliation to the cultural elite. Exercises, such as describing historical origins of some groups of phraseological units, can be named as an introduction into the culture. These roots can be in the Bible (e.g. *widows mite*), antiquity and mythology (e.g. *Sisyphean task*), literature (e.g. *to be or not to be*), legends (e.g. *basilisk stare*), history (e.g. *to cross the Rubicon*). The typical exercises in this group consists in establishing the origin on the basis of given sources, searching for some phraseological units connected with different historical events, explaining the literal and metaphoric meaning and collecting phraseologisms of the same origin.

Reconstructions of the world image reinforced in phraseology consists an interesting group of school exercises. Phraseologisms are treated as units, in which social realia, experiences the past people and marks of their mentality (beliefs, views, behaviors characteristic of a given ethnic community) were preserved and on the basis of which it is possible to attempt to reconstruct the historical past. In the language, the linguistic view of the world issues has survived throughout the centuries and its understanding is the key to understanding old pieces. An attempt to reconstruct historical past is made, for example, in phraseologisms which record the reflection of knights' culture, the echo of family, political and social relations, hunters' customs, and the image of the dead. These exercises aim to develop language competence, especially in understanding, sometimes – in production of sentences as well as an introduction to the world of former culture. It should be mentioned that some phraseological mistakes can be treated as a result of unfamiliarity with old realia (e.g. *\*pomieszać komuś szranki*, instead of *pomieszać komuś szyki*).

We inherit some ways of thinking, judging, formulizing of opinions by maxims, proverbs and phraseological units. They build our identify and specific character of our culture. Cultural stereotypes are shaped among others

by phraseological units with the anthropocentric (in whole relating to human) image of the world (e.g. *noga stołowa, główka kapusty*) or in which human judgment follows by a comparison to the animal world (e.g. *pracowity jak mrówka, chytry jak lis*). The opinions deep-rooted in the culture of a given ethnic community create the language image of some phenomena, features etc. For example, in Polish the dog has a negative connotation (*zejść na psy, zły jak pies, wieszać psy na kimś, pogoda pod psem*), and the scientific image of the world, in which the whale is a mammal, is different from the colloquial (naive) image of the world, in which the whale is a fish.

The way of introduction into axiological issues (by means of phraseological material, too) characteristic of a given culture is also connected with the cultural aspect. The best way to achieve pedagogical goals is to use the proverbs in which the centuries-old tradition survived. The proverbs reveal an affair hierarchisation and prove that reality is constantly perceived and evaluated within the categories of good and evil. There are many proverbs in high school course books and many exercises appealing to students' experiences and their linquo-cultural competency (see: Przybyła 2007).

The image of the world is rarely connected with reflection on the contemporary texts, but even this can be found in school textbooks. The object of analysis can be youth jargon from music hits (Kaszewski, Trysińska 2009: 14), attractive slogans, commercials with phraseologism used in an untypical context drawing audience attention (e.g. *weźmiemy cię na języki* – advertising of a language school, *kup go na własną rękę* – advertising of a watch, *włos ci z głowy nie spadnie* – advertising of shampoo; Grabarczyk 2009: 79) as well as attractive journal headings (e.g. *Kości zostały rzucone* – about projects of changes in the Polish constitution; *Brzydkie kaczątka* – about unwanted children; Wierzbicka-Piotrowska 2001: 73).

There are some examples of phraseological exercises representing cultural aspect:

- 1) What kind of knight's stereotype is preserved in the following phraseologisms: *rycerski honor, rycerski wobec kobiet, obejść się z kimś po rycersku*? (Mrowciewicz 2003: 142).
- 2) In the broad meaning proverbs and sayings are considered as phraseological units. Many of them create the Christian agricultural-natural calendar, connecting the natural rhythm phenomena with the saint names [...], e.g. *na św. Grzegorza zima idzie do morza*. How many texts of this kind do you remember? Write at least three (Kowalikowa, Żydek-Bednarczuk 2002: 74).
- 3) Confirm that negative stereotypes of pig, fox, shoemaker, mother-in-law, fire exist in Polish language (Karaś, Wierzbicka 2004: 165).

- 4) Which of the following statements are consistent with the language or scientific image of the world? Which are consistent with both? *Słońce świeci, księżyc świeci, słońce chowa się za chmury, horyzont się kończy, owady to zwierzęta [...]* (Paczoska 2004: 139).

The discussion on meaning and functions of phraseological units in literature pieces, especially in poetry, has a long tradition in Polish school. This type of phraseological exercises is also proposed in contemporary textbooks for the Polish language (see: Paczoska 2004: 137; Grabarczyk 2009: 79; Mrowcewicz 2005: 137).

#### 4. Between the past and the future of phraseological education

Outlined above three aspects of phraseological education have their consummation at the end of Polish education – *matura* exam (see: IEM 2007). The written examination which, generally speaking, tests meaningful reading and written skills allows verifying communicative and – although definitely more seldom – the cognitive aspect of phraseological education. The oral examination consists in a presentation the problem chosen earlier. School-leaver can decide what kind of problem is interested for him (linguistics, literature or arts). Language issues can be as follows:<sup>5</sup>

- 1) The influence of literature on modern Polish phraseology. Analysing collected language material, characterizing functions of maxims in written and oral texts.
- 2) Functioning of phraseological units in modern advertising. Analysing collected language material, characterizing goals and the ways of using them.
- 3) Phraseology and proverbs as the linguistic image of the worlds. Considering on selected examples.
- 4) Analysing youth jargon, explaining popularity of some words and phraseological units.
- 5) The role of phraseologism in modern poetry (e.g. S. Barańczak, M. Biało-zewski, R. Krynicki). Considering on selected examples.

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<sup>5</sup> The schools are responsible for preparing subjects for oral *matura* examination. Their propositions are available also on the Internet. Given examples were taken from the web sites of two high schools in Poland: [http://zsp1slupsk.pl/mmatura/t\\_ustna\\_2010.pdf](http://zsp1slupsk.pl/mmatura/t_ustna_2010.pdf) and [www.xvlo.poznan.pl/dokumenty/matura\\_10.doc](http://www.xvlo.poznan.pl/dokumenty/matura_10.doc) (access: 17.08.2010).

- 6) Vocabulary concerning the science, people names, names of educational institution and persons working in a school. Analysing the word-formation structure, give the meaning and write phraseological units which they construct.
- 7) The language of journal headings (word-game, proverbs, titles of songs, phraseology etc.). Considering selected examples.

At the oral *matura* examination collecting language material and its interpretation conducted by a student himself is required as well as presentation to the audience. This kind of testing favours functionalization and individualization of the knowledge.

To more clearly realize the current situation, we should know what phraseological education used to be like in Poland. It allows understanding accomplished changes and imagining the future evolution of phraseology teaching.

In Polish school before the reform phraseology education focused on communicative and cognitive aspects, more seldom – on the cultural aspect. In traditional programs this aspect was limited to the presentation of historical origins of some groups of phraseological units. In spite of declarations the knowledge was not functional, and each dimension was taught independently to some extent. The cognitive aspect dominated during the examinations.

The scope of communicative aspect was always wide and usually hidden. In traditional programs it was located in speaking and writing exercises. They aimed to improve different kinds of language skills, for example, by exercises in expressing the same meaning with different syntactic constructions or by mastering more and more advanced genres. High school students should use phraseological units, especially stylistically marked ones, for example, typical of colloquial story or scientific style in an essay (Program LO 1990: 30).

The cognitive aspect in older teaching programs was included in the section “knowledge about language”, which established the realisation of cognitive goals mainly and served to students' recognition of linguistic issues mentioned in the teaching program. Originally, knowledge about language had to be exploited in text analyse as well as exercises in speaking and writing. In secondary school differences between phraseological units and syntactical phrases were discussed, correctness of phraseological units and mechanisms of formation of phraseological mistakes were analysed, expressive value and stylistic diversity of phraseological units were talked over (Program LO 1990: 29).

Changes in mother-tongue didactics have taken place together with development of new linguistics areas (pragmatics, text linguistics, cognitive linguistics) and changes in linguistics paradigms. Matters connected with efficient communication in different communicative situations have started to advance into the foreground. Nevertheless – as Zbróg (2008) argues – there are many models of language education in the contemporary textbooks. The relation between knowledge about language present for many years in the Polish educational tradition and the improvement of communicative competences is established in different ways. This general reflection relates to phraseology, too.

Currently, phraseology functions in three aspects in textbooks, with a stronger emphasis on the communicative-cultural aspect and the integration of language education with literary-cultural education.<sup>6</sup> The centre of gravity was shifted from communicative-cognitive aims to linguo-cultural ones with leaving the cognitive goals on the margin.

New possibilities to take the advantages of phraseology in school undoubtedly will be connected with conducted scientific researches which demonstrate the interests of the cultural and intercultural aspect of phraseology as well as its international character (see: Lewicki, Pajdzińska 2001; Chlebda 2004; Szerszunowicz 2009).

More interests in the cultural aspect of phraseology is also seen in the reflection about phraseology in school. Postulates tend to increase the cultural aspect for the confrontative dimension, to use contemporary texts more often (not only these representing high culture), to analyse modern language phenomena as well as – which in a way results from the above – to integrate school subjects (e.g. phraseology and learning foreign languages, phraseology and media education).

Szerszunowicz (2008), taking into consideration many years of teaching foreign language students from high schools, proposes enriching mother-tongue lessons with comparative elements. She considers training intercultural competence the biggest benefit of this kind of classes, as it allows introducing in the other nation culture and to understand one's own culture better. New didactic situations related to comparative studies could concern among others comparing units both common in European culture and of national or local character, reflexion on language creativity (modification of abbreviations' or idioms' meanings), contrastive analyse of chosen elements of linguistic image of the world. The realisation of such postulates can be

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<sup>6</sup> Language education in the broad sense of the term can be characterised in a similar way (see: Grudzińska 2007).

found – although still relatively not often – in the contemporary textbooks. For example, one of the exercises in Mrowcewicz's textbook (2003: 127) is as follows: *Are there equivalents of Polish phraseological units with the word saint in foreign languages? If not – which words replaces it?*

Wacławek (2005) gives an idea how to use media, or – more precisely speaking – slogans from advertising, in language and phraseological education. She proves phraseology is not dead science, encyclopaedic knowledge that students meet during their school education, and it can be introduced in a new attractive way. The author encourages teachers to run classes dealing with idioms in advertising, which may be more interesting for students and may facilitate the process of learning and remembering new material. The discussion about language phenomena based on authentic and modern language examples allows, on the one hand, to realise cultural training, on the other hand, to create interesting and incentive situations as well as connecting theoretical knowledge with practical approach. Phraseologisms used in advertising in canonical idiomatic forms enable realizing the communicative and cultural aspect, whereas less complicated modifications of phraseologisms – all three aspects of phraseological education simultaneously with strong integration and possibility to achieve other goals of language education.

Keynotes of cultural and intercultural education can be found obviously in a wider, not only phraseological context. For example, in glottodidactics for a long time it has been said that foreign languages should not be limited to teaching/learning grammatical structures, but should also introduce the cultural space existing in these languages (see: Garncarek 2006). What is obvious, these postulates do not concern directly phraseology; nevertheless, phraseological repertoire – because of the above mentioned properties – is an excellent way to introducing cultural dissimilarity and diversity. The traditional area of language education is widened by relations between language and culture.

It can be assumed that changes will head towards shifting stress between particular aspects of phraseological education and for more eclecticism, displayed in holistic teaching, which allows integrating the knowledge, seeing phenomena in a wider intercultural perspective as well as developing thinking and analytical skills.

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis conducted leads to the conclusion that the phraseological issues in Polish school encompasses teaching communicative skills of students as well as developing knowledge about language, human, world and culture.

The practical aspect was always pointed as the strongest because it allows developing productive-receptive skills, connected also with the analysis and creation of texts.

The inclusion of the historical background renders it possible to prove that a change has occurred in the education regarding phraseology in the last twenty years. Generally speaking, it consists in shifting from language education, communication- and cognition-oriented, to linguo-cultural communication, in which the communicative and cultural components dominate.

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## Frazeologia w edukacji językowej Polaków

### Streszczenie

Artykuł poświęcony jest omówieniu współczesnej szkolnej edukacji polonistycznej w zakresie frazeologii na tle zmian, które dokonały się podczas ostatnich dwudziestu lat, tj. od czasu zmiany ustrojowej. Analiza obowiązującej podstawy programowej oraz funkcjonujących na rynku podręczników do nauczania języka polskiego pozwala stwierdzić, że w kształceniu frazeologicznym można wyodrębnić trzy aspekty. Aspekt komunikacyjny odnosi się do kształcenia zorientowanego na rozwijanie kompetencji nadawczo-odbiorczych, związanych z odbiorem i tworzeniem tekstów. Aspekt poznawczy dotyczy wiedzy językoznawczej, jaką przekazuje się uczniowi. Aspekt kulturowy oznacza wprowadzanie poprzez frazeologię w kulturę. Zmiana, jaka dokonała się w kształceniu dotyczącym frazeologii w ostatnim dwudziestolecu, polega na przejściu od edukacji językowej, zorientowanej komunikacyjnie i poznawczo, do edukacji językowo-kulturowej, w której dominuje komponent komunikacyjny i kulturowy.



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## **L2 Learners' Use of English Words and Phraseologies: Corpus-Based Identification of Lexical Proficiency Markers**

**Abstract.** In the current study, we analyzed part of the Japanese module included in the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE), which the author is currently compiling, in order to explore the relationship between the frequencies of particular words and phraseologies with the writer's L2 proficiency. Our corpus-based quantitative analysis showed that words and phraseologies concerning the setting of an objective perspective, sophisticating syntactic structure, and paraphrasing of basic expressions are positively correlated to the L2 proficiency, which suggests that learners of high proficiency tend to discuss the topic objectively from the third person perspective, while those less proficient tend to discuss subjectively in the personal relation between the writer as "I" and the readers as "you". We also created a regression model estimating the writer's proficiency based on the frequencies of key lexical items, the validity and pedagogical applicability of which was tested.

**Key words:** *learner corpus, words, phraseologies, proficiency, regression modeling*

### **1. Introduction**

Learner corpus studies have been widely conducted in the fields of applied linguistics and language education. Most of the studies resort to an analytical approach called contrastive interlanguage analysis (CIA) (Granger, 1998) and attempt to compare English Native Speakers (NS) with Non-Native Speakers (NNS) (e.g. NS vs. French learners of English) or NNS of different L1 backgrounds (e.g. French learners of English vs. German learners of English). They have revealed many noteworthy facts about the pattern of interlanguage use specific to each writer group.

Comparing NS with NNS or comparing NNS of different L1s, however, does not necessarily depict the whole picture of NNS' L2 use, since proficiency definitely influences NNS' use of the target language. Jarvis (2000) regards learners' proficiency as one of the factors influencing their interlanguage use as well as age, personality, social background, type and amount of exposure to target language. Ishikawa (2010a) introduces the concept of multi-layered contrastive interlanguage analysis (MCIA) with an emphasis on the importance of L2 proficiency, especially when discussing Asian Learners of English, whose proficiency levels generally vary far more than European learners.

It is empirically known that learners at different L2 proficiency levels use vocabulary quite differently in essay writing. The following are passages taken from essays written by Japanese learners of English (JLE) concerning the importance of a part time job for college students.

- (1) First, most college students do not have much money to spare for their hobbies and extracurricular activities. Hobbies and extra-curricular activities are vital to enriching the life as a college student. Through these activities, students can make new friends or discover their talents. However, if students did not have the money to enjoy these activities, they would be missing out on these significant chances, and they would not be able to make the best of their time in college. (W\_044)
- (2) I have a part time job now. My part time job is in private school. I teach science to students. My students are junior high school students. I feel junior high school science is very easy. But, my students feel science is difficult. It is very interesting. I think about them very much for them to understand science easily. I think that it is a precious experience. This experience makes me better than now. And private school part time job is presentation practice. (W\_013)

With only a brief look at these passages, or even excerpts thereof, we can grasp the difference in L2 proficiencies of the two writers. The score of the writer of sample (1) in the TOEIC® Test, a standardized English proficiency test comprising listening and reading sections, is in the 900s, while that of the sample (2) writer is in the 300s. According to the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which develops the TOEIC® Test, test takers whose scores exceed 860 should be classified into the most advanced level (Level A), and those whose scores are between 220 and 470 into the lowest (Level D).

## 2. Literature

Previous studies have focused on the relationship between the vocabulary use in the essays and the proficiency of the writers. Lan (2005), for instance, investigated how proficiency influences the lexical richness in the essays. Wulff & Römer (2009) analyzed the corpus of NS and learners at two different proficiency levels, to identify the patterns in progressive use specific to each writer group. Focusing on modal auxiliaries, Ishikawa (2010b) concluded that JLE at an upper level tend to use epistemic modals such as "would" and "might" more often than those at a lower level. Hsu & Chieu (2008) analyzed Taiwanese learners and revealed that their L2 proficiency is significantly related to their knowledge of lexical collocation in the target language. Juknevičienė (2009) analyzed essays written by NS and Lithuanian learners at three proficiency levels and concluded that NNS, especially those at a low proficiency level, tend to use limited types of lexical bundles repeatedly.

Although previous studies have yielded many pedagogical suggestions, the results of the analysis occasionally seem contradictory. For a reliable analysis of the interlanguage of learners at varied proficiency levels, several aspects must be carefully considered.

First, we need to use controlled essay data. As mentioned in Sugiura (2008), uncontrolled variety in the topic and writing conditions such as time, length, and dictionary use is likely to influence the occurrence pattern of the major lexical items. Critically analyzing the previous learner corpus studies, Ädel (2008) points out what has been regarded as the L1 difference is actually the difference of the time spent for essay writing.

Second, it is important to examine both sides of the vocabulary, namely, individual words and phraseologies. Phraseologies are defined here as an n-gram or multi-word unit of any type. For instance, Sample (1) above seems to be characterized and differentiated from Sample (2) by the use of particular words such as "circular," "vital," "enriching," "significant," and also phraseologies such as "spare for," "through these activities," "would be," "missing out," and "make the best of..." Focusing only on words would prevent the detection of higher-level patterns emerging in the learners' vocabulary use, while focusing only on lexical bundles or collocations might lead to basic but substantial differences in their vocabulary use being overlooked. By examining these two sides of the vocabulary, we can identify the key lexical items reflecting the learners' proficiencies and also clarify which of the words or phraseologies are related to the proficiencies more directly.

Third, we need to define the learners' L2 proficiency as a whole of their proficiencies in the four skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Many previous studies have focused only on receptive or productive skills. However, all the skills must be examined to see the relationship between proficiency and vocabulary use more persuasively.

Fourth, learners' L2 proficiencies should be evaluated as a continuum based on scores obtained from a reliable standardized proficiency test. Many of the studies classify learners into two groups (upper and lower) or three groups (upper, middle, and lower) and compare the lexical distribution in each. However, this might lead to the minute differences in individual learners stratified in the same group being slighted. Jarvis (2000) warns that when discussing L1 influence in the use of the interlanguage, at least three criteria should be satisfied: (i) intra-L1-group homogeneity in learners' IL (i.e. interlanguage) performance, (ii) inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners' IL performance, and (iii) intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and IL performance. Jarvis' first two criteria are also important when discussing learners' "L2 proficiency influence." What matters is carefully observing the relation between each individual learner's proficiency and his/her use of L2 rather than discussing them as a set of several arbitrarily pre-classified groups.

In order to take into considerations these analytical aspects, we need to use carefully controlled data, discuss words and phraseologies together, and examine the learners' L2 proficiencies in a more detailed way.

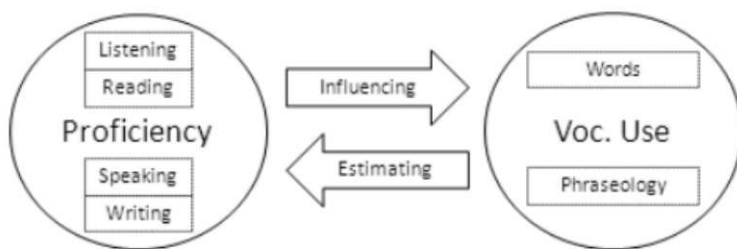
### 3. Research Design

#### 3.1. RQs

In the current study, we will quantitatively analyze essays written by JLE in order to clarify the relationship between a writer's L2 proficiency and their use of particular words and phraseologies. Firstly, Pearson's correlation coefficient is examined; then, the relationship is statistically interpreted using multiple linear regression modeling.

It is generally understood that proficiency influences and determines the use of vocabulary to some extent: thus, proficiency and vocabulary are known as dependent and independent variables respectively. However, the regression model, which originally explains how independent variables influence dependent variables, can be essentially two-way. In the current study, considering pedagogical applicability, we aim to create a model estimating





**Figure 1. Relation between learners' L2 proficiencies and their vocabulary use**

proficiency as a dependent variable based on the frequencies of particular words and phraseologies as independent variables.

Our research questions go as follows:

- 1) Which words are positively or negatively correlated with learners' general L2 proficiency and their proficiencies in the four basic skills?
- 2) Which phraseologies are positively or negatively correlated with learners' general L2 proficiency and their proficiencies in the four basic skills?
- 3) Which of the words and phraseologies are related to the learners' general L2 proficiency more strongly? How does the strength of correlation change in the cases of the top 50, 100, and 150 items?
- 4) To which extent can we estimate learners' general L2 proficiency based on the frequencies of particular words and phraseologies?

### 3.2. Data

As mentioned above, a prerequisite for a reliable comparative learner corpus study is that all the essays be written under the same controlled conditions concerning the topic, time, length, dictionary use and so on. In the current study, therefore, we will use the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE), which is a new learner corpus the author is now compiling. In the ICNALE, the writing conditions are rigidly controlled. For example, the number of topics is limited to two, "It is important for college students to have a part time job" and "Smoking should be completely banned at all the restaurants in the country." Both the time (20–40 mins) and the length (200–300 words) are regulated. The use of a spell checker is required, while that of a dictionary is prohibited (Ishikawa, 2010a).

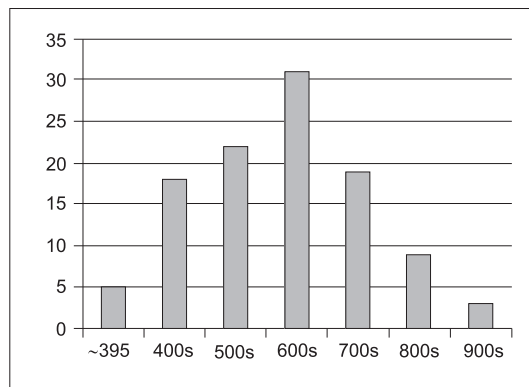
Essay data has been collected in six Asian countries and areas, and we will use an add-on data set to the JLE module. Although the data set, which comprises 107 essays written about the importance of a part time job, is

only a small portion of the whole JLE module consisting of 1084 essays, it is unique in that all the writers take the TOEIC® Test and the TOEIC® S/W Test, meaning writers' proficiencies in the four skill-based tests are included as meta-data in the same.

The proficiency profile of the 107 writers is shown in the table below. LR, L, R, and S respectively stand for the total score of the listening and reading sections of the TOEIC® Test, the scores in the listening, reading, speaking, and writing sections of the TOEIC® Test and the TOEIC® S/W Test. The full marks in the listening and reading sections are 495, while those in the speaking and writing sections are 200.

**Table 1. Proficiency Profile of the Writers**

	LR		L		R		S		W	
	Range	N	Range	N	Range	N	Range	N	Range	N
Range	900–	3	450–	6	450–	2	180–	1	180–	3
	800–	9	400–	13	400–	7	160–	2	160–	20
	700–	19	350–	19	350–	19	140–	16	140–	36
	600–	31	300–	29	300–	31	120–	25	120–	25
	500–	22	250–	24	250–	25	100–	31	100–	16
	400–	18	200–	10	200–	15	80–	22	80–	5
	~395	5	~195	6	~195	8	~70	10	~70	2
<i>Mean</i>	624.0		321.9		302.1		110.0		135.1	
<i>SD</i>	135.2		75.8		71.48		26.2		24.9	



**Figure 2. Distribution of the writers based on the LR score**

As shown in the figure above, the LR scores of the writers largely show a pattern of normal distribution, suggesting that this data set is considerably well-balanced for analyzing L2 vocabulary use by JLE at varied proficiency levels.

### 3.3. Methodology

#### 3.3.1. Definition of phraseology

In the current study, words and phraseologies, two aspects of vocabulary use, are examined. Although phraseology can vary considerably in terms of length, grammatical type, and function, we will limit ourselves to examining trigrams, namely, three-word combinations of any type and function. Exclusive focus on the trigram is based on a preliminary study investigating the frequent 2–5 grams. The number of bigrams occurring more than five times is 717 in types and 11753 in tokens, that of the trigrams is 346 in types and 4813 in tokens, that of the four-grams is 161 in types and 2366 in tokens, and that of the five-grams is 91 in types and 1383 in tokens respectively.

**Table 2. Frequently used 2–5 grams**

#	Bigrams		Trigrams		4-grams		5-grams	
1	part time	526	part time job	460	a part time job	319	have a part time job	160
2	time job	476	a part time	324	have a part time	161	to have a part time	95
3	a part	327	have a part	161	to have a part	95	is important for college students	59
4	college students	239	a lot of	107	important for college students	71	important for college students to	58
5	have a	207	to have a	100	for college students to	67	for college students to have	56

It is generally said that the longer an n-gram is, the more limited its variety is. Meanwhile, overly short n-grams are often meaningless fragments of longer units. Thus, we have chosen trigrams as a phraseology unit to be analyzed. In the above list, meaningful word combinations such as “part time job” or “a lot of” are successfully identified in case of the trigrams. According to Biber et al. (2003), who analyze the occurrence of semantically and syntactically united lexical bundles, 3-word bundles are

reported to occur much more frequently than 2-word phrasal verbs or verbs with prepositions, and 4-word bundles both in academic prose and in conversation.

### 3.3.2. Definition of general L2 proficiency

As mentioned above, we will discuss the general L2 proficiency of learners as well as their proficiencies in the four different basic skills. In order to obtain an index of general proficiency, we resort to principal component analysis (PCA), which rotates the given data set so that its variability is maximized. In other words, by PCA, we can create a new mathematical variable, which is called PCA1, effectively representing all existing variables. The result of the analysis is shown below. Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used for the preliminary conversion of the raw scores.

**Table 3. Eigenvalue and contribution**

PCA	PCA1	PCA2	PCA3
Eigenvalue	3.01	0.40	0.32
Contribution	75.16	9.97	8.03
Total Contribution	75.16	85.14	93.17

**Table 4. Component loads**

Variant	PCA1	PCA2	PCA3
Listening	0.879	-0.220	-0.252
Reading	0.870	-0.123	0.476
Speaking	0.885	-0.178	-0.171
Writing	0.833	0.551	-0.050

PCA1, which can be interpreted as an index for an integrated score of the four skill-based scores, holds approximately eighty percent of the variance of the four variables. Therefore, we can use the PCA1 score calculated for each writer as a reliable index of their general L2 proficiency.

Although PCA1 scores are statistically more robust as an index of general proficiency, conventionally the total scores of the listening and reading sections in the TOEIC® Test have also been used for that purpose. Therefore, when conducting regression modeling (RQ4), we will use two kinds of general proficiency indices.

### 3.3.3. Preparation of the frequency table

As inclusion of low frequency lexical items in the analysis might skew the results, our analysis is limited to the top 150 words and the same number of trigrams, meaning that the frequencies of the analyzed words exceed 20 and that of the analyzed trigrams are higher than seven.

**Table 5. Most frequently used words and trigrams**

	Words		Trigrams	
1	to	889	part time job	460
2	a	729	a part time	324
3	time	671	have a part	161
4	I (I)	622	a lot of	107
5	is	550	to have a	100
6	part	550	for college students	97
7	job	549	is important for	85
8	they	535	important for college	79
9	the	502	it is important	75
10	and	494	college students to	70

The following is part of a table summarizing writers' proficiencies and the frequencies of each word-level and phraseology-level lexical item used by them.

**Table 6. Writers' proficiencies and the frequencies of the lexical items used by them**

Writers	Proficiency						Words			Trigrams		
	PCA1	LR	L	R	S	W	to	a	...	part time job	a part time	...
W_001	-1.950	470	280	190	90	110	7	0	...	4	0	...
W_002	0.216	640	310	330	130	120	10	8	...	6	4	...
W_003	-0.973	495	205	290	90	150	12	10	...	4	4	...
W_004	-1.628	515	250	265	60	140	5	1	...	3	0	...

### 3.3.4. Further analysis

Concerning the RQ1 (keywords correlating with proficiency), based on correlation analysis, we identify words whose frequencies correlate at a 5% significance level with the PCA1 score and the scores in the four skill-based tests. A 5%'significance level corresponds to  $r = .19$  or higher. The choice of words is based on absolute  $r$  values, meaning they are classified into high and low proficiency markers having positive and negative  $r$  values respectively.

Concerning the RQ2 (key phraseologies correlating with proficiency), we adopt the same methodology and identify phraseologies correlating positively or negatively with general and specific L2 proficiencies.

Concerning the RQ3 (influence of words and phraseologies), the average of the  $r$  values calculated between the top 50, 100, 150 words and the general proficiency (PCA1) is compared with that between the same number of phraseologies and the general proficiency.

Subsequently, concerning the RQ4 (estimation), we conduct multiple linear regression modeling. The dependent variable is the general L2 proficiency shown as the PCA1 score or the total score of the listening and reading sections in the TOEIC® Test. The initial independent variables are the eleven words and one phrase, all of which show  $r = .20$  or higher correlation values with the dependent variable, and are simultaneously used by at least thirty percent of the writers. To choose effective independent variables, we use the stepwise method and the  $F$  value to adopt a new variable added into the model is set at 2.0. The validity of the model with the TOEIC® LR score as a dependent variable, which can be applied to language education more easily, is tested with a new bunch of learners' data.

## 4. Findings and Discussions

### 4.1. RQ1 (Keywords correlating with proficiency)

The identified high proficiency word markers are summarized in the table below. The number added to the word stands for its rank in terms of total frequency.

Examining the words positively correlating with PCA1, we realize that high proficiency is characterized by the use of (i) the third person (pro)nouns ("students," "their"), (ii) the prepositions ("to," "on," "through," "for"), (iii) the head elements of the interrogative clauses ("how," "what"), and (iv) the gerund ("having"). High proficiency learners tend to regard "the college students" shown in the topic as someone separate from themselves, which allows them to develop their discussion from a more objective perspective. They also express their claims in grammatically and lexically sophisticated sentences.

- (3) First, most college students do not have much money to spare for *their* hobbies and extracurricular activities. (W\_044/PCA: 4.977/LR: 965)
- (4) This kind of students spends their time a lot *on* doing part-time jobs. (W\_060/3.808/910)

**Table 7. High Proficiency Word Markers**

PCA1		L		R		S		W	
Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>
their_27	.375	their_27	.352	their_27	.313	students_13	.368	students_13	.323
students_13	.356	how_51	.336	how_51	.283	how_51	.344	their_27	.312
how_51	.356	to_1	.307	Having_78	.275	their_27	.323	to_1	.297
to_1	.302	two_145	.287	What_85	.270	through_101	.313	how_51	.270
on_63	.280	on_63	.283	students_13	.263	on_63	.308	having_78	.246
having_78	.279	students_13	.280	Learn_42	.232	to_1	.293	on_63	.223
learn_42	.270	these_107	.276	through_101	.221	for_11	.280	want_69	.221
through_101	.266	learn_42	.272	important_25	.216	at_72	.232	learn_42	.219
for_11	.255	having_78	.243	for_11	.202	earn_74	.215	from_75	.208
these_107	.238	what_85	.242	These_107	.201	learn_42	.212	part_6	.206
what_85	.238	for_11	.211			two_145	.211	time_3	.197
two_145	.225	parents_65	.199			having_78	.206		
		through_101	.196			important_25	.204		
		as_43	.190						

- (5) Without this sense, students would not have any idea *on how* to spend money, and they could waste great amounts of money without realizing *how* much damage it could cause to them. (W\_044/ 4.977/965)
- (6) They can learn *what* they are good at and *how* to speak to others. (W\_69/2.70/860)
- (7) *Through* these kinds of cooperation, they can learn *what* is important to make relations with colleagues or bosses better. (W\_101/3.049/855)
- (8) So, if are willing to be a owner of a restaurant in the future, *having* a part time job at a restaurant might rather be a good experience than just reading books about managing or foods. (W\_104/2.259/825) [Italics mine]

The tendency observed here is true to the lists of the words correlating with specific L2 proficiencies. Several unique lexical items are worth noting. For instance, although the overuse of prepositions by high proficiency learners is already mentioned, “as” (high listening proficiency marker), “at” (high speaking proficiency marker), and “from” (high writing proficiency marker) also support this hypothesis. They prolong the sentences using the prepositions as word connectors.

Next, the low proficiency word markers are examined.

The low proficiency is characterized by the use of (i) the second person pronouns (“you,” “your”), (ii) the auxiliary modals (“will,” “must”), (iii) the intensifiers (“very”), (iv) the verb of thought (“think”), and (v) the cardinal (“second”). Low proficiency learners tend to regard their essays as a kind

Table 8. Low Proficiency Word Markers

PCA1		L		R		S		W	
Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>	Word	<i>r</i>
will_50	-.306	become_129	-.267	club_130	-.343	become_129	-.336	your_111	-.316
become_129	-.287	will_50	-.267	will_50	-.337	which_82	-.275	you_28	-.292
you_28	-.273	high_93	-.237	importance_141	-.291	you_28	-.273	very_73	-.251
club_130	-.261	very_73	-.235	so_23	-.247	must_104	-.258	more_84	-.216
must_104	-.269	must_104	-.226	you_28	-.239	too_122	-.259	will_50	-.216
your_111	-.239	second_97	-.198	become_129	-.237	your_111	-.259	think_22	-.211
very_73	-.226	school_58	-.195	s_92	-.221	high_93	-.247	club_130	-.211
high_93	-.217			must_104	-.219	will_50	-.249	must_104	-.195
school_58	-.212			need_56	-.209	thing_120	-.219	all_108	-.191
second_97	-.212			we_17	-.207	school_58	-.216		
think_22	-.210			think_22	-.205	very_73	-.214		
which_82	-.210			Before_112	-.201	club_130	-.193		
				second_97	-.199				
				School_58	-.198				

of personal communication between the writers and the readers as “you.” What the writers personally “think” or feel is the core of their logic building, and often intensified explicitly. This clearly contrasts with the fact that high proficiency learners discuss the topic from a more objective third person perspective. Overuse of the two kinds of modals by low proficiency learners attracts our attention, for the use of “will,” which often functions as a kind of the hedge, suggests that the writers make their claim somewhat ambiguous, while that of “must” suggests that they prefer making overly straightforward claims. This contradiction seems to reflect the writers’ overall poor control of the distance between themselves and the discourse. Also, as shown in the characteristic use of the ordinal “second,” they tend to resort to the stereotyped discussion frame (“There are three reasons: first, ... second, ... third....”).

- (9) And if *you* are a leader, *you* have to get the club together and listen all of the member’s thinking. (W\_031/-3.093/390)
- (10) However, I *think* it is more important to have that. (W\_077/-2.838/395)
- (11) So we *must* separate work and daily life.(W\_007/-1.166/495)
- (12) To work together, they *will* become friendly. It is *very* good to have many friends. (W\_077/-2.838/395)
- (13) I have two reasons why I *think* like that... First, I *think* college students use much money... *Second*, they should know the importance of money. (W\_001/-1.95/470)



The tendency observed with words correlating with general proficiency and that with those correlating with specific proficiencies are similar in substance. For instance, words such as “we” (low reading proficiency marker), “need” (low reading proficiency marker), “more” and “all” (low writing proficiency marker) support our hypothesis that low proficiency learners often make overly straightforward claims with explicit intensifiers.

#### 4.2. RQ2 (Key phraseologies correlating with proficiency)

The high proficiency phraseology markers identified are summarized in the following table, where abbreviations of “col,” “st,” and “imp” represent “college,” “students,” and “important/ importance” respectively.

**Table 9. High Proficiency Phraseology Markers**

PCA1		L		R		S		W	
Phr.	<i>r</i>	Phr.	<i>r</i>	Phr.	<i>r</i>	Phr.	<i>r</i>	Phr.	<i>r</i>
having a part_14	.263	and how to_127	.249	they can learn_25	.275	and how to_127	.271	having a part_14	.232
they can learn_25	.256	learn how to_114	.218	having a part_14	.257	for col st_6	.260	in order to_89	.204
and how to_127	.243	having a part_14	.204	st don t_104	.198	learn how to_114	.245	they have to_41	.198
st don t_104	.199			with this statement_99	.191	they can learn_25	.243		
learn how to_114	.190					a part time_2	.225		
						having a part_14	.221		
						to earn money_23	.220		
						through a part_121	.212		
						col st to_10	.206		
						think it is_20	.204		
						st don t_104	.201		

Examination of the phraseologies positively correlating with PCA1 corroborates the hypothesis we have assumed from the word level analysis. High proficiency learners tend to discuss the topic from the perspective of the third person (“they can learn,” “students don’t”), in more grammatically-compressed expressions (“having a part [time job],” “and how to,” “learn how to”). The characteristic use of “learn” (“they can learn,” “learn how to”), which seems to be an alternative for a more basic verb “study,”

suggests that they can use the so-called elegant variation in expression. Lexically elegant variation is also observed in expressions such as “*through* a part [time job]” (high speaking proficiency marker) as an alternative to “by/in a part [time job],” “*in order to*” (high writing proficiency marker) as an alternative to the infinitive “to,” and “they *have to*” (high writing proficiency marker) as an alternative to “they must/should.”

- (14) The reason is that *they can learn* a lot of things which are very important but which are not taught in schools. (W\_101/2.049/855)
- (15) That is why *having a part-time job* is necessary for college students. (W\_073/2.124/750)
- (16) Common sense as working people is really essential for business, for instance, how to communicate with other people in business *and how to talk*. (W\_043/2.523/835)
- (17) So, *in order to* prevent this, it is important for college students to earn money to spend on their pastime. (W\_044/4.977/965)
- (18) Therefore, *they have to* learn many things through the working there and hearing stories by a same company staff. (W\_026/2.039/765)

Next, the low proficiency phraseology markers are investigated.

**Table 10. Low Proficiency Phraseology Markers**

PCA1		L		R		S		W	
Phr.	R	Phr.	R	Phr.	r	Phr.	r	Phr.	r
need much money_142	-.232	st have a_70	-.240	col st need_45	-.290	col st need_45	-.197	is very imp_68	-.219
col st need_45	-.225	junior high school_79	-.235	need much money_142	-.254			I think that_11	-.202
junior high school_79	-.208	need a lot_103	-.193	imp of money_88	-.234			need much money_142	-.197
				the imp of_81	-.204				
				think it s_147	-.193				

Low proficiency is characterized by expressions including “need” (“*need much money,*” “college students *need*”). Focusing on phraseologies negatively correlating with specific skills, we realize that it is also characterized by expressions including “importance” or “important,” such as “*importance of money,*” “the *importance of*” (low reading proficiency marker), and “is very *important*” (low writing proficiency marker). Repeating the word “important,” which is a part of the topic sentence given to writers, literally or

only with a minor derivation in their own essays can be one of the features of low proficiency learners. They also tend to use expressions including "think" such as "think it's" (low reading proficiency marker) and "I think that" (low writing proficiency marker). As many of the previous studies analyzing learner corpus have suggested, learners have a general tendency to overuse "think," which can be attributed to our finding that high proficiency learners discuss the topic objectively from the third person perspective, while low proficiency learners resort more to the personal relationship between the writers and readers.

- (19) Therefore, college students *need much money* to buy a lot of books. (W\_105/-2.589/435)
- (20) And getting money myself teach me *importance of money*. (W\_013/-3.694/355)
- (21) *I think that* doing part-time job is the best way for them to change free time into useful time and to make money. (W\_036/-1.513/590)

### 4.3. RQ3 (Influence of words and phraseologies)

The descriptive statistics are summarized in the following table:

**Table 11. Mean  $r$  values**

Items	Variant	Mean	Max	Min	SD	CV	Skew	Kurt
50	Words	0.1397	0.375	-0.045	0.105	0.754	0.301	-0.376
	Trigram	0.1072	0.263	-0.009	0.070	0.653	0.241	-0.593
100	Words	0.0733	0.375	-0.115	0.111	1.511	0.672	-0.057
	Trigram	0.0576	0.263	-0.121	0.080	1.391	0.274	0.043
150	Words	0.0023	0.375	-0.306	0.142	61.816	0.288	-0.178
	Trigram	0.0111	0.263	-0.232	0.100	9.034	0.094	-0.234

The mean of the  $r$  values between the words and the general proficiency is always higher than that between the phraseology and proficiency in all the cases. Below are histograms showing the distribution of  $r$  values for the top 50 words and phraseologies.

It has been pedagogically suggested that the proficiency gap of L2 learners is reflected more clearly in the use of phraseology, which should require a deeper or more sophisticated type of vocabulary knowledge, than in the use of individual words. However, our analysis tends to show the opposite. The frequency of the particular set of words correlates more strongly with the PCA1 scores.

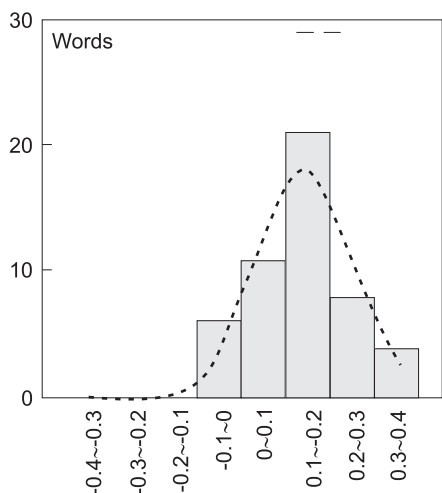


Figure 3.  $r$  values for the top 50 words

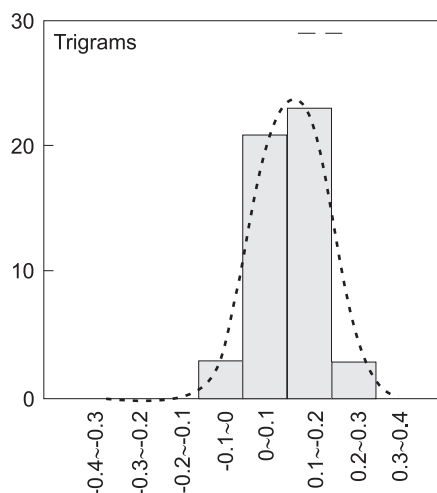


Figure 4.  $r$  values for the top 50 phraseologies

This phenomenon can be attributed to the unique pedagogical background of JLE. In Japan, like in other Asian EFL countries, the amount of natural L2 input is generally limited. Thus they acquire the L2 vocabulary largely from intentional and institutional study in class, where the focus is generally on individual words rather than phraseologies. This means that even learners at a considerably high proficiency level cannot use phraseological expressions satisfactorily. Therefore, knowledge of individual words may be a better indicator of L2 proficiency than that of phraseology.

Another noteworthy aspect is that the difference in mean  $r$  values peaks in the case of the top 50 items and diminishes as the number of items compared increases. It is true that the usage of individual words is more likely to be related to general L2 proficiency, but its influence seems limited to the most basic words.

#### 4.4. RQ4 (Estimation)

The total of lexical items used as initial independent variables was twelve as shown in the table below, where the range shows the ratio of writers who used the particular item more than once relative to all 107 writers.

As a result of the modeling with the PCA1 score as a dependent variable, we obtained the following equation formula:

$$(22) \text{ [PCA1]} = -1.425 + 0.163 \text{ [learn]} + 0.275 \text{ [how]} - 0.649 \text{ [second]} + 0.219 \text{ [students]} - 0.279 \text{ [school]} - 0.248 \text{ [will]} + 0.338 \text{ [having a part]} + 0.0746 \text{ [to]}$$

**Table 12. Keywords and phraseologies used as independent variables**

Items	Range (%)	<i>r</i>
to	99.1	0.302
for	97.2	0.255
students	95.3	0.356
think	92.5	-0.210
their	62.6	0.375
learn	55.1	0.270
will	48.6	-0.306
how	43.9	0.356
school	39.3	-0.212
on	56.1	0.280
second	44.9	-0.212
having a part	31.8	0.263

Among the twelve independent variables initially prepared, eight were added into the final model, where relatively greater weights are put on the frequencies of "second" and "having a part," which play a particularly crucial role in determining the writers' general L2 proficiency.

The *r* square value with adjustment of the degree of freedom, which is regarded as an index for the explanatory power of the model, is .440, suggesting that the model holds a certain level of validity.

Next, the same modeling was conducted with the total score of the listening and reading section in the TOEIC® Test as a dependent variable. As the correlation value between PCA1 and the total LR score amounts to .95, two kinds of modeling are mathematically similar, but the model estimating the TOEIC® score will be more useful from a pedagogical perspective. The final model we obtained goes as follows:

$$(23) \text{ [LR]} = 542.0 + 21.56 \text{ [how]} + 20.42 \text{ [having a part]} + 12.20 \text{ [learn]} + 9.979 \text{ [students]} + 8.232 \text{ [their]} + 4.254 \text{ [to]} - 49.29 \text{ [second]} - 20.67 \text{ [will]} - 19.82 \text{ [school]}$$

Nine variables were added into the final model, to which the word "there" is newly added, and items such as "second," "how," and "having a part" are given relatively higher weights. The *r* square value with adjustment of the degree of freedom is .40. This model also seems to hold a certain level of validity.

Using the spreadsheet software, calculation based on the regression model can be automated. The following is a screen shot of the Quick TOEIC®

Score Estimator, which is an Excel® template developed to facilitate application of the regression model (the second model) to the actual essay data. Counting the frequencies of nine lexical items and inputting them in the appropriate cells, users can quickly obtain the essay writer's estimated score in the TOEIC®Test.

	A	B	C
1	<b>Quick TOEIC® Test Score Estimator (V201009)</b>		
2	Count the raw frequencies of the key words and phrases (case insensitive) occurring in the part time job essay, and fill out the blanks appropriately. The writers of the essays must follow the ICNALE writing rules.		
3	Positive	how	
4		having a part	
5		learn	
6		students	
7		their	
8		to	
9	Negative	second	
10		will	
11		school	
12	Estimated Score		542
13	$[LR] = 542.0 + 21.56 [\text{how}] + 20.42 [\text{having a part}] + 12.20 [\text{learn}] + 9.979 [\text{students}] + 8.232 [\text{their}] + 4.254 [\text{to}] - 49.29 [\text{second}] - 20.67 [\text{will}] - 19.82 [\text{school}]$		

Figure 4. Quick TOEIC® Score Estimator

Finally, using a new set of fifteen essays written by JLE at varied proficiency levels, which were not used for developing the model, we examined how the estimated scores in the TOEIC® Test differed from the actual scores. Calculations were made with the template above. The result is shown below:

Table 13. Estimated and actual scores

Writers	Estimated Score	Actual Score	Dif
X_001	488.9	555	-66.1
X_002	656.5	565	91.5
X_003	519.9	575	-55.1
X_004	686.6	595	91.6
X_005	588.6	605	-16.4
X_006	526.9	615	-88.1
X_007	593.7	640	-46.3
X_008	716.9	645	71.9

Writers	Estimated Score	Actual Score	Dif
X_009	655.3	650	5.3
X_010	635.1	655	-19.9
X_011	581.7	670	-88.3
X_012	601.6	695	-93.4
X_013	674.5	715	-40.5
X_014	689.4	720	-30.6
X_015	764.2	860	-95.8
<i>Mean</i>	625.3	650.7	-25.3
<i>SD</i>	77.5	77.4	64.7

The correlation between the actual and estimated scores is .65, while the mean and standard deviation of the diffs. are -25.3 and 64.7 respectively. Although the precision of estimation may not currently be satisfactory, we could make the model more sophisticated by increasing the data used for model development.

## 5. Conclusions

In the current study, analyzing the corpus of essays written by JLE at different L2 proficiency levels, we discussed four research questions. The findings are to be briefly summarized:

- 1) *Which words are positively or negatively correlated with learners' general L2 proficiency and their proficiencies in the four basic skills?*

The words including the third person nouns and pronouns, the prepositions, the head elements of the interrogative clauses, and the gerunds are positively correlated with learners' general and specific L2 proficiency, while those including the second person pronouns, the auxiliary modals, the intensifiers, the verb of thought, and the cardinals are negatively correlated. This suggests that JLE at high proficiency level tend to discuss the topic more objectively and logically in more syntactically sophisticated sentences, while those at lower proficiency level tend to develop their discussion from a more subjective perspective. Low proficiency learners also tend to fail in the appropriate control of the writers' stance, in other words, the psychological distance between themselves and the readers.

- 2) *Which phraseologies are positively or negatively correlated with learners' general L2 proficiency and their proficiencies in the four basic skills?*

The phraseologies concerning an objective perspective, a condensed syntactic structure, and a variation of the basic expressions are positively correlated with learners' general and specific L2 proficiency, while those concerning making overly straightforward claims and subjective judgments are negatively correlated. This suggests a similar pattern to that which we have already observed with words.

- 3) *Which of the words and phraseologies are related to the learners' general L2 proficiency more strongly? How does the strength of correlation change in cases of the top 50, 100, and 150 items?*

Based on the mean  $r$  values, the words are related to the general L2 proficiency more strongly than the phraseologies, which seems to be caused by the JLE's overall tendency to focus more on individual words when learning L2 vocabulary. However, the difference is clear only in the case of the most frequent and basic items.

- 4) *To which extent can we estimate learners' general L2 proficiency by the frequencies of particular words and phraseologies?*

By regression modeling, we obtained a mathematical formula to estimate the PCA 1 score or the total scores of the listening and reading sections in the TOEIC® Test. The  $r$  square values of the models are .40 and .44 respectively, suggesting that the models hold a certain level of validity for pedagogical application, although there still exists room for further sophistication.

Our corpus-based analysis showed that learners' essays tell us a lot about the writers. It is particularly noteworthy that each of the learners at varied L2 proficiency levels uses the vocabulary (words and phraseologies) in a characteristically patterned way and there are a group of key lexical items suggesting the proficiency of the writers. It is true that the precision of the regression model obtained in the current study remains insufficient, but if it is sophisticated up to a satisfactory level, we might be able to use the learners' controlled essays as a new type of proficiency test. In future study, we will conduct a similar modeling with different types of learners' essays and explore which kind of lexical items are robust across topics as general proficiency markers.

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**Używanie angielskiej leksyki i frazeologii  
przez osoby uczące się języka angielskiego jako obcego:  
Identyfikacja wyznaczników biegłości  
na podstawie danych korpusowych**

**Streszczenie**

Artykuł zawiera omówienie analizy japońskiego modułu, który stanowi część the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE), aktualnie opracowywanego przez autora, przeprowadzonej w celu zbadania związku między częstotliwością użycia danego słowa czy związku frazeologicznego a biegłością osoby piszącej w języku angielskim, który jest dla niej językiem obcym. Ilościowa analiza danych korpusowych pokazała, że operowanie obiektywną perspektywą, wyszukanyimi strukturami składniowymi oraz parafrazowanie podstawowych wyrażen wskazuja na znaczną biegłość w zakresie języka angielskiego. Autor wykorzystuje model pozwalający ocenić biegłość piszącego na podstawie częstotliwości podstawowych jednostek leksykalnych.



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## Gender-Related Phraseological Units in Japanese

**Abstract.** Not only does Japanese have distinctive male and female speech forms, but also it has a number of phraseological units about males and females. These phraseological units include idioms, proverbs or fixed expressions which have been used for many years and reflect Japanese cultural views towards men and women. As to phraseological units about *otoko* (man) in Japanese, they are often used to praise their abilities or virtues as human-beings: “*otoko ga sutaru* (lose face as a man),” “*otoko ga tatu* (satisfy one’s manly honor),” and “*otoko o ageru*” (get a reputation for courage).” On the other hand, many examples about *onna* (woman) reveal that Japanese women are referred to in derogatory terms and that they have long been despised historically: “*onna daterani* (in spite of being a woman),” “*onna no kusatta yo na* (rotten as a woman),” and “*onna no asajie* (woman’s shallow thinking).” In this paper I deal with numerous examples and discuss the Japanese culture through the phraseological units concerning men and women, and demonstrate that some of the phraseological units are culturally-bound and specific to Japanese.

**Key words:** *phraseological unit, Japanese, gender, men and women*

### 1. Introduction

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which is the linguistic relativity hypothesis, proposes that the particular language one speaks influences the way one thinks about reality. Although this hypothesis may be correct, there is not clear agreement among linguists regarding the extent the language influences the way we think. In this article, I will deal with the gender-related phraseological units and discuss how these units reflect the Japanese culture. The studies on phraseological units have been extensively done in many European languages (Cowie 1998, Granger and Meunier 2008, Szerszunowicz 2011). Not many studies about Asian languages, however, have been done so far, and

thus this study on phraseological units in Japanese will be of some value in a cross-linguistic perspective.

## 2. Male and female speech

The Japanese language is often considered to be a language which has distinctive speech forms between male and female speakers (Jugaku 1979, McGloin 1990). It was already pointed out by Wilhelm von Humboldt (1835) that Japanese has a lot of differences between male and female speakers' languages and thus it is worthy of serious investigation (Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen 2005: 221). For example, in order to express the meaning of "I am hungry," the male speaker will utter sentence (1), while the female speaker will utter sentence (2).

(1) *Ore hara het-ta naa.*

I stomach empty.past FP

(2) *Atasi onaka sui tyat-ta no.*

I stomach empty.past FP (Jugaku 1979: 65)

In Japanese, different words or morphemes are used to express "I" (*ore* vs. *atasi*), "hungry" (*hara het-ta* vs. *onaka sui tyat-ta*), and sentence final particle (*naa* vs. *no*), which clearly indicates that Japanese uses distinctive forms between males and females.

These examples show that the Japanese language is distinctive in its forms between the two sexes, but it does not mean that Japanese males and females always speak different forms. After World War II, the new Constitution guaranteed equality of men and women before law, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1986 ensured that women receive equal opportunities and working conditions with men, which might help to reduce the difference between male and female speech to some extent. An example of the reduction of the difference between the two sexes' speech is the use of *boku* (the first person pronoun "I") by some women. Japanese men generally refer to themselves with *ore* or *boku*, while Japanese women do so with *atasi*. But some young women, especially junior high school girls, often call themselves not *atasi*, but *boku*,<sup>1</sup> which is used by men.

In spite of this example, the difference between Japanese male and female speech is still so distinctive that we can easily distinguish between

<sup>1</sup> It is said that this use was started by junior high school female students in the Tokyo district in 1970s (Jugaku 1979: 78, Reynolds 1990: 140).

them. One of the markers to distinguish male speech from female speech is the use of sentence-final particles. Some Japanese sentence-final particles are gender-specific. For example, sentence-final particles *zo*, *ze*, and *na* are usually uttered by men, while *wa* (*yo*) and *no* (*yo*) are usually uttered by women.

(3) *Soto wa atui zo/ze/na.*

Outside TOP hot FP

'Outside is hot.'

(4) *Soto wa atui wa/no.*

Example (3) is uttered by men and (4) by women. There is a slight difference in meaning on the use of sentence final particles *zo*, *ze*, and *na* in (3) and the use of *wa* and *no* in (4), but I will not deal with this any further.<sup>2</sup>

Let us now observe the following dialogue:

(5) A: *Yado zya moo okite iruno kai.*

inn in already up COP FP

'Are the inn people up yet?'

B: *Siranai wa. Ura kara aggate kita no yo.*

know.not FP back from come.past FP FP

'I have no idea. I came in from the back.'

A: *Kimi wa mata hayaoki nanda ne.*

you TOP early riser COP FP

'You seem to be an early riser.'

B: *Yuube nemure nakkata no yo.*

last night sleep not.past FP

'I couldn't sleep.' (Yasunari Kawabata, *Snow Country*)

This dialogue is cited from *Snow Country* written by a well-known Japanese novelist, Yasunari Kawabata and the English translator is Edward G. Seidensticker. Just reading the English translation of (5) does not inform us of the speaker's sex.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the original work in Japanese can mostly inform us of the speaker's sex because of the sentence-final particles. In (5), whether Speaker A is male or not is not decided by only the sentence-final particles such as *kai* or *ne* because they are used by both males and females. On the other hand, Speaker B is definitely female because the speaker is using *wa* and *no yo* in her dialogue.

<sup>2</sup> On the meaning difference of sentence-final particles, see McGloin (1990).

<sup>3</sup> In order to make a distinction between male and female speakers, "she said," or "he said" will be added to the dialogue in English (Ide 1982: 152).

### 3. Phraseological units of men and women

#### 3.1. Definition of phraseological units

As seen in the previous section, the Japanese language has different speech forms between men and women. In addition, Japanese has varieties of expressions about men and women and they are encoded into the Japanese language in a complex way. Some of these phraseological expressions were born many years ago and some quite recently. Overall, we can get a glimpse of the Japanese culture through these old and new phraseological expressions which are unconsciously used in daily life. I will argue how the phraseological expressions about men and women are used in the Japanese language and examine how these units reflect the Japanese culture.

Before the discussion, let us define the phraseological units. They are defined as fixed-word units of a language, i.e. formulaic expressions that are elements of the lexicon and that go beyond the level of single word but do not go beyond sentence level (Pirainen 2008: 208). According to Vinogradov (1947) and Chernuisheva (1964), phraseological units can be divided into sentence-like and word-like units; the sentence-like units are called phraseological expressions (for example, sayings and familiar quotations), and the word-like units are subdivided into three parts: phraseological combinations, phraseological unities, and phraseological fusions.<sup>4</sup> As Cowie (1998) points out, an example of phraseological combinations will be *meet the demand* where one component (*the demand*) is used in its direct meaning, while the other (*meet*) is used figuratively. *Blow off steam* is an example of phraseological unities where it is used figuratively, resulting in the meaning of “becoming less excited.” An example of phraseological fusions will be *kick the bucket*, or *spill the beans*, where the meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of the words of which the phrase is made up.<sup>5</sup> Examples of Japanese counterparts of the phraseological units are as follows:

- (6) a. phraseological combination: *hara o kimeru*  
 abdomen ACC decide  
 ‘make up one’s mind’

<sup>4</sup> Notice that phraseological expressions correspond to Cowie’s “functional expression,” and phraseological combination to his “restricted collocation”; phraseological unity corresponds to Cowie’s “figurative idiom,” phraseological fusion to his “pure idiom.”

<sup>5</sup> Even in pure idioms, there is some difference in their syntactic behavior; *kick the bucket* cannot be passivized as in “\*The bucket was kicked.”, while *spill the beans* can be passivized as in “The beans were spilled.” (Cowie 1981). Fraser (1970) classifies English idioms into even seven categories.

- b. phraseological unity: *asi o hipparu*  
 leg ACC pull  
 'get in one's way'
- c. phraseological fusion: *saba o yomu*  
 mackerel ACC read  
 'count wrongly on purpose'

The phrase (6a) *hara o kimeru* is an example of a phraseological combination since one component (*kimeru*: decide) is used in its direct meaning and the other (abdomen) is used figuratively. The phrase (6b) *asi o hipparu*, which is an example of phraseological unity, can be used figuratively, meaning "thwart" or "get in one's way." The phrase (6c) *saba o yomu* (fudge) will be an example of phraseological fusion since it is semantically non-compositional and its meaning is not derived from the meaning of its constituents.

In this article I will deal with not only formulaic expressions such as phraseological expressions, phraseological combinations, phraseological unities, and phraseological fusions, but also any sequence of two or more words that function as a unit. In addition I will use the term "phraseological units" to cover all aspects of gender-related formulaic expressions unless specified.

### 3.2. Asymmetry of men and women

Japan is a male-dominated society due in large part to the strong influence of Confucianism. Before World War II, the Japanese family was organized as a hierarchy with males at the apex; above all, the eldest sons were highly esteemed in their families because they inherited their family estate. This family hierarchy was abolished after World War II, and men and women were legally given equal rights. However, there still remains strong male chauvinism or primogeniture in the Japanese language in many respects.

- (7) *Kyoodai wa nan nin desu ka.*  
 brothers TOP how many COP FP  
 'How many brothers do you have?'
- (8) \**Simai wa nan nin desu ka.*  
 sisters TOP how many COP FP  
 'How many sisters do you have?'

When asking the number of brothers and sisters, English speakers use (7) and (8), respectively. In Japanese, however, whether siblings are male or female, it uses (7), not (8). That phraseological units such as *otoko kyodai* (male siblings) and *onna kyodai* (female siblings) do exist in Japanese indicates that *kyodai* is a superordinate notion, or a hyperonym of brothers and sisters. The

similar phenomenon can be seen in the fact that “man” is a hyperonym of “men” and “women” in English.

A Japanese organization similar to the PTA (parent-teacher association) was once called *hukei kai* (fathers and big brothers association), because the heads of the families were fathers and after the death of the fathers the big brother would succeed them. The existence of mothers and sisters was excluded in the term of *hukei-kai*,<sup>6</sup> so that these days phraseological units such as *hubo kai* (fathers and mothers association) or *hogosya kai* (guardians association), which are more gender-neutral expressions, are prevalent. But the term *hukei kai* is still in general use, especially among older people.

Let us now turn to the phraseological units which include *otoko* (man) or *onna* (woman). First, we will observe the phraseological unit *otoko ga tatu*, which means satisfying one’s manly honor. This phraseological unit appears in the context as follows:

(9) *Sonna koto o site ite wa otoko ga tata nu.*

Such thing ACC do TOP man NOM stand. not

‘If I do such a thing, I shall dishonor myself.’ (SJED)

This phraseological unit is used as a metaphorical extension of its original meaning, so that it can be called an example of phraseological unity. The replacement of *otoko* to *onna* in this phraseological unit will yield *onna ga tatu*, resulting in unacceptable Japanese:

(10) \**Sonna koto o site ite wa onna ga tata nu.*

Such thing ACC do TOP woman NOM stand. not

Then let us observe the following three phraseological units: *otoko ga sutaru* (lose face as a man), *otoko o ageru* (do something that demonstrates one’s manliness), *otoko o sageru* (disgrace oneself as a man):

(11) *Koko de kare o misutete wa otoko ga sutaru.*

Here in him ACC abandon if man NOM obsolete

‘I’d be less than a man if I abandoned him now.’ (KNCJED)

(12) *Omae ga otoko o ageru zekkoo no kikai da zo.*

you NOM man ACC up best of chance COP FP

‘This is a wonderful chance for you to show that you are a man.’ (KNJED)

(13) *Doryoo o tasuke yoo to sinakatta koto de, kare wa ippen ni otoko o sageta.*

fellows ACC help try do.not thing by he TOP at once man ACC down.past

‘His failure to try and help his fellows immediately made him lose face as a man.’ (*ibid.*)

<sup>6</sup> This does not mean that mothers and sisters did not have a right to attend “hukei kai.” Actually, more mothers than fathers attended “hukei kai.”



Unlike example (9), the replacement of *otoko* to *onna* in these phraseological units will yield *onna ga sutaru*, *onna o ageru*, and *onna o sageru*, which are acceptable sentences in Japanese. Thus these expressions as in (11)–(13) are examples of phraseological combinations as discussed in 3.1. where one component is used in its direct meaning while the other is used figuratively. On the other hand, the phraseological units such as *onna ga sutaru*, *onna o ageru*, and *onna o sageru* are derived from *otoko ga sutaru*, *otoko o ageru*, and *otoko o sageru*, respectively. They are not so often used as the male counterparts and thus they are not considered to be full-fledged phraseological combinations yet.

The point to which special attention is needed is that these phraseological combinations have different meanings between phrases with men and women. For example, *otoko o ageru* means to rise in public estimation by doing something good, whereas *otoko o sageru* has the opposite meaning, i.e. to lose public estimation by doing something bad. On the other hand, *onna o ageru* does not convey the meaning of rising in public estimation by doing something good. Instead, the meaning is so specialized as to mean to improve in one's looks, as seen in example (14). *Onna o sageru* means to lose one's good looks, as seen in example (15).

(14) *Kanozyo wa onna o ageta.*

'She has improved in her looks.' (SJED)

(15) *Onna ga sagatta.*

'She has lost her good looks.' (*ibid.*)

The similar phenomenon can be seen in phraseological combinations such as *otoko buri* versus *onna buri*. *Otoko buri* not only means "handsome" but also "rise in a person's estimation" as in (16) and (17):

(16) *Nobu tyan. Omae erai ii otoko buri ni natta ya nai ka.*

Nobu you very good man behavior become not FP

'Nobuo, you're beginning to look quite handsome.' (Ayako Miura, *Shio-kari Pass*)

(17) *Otoko buri ga agatta.*

man behavior NOM up.past

'He has risen in the public estimation.' (SJED)

On the other hand, *onna buri* only means "improve in one's looks" and does not have the meaning of "rise in a person's estimation," as in example (18).

(18) *Onna buri ga agatta.*

'She has improved in her looks.' (*ibid.*)

As to the phraseological units including men and women, men are generally valued for the dispositions as human beings as well as men, as in (16)

and (17), while women are valued for their looks, as in (18). Thus it can be said that there is an asymmetry between phraseological units of men and women.

More examples of asymmetry between men and women are *otoko ni naru* (lit., become man) and *onna ni naru* (lit., become woman), or *otoko ni suru* (lit., make man) and *onna ni suru* (lit., make woman). *Otoko ni naru* has the meaning of “have one’s sexual experience” as well as “grow to be a man” as in examples (19) and (20), respectively:

(19) *Sono yo boku wa tosiue no zyosei ni yotte otoko ni natta.*

that night I TOP older of woman by man become.past

‘That night, that older woman gave me my first introduction to sex.’

(KNJED)

(20) *Kare wa rippa na otoko ni natta.*

he TOP fine man become.past

‘He grew up to be a fine man.’ (NCJED)

On the other hand, the predominant meaning of *onna ni naru* is that of (19) rather than of (20):

(21) *Kanozyo mo itinin mae no onna ni natta.*

she too grown-up of woman become.past

‘She has come to womanhood.’ (*ibid.*)

The same is true of *otokoni suru*, which is semantically ambiguous between “have his first sexual experience” and “grow to be a man,” as in example (22):

(22) *Nan toka aitu o otoko ni site yari tai.*

by any means him ACC man make want

‘I want to do something to get him his first sexual experience. / I want to do something to help him grow to be a man.’

The predominant meaning of *onna ni suru* is that of “have her first sexual experience,” as in example (23):

(23) *Kanozyo o onna ni sita no wa oreda.*

her ACC woman make.past TOP I

‘It was I who made a woman of her.’

We often hear a male candidate make the following campaign speech during an election:

(24) *Doozo watasi o otoko ni site kudasai. Dooka watasi o kokkai ni okutte kudasai.*

please me ACC man make give please me ACC diet to send give

‘Please make me a man and send me to the Diet.’

The use of “*onna*” instead of “*otoko*” in this sentence will change the whole meaning of the sentence and thus “*onna*” cannot be used in this context of an election campaign.

### 3.3. Other examples of men and women

Some of the phraseological units are restricted to men and some to women. For example, there is a phraseological unit such as *otoko masari* (lit., surpass man: a spirited woman) in Japanese, but there is no female equivalent such as *\*onna masari* (lit., surpass woman: a spirited man). Also, there is a phraseological unit such as *otoko no naka no otoko* (a man among men), but there is no unit of *\*onna no naka no onna* (a woman among women).

Some of the phraseological units including *onna* are *onna datera ni* (woman though she is), *onna no kusatta yoo na* (being rotten to the core), *onna no asa zie* (woman's foolishness). All of these are derogatory phraseological units for women. But there are no male counterparts of these expressions such as *\*otoko datera ni*, *\*otoko no kusatta yoo na*, and *\*otoko no asa zie*.<sup>7</sup>

There are also phraseological units such as *otoko gi* (lit., man's spirit) and *onna gi* (lit., woman's spirit). But the actual meanings are different from each other; *otoko gi* means "a chivalrous spirit", while *onna gi* means "a gentle spirit." *Oo-sii* (lit., manly) means "courageous" and *meme sii* (lit., womanly) means "sissy or cowardly"; hence *oo-sii* and *meme sii* have just the opposite meaning.<sup>8</sup> Observe the following examples:

(25) *Nihon wa haisen kara oosiku tati agatta.*

Japan TOP defeat from manly rise.past

'Japan bravely rose from the ashes of defeat.' (KNJED)

(26) *Schwarzenegger wa Kerry no koto o meme sii otoko to yonda.*

Schwarzenegger TOP Kerry 's thing ACC womanly man QUOT call.past

'Schwarzenegger called Kerry "a girlie man."' (MCR)

The above parallel phraseological units describing men and women clearly indicate that Japanese women have been despised and unduly underestimated for a long period of time, while Japanese men overestimated.

## 4. Metaphor and gender

It has recently been observed that metaphor is playing an important part in the use of language. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3) claim that metaphor is

<sup>7</sup> The English counterpart of *onna no asa zie* will be a proverbial expression, "Women have long hair and short brains."

<sup>8</sup> The similar observation can be found in English; "a man in the street" means "an ordinary person," but "a woman in the street" means "a prostitute."

pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. We will examine how metaphors are used in the phraseological units of men and women in the Japanese language.

Women who missed the chance to get married are called *ure nokori* in Japanese, which literally means “unsold goods,” as in example (27):

(27) *Saikin watasi wa oyani “anta urenokori” tte iwareru yooni natte syokku o ukete imasu. Tinamini watasi wa moosugu 30 ni naru onna desu.*

COP incidentally I TOP soon become woman COP

‘I’ve recently got shocked to hear that my mother called me “unsold merchandise.” I am a woman of 30 years old.’

“Unsold merchandise” implies that the woman waits as passively as a grocery-store tomato hoping a customer will buy it before it rots (Cherry 1987: 137), i.e. women are compared to sales products. This metaphoric use of Japanese is discussed in detail in Hiraga (1991, 1997) where she proposes the “women are sales products” metaphor.

There are many more phraseological units of the “women are sales products,” the examples of which are as follow:

(28) *Hanako wa zyunsin muku no hako iri musume datta.*

Hanako TOP naïve pure of box in daughter COP.past

‘Hanako was a naïve girl who knows nothing of the world.’

(29) *Uti no musume o kizu mono ni suruna.*

My daughter ACC flawed article make.not

‘Don’t make my daughter a flawed article.’

It is believed in Japan that a woman in marriageable age is so precious that she should be protected from the hazardous world like a precious doll is stored in the wooden box (Cherry 1987: 41). Thus she is metaphorically referred to as *hako iri musume* as in example (28). Also, a woman who has premarital sex relations is referred to as *kizu mono* (damaged goods) as in example (29), which is also one of the metaphors.

*Katazukeru* (clean out) is one of the most common expressions to give one’s daughter in marriage:

(30) *Nan toka sue no musume o katazukeru koto ga deki masita.*

Somehow last of daughter ACC clean thing NOM possible COP.past

‘We finally married off our last daughter.’

(31) *\*Nan toka sue no musuko o katazukeru koto ga deki masita.*

Somehow last of son ACC clean thing NOM possible COP.past

‘We married off our last son.’

In example (30) *katazukeru* (clean out) is used to mean that the daughter gets married and hence she is compared to sales goods. *Katazukeru* cannot

be used in example (31) where the person in question is male, because men are generally not the objects for selling.

As Bolinger (1980: 92) points out, the phrase *marry off* smacks of *auction off* and *sell off*, implying that English also contains the “women are sales products” metaphor. In fact, there is a phraseological unit such as “to be left on the shelf” in English, which is said of a woman who is past an age at which she might expect to get married (Piirainen 2008: 213). This expression is also metaphorical since the woman is compared to sales goods. This implies that the “women are sales products” metaphor is not restricted to Japanese, but rather it may be used in other languages as well.

## 5. Female terms

In this section, we will examine four words in Japanese to denote women – *zyosei*, *hujin*, *zyoryuu*, and *onna* – and demonstrate that these words bear negative connotations in comparison with male counterparts.

Before discussing female terms in Japanese, let us take a brief look at female terms in English. In English there are several ways to tell the person in question is female. Observe the following examples from *Longman Language Activator*<sup>2</sup>:

(32) Mrs Thatcher was Britain’s first *woman* prime minister.

(33) *Female* students tend to get better grades than male students.

(34) The town has had a *lady* mayor for a couple of years now.

Among the use of *woman*, *female*, *lady* as modifiers, *woman* in example (32) is the most common usage. *Female* in example (33) is used to contrast women with men who are doing the same thing. *Lady* in example (34) is a polite word, which some women may find offensive, for a woman who does an important or professional job (*LLA*).

Now let us turn to the female terms in Japanese. In order to denote female persons, the following terms are used in Japanese: *zyosei*, *hujin*, *zyoryuu*, and *onna*. All these phraseological units have negative connotations in comparison with male counterparts (Nakamura 1990). When female terms are added to the words, they often assume the negative meaning. *Hujin keikan* (woman police), for example, makes a frivolous impression:

(35) *Kinoo hujin keikan ni tukamatta.*

yesterday policewoman by caught

‘Yesterday I was caught by a policewoman.’

(36) *Kinoo keikan ni tukamatta.*

yesterday police by caught

‘Yesterday I was caught by a police officer.’

Example (35) generally means that I got a parking ticket, but (36) sounds more serious, meaning that I was arrested by a police officer.

Among the four female terms, *zyosei* and *hujin* bear weaker negative connotations, while *zyoryuu* and *onna* stronger negative connotations. I will start to examine the meaning of *zyosei*. *Zyosei* is one of the most neutral expressions among the four words, which is equivalent to the “woman” in English. The examples are as follows:

(37) *zyosei mondai* (woman’s problem), *zyosei roodo* (woman’s work), *zyosei syatyoo* (woman president), *mikon zyosei* (unmarried woman)

*Hujin* sounds elegant as well as a bit old fashioned and it is the most formal terms among four terms; hence its frequency is decreasing these days:

(38) *hujin keikan* (lady police), *hujin kisya* (lady journalist), *hujin kai* (lady association), *roo hujin* (old lady), *syokugyoo hujin* (career lady)

The use of *zyoryuu* is largely limited to the women artists, and it often has a connotation that the artists are second-rate:

(39) *zyoruu sizin* (woman poet), *zyoryuu sakka* (woman writer), *zyoryuu gaka* (woman painter), *zoryuu kisi* (woman go player)

Notice that there is no female equivalent for the female term *zyoryuu*, as in \**danryuu*.

*Onna* is the most informal word among the four terms and has the most negative connotation, the examples of which are as follows:

(40) *onna doroboo* (woman thief), *onna zyimuin* (woman clerk), *onna zumoo* (woman sumo wrestling), *onna syatyoo* (woman president), *onna oyabun* (woman boss)

Japanese has such a phraseological unit as *onna kodomo* (woman and child), which is used in the following contexts:

(41) *Onna kodomoni nani ga wakaru. Kutidasi suru na.*

woman child what know interefer do not

‘What do women and children know about it? Keep your nose out of this.’ (KNJED)

(42) *Onna kodomo no deru makude wa nai.*

Woman child appear screen TOP not

‘Women and children are to stay out of this.’ (*ibid.*)

These sentences clearly indicate that “women and children” are considered as a two-piece set, which means that women have been treated like children in the Japanese society.

## 6. Conclusion

We have argued in this article how gender-related phraseological units in Japanese reflect the Japanese culture and have suggested that some of the phraseological units are culturally bound and specific to Japanese.

In section 2, we have shown that Japanese is a language which has distinctive forms between male and female speakers, pointing out that the difference is conspicuous for sentence-final particles. In section 3, we have seen numerous examples of gender-related phraseological units and found that they are often used to praise men's abilities or virtues as human-beings, while many examples about women reveal that Japanese women are referred to in derogatory terms. It is evident from these examples that there is a marked asymmetry between the expressions of men and women. In section 4, we have dealt with metaphors in gender and demonstrated that the "women are sales products" metaphor is often used in Japanese. In section 5, four words to denote women, i.e. *zyosei*, *hujin*, *zyoryuu*, and *onna* are examined and it is observed that these words bear negative connotations in comparison with male counterparts.

This article is a brief survey on gender-related phraseological units in Japanese. Japanese is rich in phraseological units concerning men and women and therefore further research on gender from a phraseological viewpoint will be needed.

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## List of Symbols

ACC – accusative	FP – final particle	QUOT– quote
COP – copula	NOM – nominative	

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## Genderowo nacechowane jednostki frazeologiczne w języku japońskim

### Streszczenie

W języku japońskim występują różnorodne stałe połączenia wyrazowe, które odnoszą się do mężczyzn i kobiet. Jednostki te to przede wszystkim idiomy i przysłowia, będące w użyciu od wielu lat, odzwierciedlające poglądy na temat mężczyzny i kobiety w kulturze japońskiej. Jednostki frazeologiczne opisujące mężczyznę (*otoko*) w języku japońskim często są używane do chwaleń jego umiejętności lub zalet: *otoko ga sutaru* ('stracić twarz jako mężczyzna'), *otoko ga tatu* ('zaspokoić swój męski honor'), *otoko o ageru* ('zyskać opinię odważnego'). Liczne związki odnoszące się do kobiet (*onna*) mają charakter deprecjonujący, co jest uwarunkowane historycznie: *onna daterani* ('mimo bycia kobietą'), *onna no kusatta yo na* ('zepsuta jak kobieta') i *onna no asajie* ('płytkie myślenie kobiety'). Autor artykułu przedstawia rozmaite przykłady jednostek należących do omawianej grupy i przez ich pryzmat omawia mężczyznę oraz kobietę w japońskiej kulturze, pokazując, że niektóre z tych jednostek mają nacechowanie kulturowe i ich występowanie ograniczone jest do języka japońskiego.



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## **An Exploration of Culture-Marked Phraseologisms in a Karuta Set of an Endangered Language**

**Abstract.** If a person's "linguistic world-picture is commensurable with the mental attitudes and culture of a speech community" (Teliya et al. 1998) s/he hails from, where does that leave languages that are teetering on the brink of obsolescence? This paper examines the phraseological entries in a recently produced Karuta card game set written in the endangered language of Uchinaaguchi. The set has been devised with children in mind and its goal is to expose the youth of the island to their linguistic heritage which is slowly eroding away with each subsequent generation. This study will look at the culture portrayed through the phrasemes of the set.

**Key words:** *Okinawan, Uchinaa, Karuta, Endangered, Phraseologism.*

### **1. Introduction**

Okinawa, home to 4 of the 6 endangered Ryukyuan languages is the Southernmost administrative district in the archipelago of Japan; The main island of the prefecture (also called Okinawa) is home to two of these endangered languages (Kunigami and Uchinaa). Both are classified at Level 4 "definitely endangered" in the Language Vitality and Endangerment UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages. (2003, pp. 10) This classification intimates that "The language is used mostly by the parental generation and upwards." This article will examine the contents of a Karuta card set created for Japanese non-native speakers of Okinawan (Uchinaa).

### **2. Language classification and brief background**

First off, a little scene setting may be useful. Although sometimes the 6 languages of the Ryukyu chain are collectively erroneously referred to as

'Uchinaaguchi' (Okinawan Language), the term in fact refers more correctly to one common language spoken on the main island of Okinawa. This language, Shibaikutuba (Fija, Heinrich 07), while tracing its roots back to the Shuri-Naha area, has its own dialects in different districts of the island. 'Uchinaa' is the Okinawan language word for Okinawa. This paper will refer to Uchinaaguchi as a "language" in accordance with the aforementioned UNESCO survey and many linguistic researchers' findings (Chamberlain 1895; Hattori 1954; Heinrich 2004; Miyara 2008) despite the fact that on a political level it is still considered a dialect. To a speaker of Uchinaaguchi it is axiomatic that the two languages hail from the same proto-Japonic family but that the isolated evolution of Uchinaa has given rise to distinct grammatical patterns not found in Standard Japanese. A mutual intelligibility (Hattori 1954) ranking lower than that of German and English using the lexicostatistical method or Spanish and French (Chamberlain 1895) seems to be solid ground on which to base distinct language claims.

The political viewpoint of Japan being a mono-lingual society leaves the periphery languages of the South and the Ainu languages of the North at a great disadvantage on many levels. One of these levels is language maintenance programmes, not only to support their continued existence but to formally recognize and preserve Japan's multi-lingual heritage through documentation and promotion. On a local level, documentation projects are emerging, Karimata Shigesu's Ryukyuan audio database, Patrick Heinrich's Yonaguni language documentation programme, Miyara Shinsho's Tome of Yaeyama grammar, Shimoji Michinori's Reference Grammar of Irabu language. However there is a lot of responsibility falling on too few shoulders. Like many languages that were/are subjugated by political, economic or social means: Uchinaaguchi has long been stigmatized and relegated to second-class status. In the 1950's there was a well documented language shift whereby Okinawan adults seemingly overnight barricaded the intergenerational language path and stopped passing the language down to their children. Japanese was considered progressive and the way forward.

Unfortunately this diminished transmission of the language had near devastating effects on its vitality. Many Okinawans today view their language like Breton speakers of the French region of Brittany view theirs; 'Fit for limited intra-group communication and local oral traditions' (Kuter 1989). Over the last two decades however, there have been ripples of revitalization attempts with the establishment of Uchinaaguchi Fukyu Kyogikai (Okinawa Society for Language Revitalization) in 2000, and a prefecture supported *Shimakutuba no hi* (Local language day) (2004). The stigma of being an Uchinaa speaker is fading and young people today are being mildly encouraged to re-

cognize their linguistic heritage. With the advent of this change in mood, one can witness a slow but steady expansion in the Okinawan language section of the book store.

### 3. Karuta Analysis

#### 3.1. Karuta

In Japan Karuta is traditionally a proverb card game played by listening to a caller randomly read out the first half of a proverb while the players try to beat their opponents in being the first to locate the second half of the apothegm from a spread of upturned cards lying between them. The Karuta game framework has spawned many educational theme variations. The set this paper is concerned with was devised in conjunction with a local TV station and has as its aim the dispersion of Uchinaaguchi in a fun way that is accessible to all. There are 45 e-fuda (picture cards) for the players and 45 i-fuda (calling cards) for the speaker. The language on the written cards is laid out as in the following example. See figure 1a. below. The corresponding picture card in this instance is shown beside it, figure 1b:

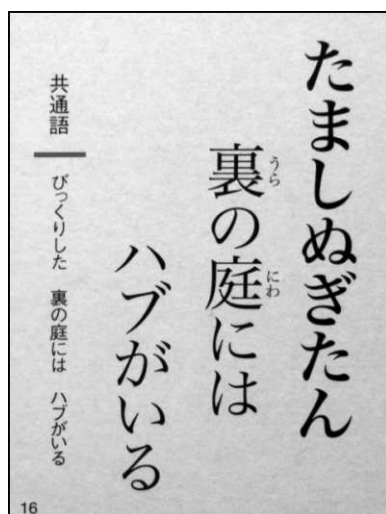


Figure 1a. I-fuda



Figure 1b. E-fuda

The reader is expected to call out the larger print on the card. Each entry is written using a mixture of all three scripts: Kanji, Hiragana and Katakana. Words that appear in Kanji also have small print hiragana written alongside

to indicate how the ideographs should be read. Each of the 45 cards starts with a different letter of Hiragana.

This Karuta set's tone is informal and for the most part conversational; its contents are not likely to be found in any formal texts. Its target audience is young therefore it is simplistic in nature and does not present any complicated concepts. It could be considered quasi-interactive as the presented data may incite discussion and opportunities to further expand the cards' contents. Unfortunately by employing such a restricted source as a foundation the chances of co-occurrence are reduced to practically zero as each item should in theory appear only once. This self-contained minuscule corpus of Uchinaaguchi Karuta were studied to observe which ideational linguistic combinations, elements and concepts of the language and culture of Okinawa the editors deemed important in transmitting. "It is generally agreed that multi-word units, or phrasemes, may be 'culturally-marked' to a significant extent, more so than single word units" (Sabban 2008). So with this in mind single word cultural realia such as the names of local dishes, ceremony names, sacred place names were put to one side.

While phraseology is still a field with fuzzy parameters in the world of linguistics, as its wide and variable range overlaps into other disciplines, (Granger, Paquot 2008) there is agreement that there are two main approaches. One rooted in descriptive linguistic foundations hailing from Eastern European and the other having its base in the data driven field of Corpus Linguistics. The Corpus Linguistic approach is appropriate for languages which are/were vibrant and prolific. Uchinaa does not fall under this category. Not only are there few written records or literary offerings in Uchinaaguchi, the current situation is slow-moving and uncoordinated. Currently there is a scarcity of electronic data and transcribed examples of the language for comparison and reference, so to overcome this impediment a technique from endangered language research was adopted and will be described later on.

### 3.2. Method

As mentioned earlier the written content of each Karuta card has Japanese translations printed along the side. Each card was translated into English for reference purposes but the Uchinaa version naturally took precedence for this study. It was thoroughly reviewed for significant lexical features of interest. (Please see appendix 1 for a list of slides used.) The phraseological element was pinpointed and it was reviewed for specific ethnographic lan-

guage. Could any of the multi-word units be considered culture-specific to Okinawa?

The sound bites of the Uchinaa lexicon that appear in this set are an attempt to pass down the linguo-cultural heritage that is slowly being eroded. Teliya et al.'s five suggested channels were employed as an angle from which to observe and examine the cultural data contained within the cards identified as having one or more categories of phraseme.

The channels are:

1. Cultural semes,
2. Cultural concepts,
3. Cultural connotations,
4. Cultural background and
5. Discourse stereotypes.

### 3.3. Content of Cards

*Cultural semes:* Slide#3 refers to the *Wuujitoushii* the billexemic entry that refers to the farm laborers who specifically harvested sugarcane and no other crop. This social realia seeps over to the historical realia sphere also, as nowadays the same work is done by machinery. Sugar cane is an important cash crop on Okinawa and there is a plethora of Uchinaa vocabulary items associated with the activities of cultivating, harvesting and preparing the sugar cane for consumption.

*Cultural concepts:* Slide #19 *Tii-anda* (lit the oil/sweat of your hands) goes into what you are preparing. The periphery connotation of this literal collocation is the extra special care and attention one should afford food preparation. It also alludes to the sentiment of love or strong affection for the recipient of the handmade food. In English the closest counterpart would be 'to put your heart (and soul) into it' however the English rendition can be applied to many circumstances requiring effort and the beneficiary is just as likely to be the actor as it is a friend or family member. The Uchinaa, *tii-anda* is specifically used in conjunction with food preparation. This entry further expounds the image by adding the ubiquitous collocation '*nuchi gusui*', (lit. your life force gets nourished by healthy (medicinal) food).

Slide #28 introduces the restricted collocation *uchiami*. (lit. rain inside the house) – usually because of wind. At first glance this collocation looks entirely compositional in structure however the aura of the two words together paint a bigger picture than raindrops landing inside. Both words are very similar cognates of the Japanese 'uchi' and 'ame' however in Standard Japanese they do not possess the same collocability as they do in Uchina-

aguchi. The translation for *uchi* on the card reads *ame ga hairu* (lit. the rain comes in), a descriptive statement of a situation. There is no nuance of 'home' the rain has simply entered a 'place'.

*Cultural connotations:* While the mythical fairy, Kijimuna, makes an appearance in this set slide #6 he doesn't do so idiomatically. He is simply presented as the red-haired fairy that lives in a Banyan tree. He has a reputation of being a mischievous prankster and is often at the comparison end of a simile. However one cultural connotation that has its source in a cultural concept is "tamashi nugitan" (lit. [my] soul came out [of me]) in slide #16. The phraseologism was identified with the first person singular as this is most likely who the interlocutor would be. It infers that the speaker briefly 'died of fright' because his very soul departed him. The Okinawan *tamashi* is a cognate of the Japanese *tamashii*. A synonymous word for 'soul' in Uchinaa is 'mabuya'. This can also be shocked out of you *mabuyaa utuchusan* but suffers more gravitationally and falls downwards on corporal departure whereas a 'tamashi' does not go below the horizon.

*Cultural background:* Returning to slide #19, the entry *Nuchi gusui* appears. Even though this is a more recent coinage its conception has coincided with the increasingly popular image of Okinawan food being healthy and the population of the prefecture living longer than elsewhere in the country. Over the last two decades, the renewed interest in things Okinawan, labeled the 'Okinawan boom', has not only seen the creation of Uchinaaguchi fixed expressions as promotional sound bites but it has also seen revival of some forgotten phrasemes. Marketeers have employed *Nuchi gusui* so frequently that it now almost appears concurrently when referring to Okinawan fare.

*Discourse stereotypes:* Okinawan proverbs reveal a plethora of stereotypes not only of the prefecture as a whole but also of many geographical areas within the island (O'Callaghan 2010). The discourse stereotypes are an old conception and didn't find a place in the limitations of this Karuta set. In fact no proverbs were introduced at all.

Throughout the 45 cards the three Japanese scripts were used. Foreign words and loanwords are written in Katakana so it is easy to recognize which words were not Japanese. From a phraseological stand point, fewer than 50% of the 45 cards had bona fide collocations, idioms and metaphors. Some of those were Standard Japanese phraseologisms. The entries that were discounted had a similar format; place names/festival names/names of local dishes plus commentary. Slide #1 *Achikookoo obaa ga tsukutta hirayachi* (lit. Grandma's hirayachi is piping hot). *Hirayachi* is a local dish, and 'piping hot' is expressed by 'achikookoo'. Note: the translation issues 'piping hot' raises will not be addressed in this article while it is a restricted phrasal



lexemic entry in English, the Uchinaa word is morphologically formed by adding an emphatic suffix to the adjective 'hot', a suffix that does not follow any other root lemma.

Even within this extremely small set there were two concepts that appeared twice. The first example is in slide #3 and slide #30 the notion of a break-time at three o'clock. Slide #3 saying *san ji chaa* (lit. 3pm tea) and slide #30 *san ji no oyatsu* (lit. 3pm's snack). A custom that is comparable to 'elevensies' in the British Isles. The 3pm tea or 3pm snack demonstrated variability of the collocation and its ability to assimilate a modification yet retain the culturally recognized need for a break at 3pm. This 'break time' is a regional phenomenon and not ascribed uniquely to Okinawa. The second re-occurrence of a concept was the English phrasal verb 'look forward to'. It appeared in slide #3 and slide #31. In slide #3 it was written in Japanese whereas in slide #31 it was the focal point of the card and the Uchinaa word in the salient first position.

As introduced earlier, there are not many ready available sources to employ as reference tools. How was one to know if these entries were one speaker's own preferences in the language? or if they were widespread and current among other speakers. Using one of Thompson et al.'s (2006) techniques for eliciting the now extinct Native American Wappo Language, a very small number of native speakers of Uchinaaguchi were given single key words of phrasemes that appeared in the Karuta and asked to come up with three collocates of the lexeme. Their "linguo-cultural competence" (Teilya et al. 1998) was put to the test. All informants were employed, which would infer that they were under 65 years old. The youngest contributor was in her 40s. Without fail, all the participants verbalized the collocations that appeared on the cards. Despite the interlocutor population being small, the geographical areas they represented were wide.

While generalizations cannot be made from the results of such a minor study the initial indications demonstrate levels of cognition and a high degree of currency among this extremely limited population. A more formal study would have to be undertaken to verify if it assists in contributing to a corpora of 'linguistic minimum' for non-native speakers and students of the language to strive for.

### 3.4. Problems and inconsistencies within the original text

Throughout the 45 cards the three Japanese scripts were used. Most foreign words are written in Katakana so it is easy to recognize which words were not Japanese. The first few cards followed this pattern by indicating the

Okinawan words in Katakana but later on switched some entries to hiragana, slide #26. “Mo-iashibi” (lit. dancers) and slide #40 “Riika riika” (lit. hurry, hurry!). 31 cards had the Uchinaa word as the initial word and in bold face type while the others had it appear later on in the compositional string not bolded. The first word or phrase of each card was always in bold face. Schmitt and Carter (2000) discuss saliency of the first words in lexical phrases, reporting that they are the most memorable for a learner of another language. In that respect it was a shame that the pattern of the first few slides was not continued throughout the set.

While Sinclair (08: 409) comments that it is somewhat easier to spot where “one meaningful unit ends and another begins” in written language as it “tends to be segmented, and in alphabetical script, which is clearly segmented and often has word separators and punctuation marks as well as letters’, this is not the case in Japanese. Even though the majority of slides were single sentence, orthographically, Japanese words run onto to each other with no spaces between verbs, particles, affixes, diminutives etc. Apart from minimal use of periods (this set uses none) punctuation and capitalization are used very infrequently.

For example in English, noun compounds present themselves in one of three ways with a hyphen, with an orthographic space or as run on words to become a monolexical unit. In Japanese they are all monolexical units and it takes the untrained eye longer to decipher two non-connected run on nouns. The Uchinaa word for swim goggles on slide #32 ‘miikagan’ is composed of mii – eye, and kagan which means mirror when it appears alone but takes on the meaning of ‘glasses for water’ when paired with ‘mi’, thus creating an idiomatic collocation. The Japanese equivalent ‘suichumegane’ (lit. in water spectacles/glasses) does not use the figurative language of its Okinawan counterpart.

#### 4. Conclusion

While the set has achieved its goal of ‘exposure to the language’, given the ‘couching’ of Uchinaa in a Japanese sentence with a loose Japanese translation down the side, the goal of imparting that knowledge to children is reduced to minimal impact sound-bite size. At first glance, the quantity of Japanese in the set was considered excessive but as the study progressed the Japanese insight was an added bonus and assisted with comprehension. That said however, a concerted effort would need to be made on the part of the participants to actively learn the Uchinaaguchi lexical chunks contained within.

It can be argued that the processing load of the learner is actually reduced by the presentation of the phrasemes in such a way. The target Uchinaaguchi compositional string stands out against the familiar and comprehensible language, rather than getting swallowed up as was originally assumed would happen. While learners will not be regarding phrasemes based on the frequency of their appearance and likelihood of their co-occurrence it is up to material writers and teachers to expose them to well known commonly used and current formulaic language. The authors have selected popular and familiar concepts to relay and the phraseologisms certainly possessed currency among the native speakers asked. More extensive research is required to determine how effective they are at impacting the target audiences' long term memories but this set is very definitely a positive step in the right direction, a proverbial foot in the door for first time Japanese speaking Uchinaa students.

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### Appendix

Here is a Romanization of the presented Karuta items used in this article. The Uchinaa word is in bold face. All words have been transcribed from the Hiragana and Katakana script that appear on the cards. Capitalization is included to conform to orthographic norms of this paper as are the spaces between words. If the creators had written these texts horizontally they would appear as a long string of characters. Only the first employed entry (#3) is given as an example of this. The Japanese translation on the cards has been omitted and in its place the author has translated the entries into English so as to reach a wider audience. Where a corresponding set phrase was not available in English a semantic paraphrase was used. Please

note, not all slides have been included. Only those deemed to incorporate a holistic phraseological unit appear below. The number assigned to each entry is that of the original compilers.

#3 ウージトーシー三時茶が待ち遠し **Wuujitoushii** sanjichya ga machidooshi

#16 **Tamashinugitan** ura no niwa ni ha habu ga iru

My soul came out of me; there was a snake in the back garden.

#19 **Teianda** kokoro no komotsuta **nuchi gusui**

Being mindful during the good food preparation will ensure its life nourishing quality.

#28 Futtekita **uchiami** suru kara to wo shimete.

Have to close the door because the rain is falling in the house.

#29 Bento wo wasurete ensoku **nadaguruguru**

I was crying my eyes out at the picnic because I forgot my boxed lunch.

#39 Randoseru katteromatte **tounjiyaamohyaa**

The backpack that I received had me jumping for joy.

## **Analiza kulturowo nacechowanych frazeologizmów zagrożonego języka w talii Karuta**

### **Streszczenie**

Autorka artykułu bada jednostki frazeologiczne pochodzące z talii kart Karuta zapisane w zagrożonym języku Uchinaaguchi. Ta gra została stworzona z myślą o dzieciach i celem opracowania jej było stworzenie najmłodszym rodzimym użytkownikom języka możliwości zapoznania się z ich językowym dziedzictwem, które powoli zanika, czego przejawy obserwuje się w każdym pokoleniu. Analiza stałych połączeń wyrazowych obecnych na kartach ukazuje, jak kultura jest przedstawiana za pomocą frazeologizmów.

