

# English Idioms from a Crosslinguistic Perspective

Petra Julie Fimbingerová

---

Bachelor's Thesis  
2024



**Tomas Bata University in Zlín**  
Faculty of Humanities

---

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně  
Fakulta humanitních studií  
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Akademický rok: 2023/2024

## ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: **Petra Julie Fimbingerová**  
Osobní číslo: **H20637**  
Studijní program: **B0231P090005 Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**  
Forma studia: **Prezenční**  
Téma práce: **Anglické idiomy ve srovnávacím pohledu**

### Zásady pro vypracování

Shromáždění materiálů k tématu  
Studium odborné literatury  
Formulace cílů práce  
Analýza vybraných idiomů  
Vyvození a formulace závěrů práce

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**  
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

**Seznam doporučené literatury:**

- Fernando, Chitra. 1996. *Idioms and Idiomaticity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Kvetko, Pavol. 2006. *An Outline of English Phraseology*. 2nd ed. Trnava: Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave.  
Liu, Dilin. 2008. *Idioms: Description, Comprehension, Acquisition, and Pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.  
Makkai, Adam. 1972. *Idiom Structure in English*. The Hague: Mouton.  
Seidl, Jennifer. 1990. *English Idioms*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Jeffrey Keith Parrott, Ph.D.**  
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **1. února 2024**  
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **6. května 2024**



---

**Mgr. Libor Marek, Ph.D.**  
děkan

**doc. Mgr. Roman Trušník, Ph.D.**  
ředitel ústavu

Ve Zlíně dne 26. února 2024

## PROHLÁŠENÍ AUTORA BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Beru na vědomí, že

- odevzdáním bakalářské práce souhlasím se zveřejněním své práce podle zákona č. 111/1998 Sb. o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, bez ohledu na výsledek obhajoby <sup>1)</sup>;
- beru na vědomí, že bakalářská práce bude uložena v elektronické podobě v univerzitním informačním systému dostupná k nahlédnutí;
- na moji bakalářskou práci se plně vztahuje zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, zejm. § 35 odst. 3 <sup>2)</sup>;
- podle § 60 <sup>3)</sup> odst. 1 autorského zákona má UTB ve Zlíně právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití školního díla v rozsahu § 12 odst. 4 autorského zákona;
- podle § 60 <sup>3)</sup> odst. 2 a 3 mohu užít své dílo – bakalářskou práci – nebo poskytnout licenci k jejímu využití jen s předchozím písemným souhlasem Univerzity Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, která je oprávněna v takovém případě ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které byly Univerzitou Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně na vytvoření díla vynaloženy (až do jejich skutečné výše);
- pokud bylo k vypracování bakalářské práce využito softwaru poskytnutého Univerzitou Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně nebo jinými subjekty pouze ke studijním a výzkumným účelům (tj. k nekomerčnímu využití), nelze výsledky bakalářské práce využít ke komerčním účelům.

Prohlašuji, že

- elektronická a tištěná verze bakalářské práce jsou totožné;
- na bakalářské práci jsem pracoval(a) samostatně a použitou literaturu jsem citoval(a). V případě publikace výsledků budu uveden(a) jako spoluautor.

Ve Zlíně 30.4.2024 .....

---

*1) zákon č. 111/1998 Sb. o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 47b Zveřejňování závěrečných prací:*

*(1) Vysoká škola nevydělečně zveřejňuje disertační, diplomové, bakalářské a rigorózní práce, u kterých proběhla obhajoba, včetně posudků oponentů a výsledku obhajoby prostřednictvím databáze kvalifikačních prací, kterou spravuje. Způsob zveřejnění stanoví vnitřní předpis vysoké školy.*

*(2) Disertační, diplomové, bakalářské a rigorózní práce odevzdané uchazečem k obhajobě musí být též nejméně pět pracovních dnů před konáním obhajoby zveřejněny k nahlédnutí veřejnosti v místě určeném vnitřním předpisem vysoké školy nebo není-li tak určeno, v místě*

pracoviště vysoké školy, kde se má konat obhajoba práce. Každý si může ze zveřejněné práce pořizovat na své náklady výpisy, opisy nebo rozmnoženiny.

(3) Platí, že odevzdáním práce autor souhlasí se zveřejněním své práce podle tohoto zákona, bez ohledu na výsledek obhajoby.

2) zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 35 odst. 3:

(3) Do práva autorského také nezasahuje škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení, užije-li nikoli za účelem přímého nebo nepřímého hospodářského nebo obchodního prospěchu k výuce nebo k vlastní potřebě dílo vytvořené žákem nebo studentem ke splnění školních nebo studijních povinností vyplývajících z jeho právního vztahu ke škole nebo školskému či vzdělávacímu zařízení (školní dílo).

3) zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 60 Školní dílo:

(1) Škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení mají za obvyklých podmínek právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití školního díla (§ 35 odst.

3). Odpírá-li autor takového díla udělit svolení bez vážného důvodu, mohou se tyto osoby domáhat nahrazení chybějícího projevu jeho vůle u soudu. Ustanovení § 35 odst. 3 zůstává nedotčeno.

(2) Není-li sjednáno jinak, může autor školního díla své dílo užít či poskytnout jinému licenci, není-li to v rozporu s oprávněnými zájmy školy nebo školského či vzdělávacího zařízení.

(3) Škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení jsou oprávněny požadovat, aby jim autor školního díla z výdělku jím dosaženého v souvislosti s užitím díla či poskytnutím licence podle odstavce 2 přiměřeně přispěl na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložily, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše; přitom se přihlédne k výši výdělku dosaženého školou nebo školským či vzdělávacím zařízením z užití školního díla podle odstavce 1.

## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá vnímáním anglických idiomů z pohledu nerodilého mluvčího angličtiny. Cílem práce je vybrat takové třídy idiomů, které odpovídají potřebám českých studentů angličtiny. Důvodem je, že vybrané klasifikace idiomů jsou příliš obsáhlé, a proto je třeba je zúžit. Součástí práce je zhodnocení různých tříd idiomů a analýza vybraných idiomů. Zhodnocení odhaluje, že jedna ze tří klasifikací obsahuje třídy idiomů, které jsou pro studenty užitečné, a to konkrétně třídy ‘turnures’ a ‘first base idioms’. Ostatní klasifikace sice neposkytují ideální třídy idiomů, ale jsou pro studenty užitečné, protože jim pomáhají uvědomit si všechny aspekty idiomatických výrazů.

Klíčová slova: idiom, klasifikace, ekvivalent, anglický jazyk

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor's thesis deals with the perception of English idioms from the perspective of a non-native speaker of English. The aim of the thesis is to select classes of idioms which fit the needs of Czech learners of English. The main argument is that the selected classifications of idioms are too broad for the learners, therefore they need to be narrowed down. An evaluation of different classes of idioms as well as analysis of selected idioms are provided. The evaluation reveals that one of the three classifications of idioms includes classes of greater value for the learners, namely ‘turnures’ and ‘first base idioms’. Other classifications do not provide ideal classes of idioms, but they are useful for the learners as they help them to realize all aspect of idiomatic expressions.

Keywords: idiom, classification, equivalent, English language

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my supervisor Jeffrey Keith Parrott, Ph.D. for his patience, advice, and kindness. I am especially grateful for the time he devoted to consultations which gave me courage and motivation during the writing of my thesis. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and my partner for their support during my studies.

I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.



# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>I THEORY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1 PERCEPTION OF THE TERM IDIOM .....</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 GENERAL PERCEPTIONS .....	12
1.2 COMMON FEATURES OF IDIOM DEFINITIONS .....	13
1.3 THE TERM IDIOM AND PHRASEME .....	13
<b>2 CLASSIFICATIONS OF IDIOMS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 CLASSIFICATION OF IDIOMS ACCORDING TO MAKKAI .....	15
2.1.1 Lexemic Idioms and their Classification .....	15
2.1.2 Sememic Idioms and their Classification .....	17
2.2 CLASSIFICATION OF IDIOMS ACCORDING TO FERNANDO .....	18
2.2.1 Pure Idioms .....	19
2.2.2 Semi-literal Idioms .....	19
2.2.3 Literal Idioms .....	19
2.3 CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO KVETKO .....	20
2.3.1 Absolute Equivalents .....	21
2.3.2 Relative Equivalents .....	21
2.3.3 Deceptive Equivalents .....	22
2.4 PERCEPTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS OF OTHER LINGUISTS .....	22
<b>3 COMPREHENSION TECHNIQUES USED BY L2 LEARNERS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>II ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4 METHODS AND SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF IDIOMS .....</b>	<b>26</b>
4.1.1 Multiple-word Character .....	26
4.1.2 Non-compositionality .....	27
4.1.3 Relative fixedness and Limited Variations .....	27
<b>5 EVALUATIONS OF DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1 MAKKAI .....	28
5.1.1 Tournures and ‘First Base’ idioms .....	29
5.1.2 Phrasal Verbs .....	29
5.1.3 Irreversible Binomials .....	30
5.1.4 Proverbs .....	30
5.2 FERNANDO.....	31
5.2.1 Pure Idioms .....	32
5.2.2 Semi-literal Idioms .....	33
5.2.3 Literal Idioms .....	33
5.3 CZECH AND ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS BASED ON KVETKO’S CLASSIFICATION .....	34
5.3.1 Absolute Equivalents .....	34
5.3.2 Relative Equivalents .....	34
5.3.3 Deceptive equivalents .....	36
5.3.3.1 Analysis of a Selected False Friend Idiom	37
<b>6 THE MOST BENEFICIAL CLASSES OF IDIOMS FOR CZECH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>41</b>



<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>45</b>

## INTRODUCTION

English idioms represent a wide group of different, yet interconnected types of expressions which are important for foreign learners of English to acquire. The issue connected to idioms is that there is not a specific determination of which expressions should be included in the group of idioms and each linguist adapts the definition of idioms to their own perception which results in confusion and even greater difficulty for non-native speakers of English to comprehend idioms. Although there have been attempts to classify English idioms according to different features, they are still way too broad for the learners.

The first part of the thesis deals with the term *idiom* which is explained from the point of view of various linguists. The emphasis is aimed at the demonstration that each linguist considers idioms as different types of expressions which can be as small as morphemes and as large as clauses. The perception of the term *idiom* in the Czech (and Slovak) language is described briefly. The following chapter is dedicated to three selected classifications of idioms established by three different linguists—Makkai (1972), Fernando (1996), and Kvetko (2009). These three classifications have been chosen to demonstrate in more detail what different types of expressions can be classified as idioms when considering different criteria, or different fields of interest. The last part of the theory section is devoted to a brief summary of perceptions and observations from other linguists in terms of defining and classifying idioms, and techniques which learners of English as a second language use in their idiom comprehension.

In the second part of the thesis, the evaluation of the classifications, which has been introduced by the three linguists, is provided from the point of view of a Czech learner of English based on selected characteristics of idioms and analysis of selected expressions which the three linguists have decided to include in the group of idioms. Based on the evaluation and analysis, it is demonstrated that these classifications are too broad for the Czech learners and that the individual classes include expressions which are very different from each other and therefore should rather be introduced separately to the learner. The most beneficial classes of idioms from these classifications have been selected for the purpose of making idiom comprehension easier for the Czech learners of English as the main goal of this thesis.

## **I. THEORY**

## 1 PERCEPTION OF THE TERM IDIOM

Several scholars (Cieślicka 2015, 209–210; Cooper 1999, 233; Katz and Postal 1963, 275; Philip 2010, 266; Seidl 1990, 13) perceive as a generally accepted definition of idioms that they are (multiword) expressions whose meaning cannot be understood from the meanings of the individual words. However, there are many ways to perceive the term *idiom*—what it is, how it should be defined, or which expressions should be included—and the definition may vary among scholars as each of them is interested in a different area of research and therefore, they must adapt their definitions accordingly (Liu 2008, 3, 23). Nunberg, Sag and Wasow state that “attempts to provide categorical, single-criterion definitions of idioms are always to some degree misleading and after the fact” (1994, 492).

### 1.1 General Perceptions

As stated above, each scholar looks at idioms from a slightly different perspective. Kvetko comments on three main extents of how idioms can be perceived. The “narrowest” group can be called ‘pure idioms’ and it mainly includes expressions which express semantic opacity, i.e., their meaning is different from the meaning of their components. The second group is called ‘idioms proper’ and it includes, additionally to the pure idioms, expressions that might be partially opaque. The third group is the most extensive out of these three groups and it includes multiword expressions like similes, binomials, proverbs, or phrasal verbs (2009, 16). The reason for including all these different types expressions into the group of idioms is because they meet the common features, e.g., (among others) that they are more or less fixed expressions consisting of two or more words, and they express “functional and semantic unity” (Kvetko 2009, 19).

Liu discusses Hockett (1958) who claims that some individual morphemes can also be considered idioms, unless the morpheme is a part of a bigger idiom, in which the other morphemes would imply the meaning of the co-occurring morphemes. As an example, Liu states that the individual morphemes *work* and *ed* are idioms, but the whole word *worked* should not be considered an idiom (2008, 4).

Čermák states that since the general conception, that idioms (or *phrasemes*) are fixed expressions and their meaning cannot be inferred from the separate meanings of its elements, cannot be applied to all the different types of idioms and “has to be rejected” (2007, 83). Instead, he suggests this general interpretation: “the phraseme and idiom is such a non-model and fixed syntagma of elements of which (at least) one is with respect to the other member of an extremely limited (both formally and, mostly, even semantically)

and closed paradigm” (2007, 83). While Čermák (2007) suggests this more general definition so that it fits more expressions, Philip (2010) states that the generally accepted definition actually can be applied to various types of expressions such as collocations or formulaic greetings and that is the reason why she does not necessarily consider it to be the ideal one. However, she also admits that it is a great challenge for scholars to introduce a definition which would effectively describe idioms without including non-idiomatic expressions (2010, 266).

## 1.2 Common Features of Idiom Definitions

Liu has considered various definitions and classifications made by several scholars and came up with three main criteria for defining idioms:

- (1) idioms are often but not always non-literal or semi-literal in meaning—that is, their meaning is not completely derivable from the interpretation of their components; (2) they are generally rigid in structure, with some being completely invariant and some allowing some restricted variance, as demonstrated by Fraser (1970) and Fernando (1996); and (3) idioms are multiword expressions consisting minimally of two words, including compound words (2008, 13).

Liu has also considered the language learners’ perspective and states that the main criteria accepted by scholars seem to be suitable for second language learners (hereinafter referred to as ‘L2 learners’) as well. Additionally, the definition which he considers as fitting the needs of L2 learners the best is: “multiword expressions that are invariant or variance-restricted in structure and often (not always) non- or semi-literal in meaning” (2008, 13, 15–16).

## 1.3 The Term Idiom and Phraseme

In Slovak linguistics, the terms *idiom* and *phraseme* (Czech ‘frazém’ and Slovak ‘frazéma’) are usually differentiated. According to Kvetko, the Slovak term *idióm* is used when talking about units in other languages, while the terms *frazéma* or *frazologická jednotka* ‘phraseological unit’ are used when referring to units within the Slovak language. On the contrary, it is uncommon in English linguistics to use the term ‘phraseological unit’ (2009, 15–17). Čermák states that it is often the case of different perspective, when not only the terms phraseme and idiom but also the fields *phraseology* and *idiomatics* differ, as well as overlap (2007, 85).

The term ‘phraseological unit’ is usually used in Slavonic and German languages. There are more terms used in English linguistics, e.g., *idiomatic expression* or *idiomatic*

*phrase* and others, but in general, when talking about fixed expressions, the term *idiom* is used the most often (Kvetko 2009, 14–16). Kvetko's statement corresponds to the differentiation presented by Espinal and Mateu, who state that the term *idiom* is often used in Anglo-Saxon tradition when talking about more or less fixed multiword expressions, while the term *phraseme* is typically used in Romance and Germanic traditions (2019, 1).

## 2 CLASSIFICATIONS OF IDIOMS

This chapter is mainly focused on three different classifications of idioms that have been introduced by Makkai (1972), Fernando (1996), and Kvetko (2009). Makkai's classification has been chosen for its broad inclusion of various types of expressions. Additionally, Grant and Bauer state that Makkai has contributed greatly to the study of idiomaticity (2004, 40). Fernando (1996) presents a wide range of idioms which she categorises into three main groups from non-literal 'pure idioms' and 'semi-literal idioms' to 'literal idioms' and consequently separates from idioms so called 'habitual collocations'. Lastly, a division of English and Slovak idiomatic equivalents (which can be applied to Czech language as well) introduced by Kvetko (2009) is described in chapter 2.3. This categorization provides useful findings from the crosslinguistic perspective in the further analysis of Czech and English idiomatic equivalents which is discussed in chapter 5.3.

### 2.1 Classification of Idioms According to Makkai

Makkai has introduced a division of idioms into two main groups, which he calls the 'two idiomaticity areas'. For each area, he presents several criteria according to which idioms can or cannot be subduced into those two groups. If the "constructions" (i.e., expressions) meet the given criteria, then they can be divided into lexemic or sememic idiom group. These two groups are also divided into several subcategories (1972, 117). Liu finds the division into lexemic and sememic idioms good for students and teachers because Makkai provides an analysis of the different subcategories (2008, 17). Makkai (1972,134) has also briefly discussed the possibility of a third idiomaticity area, which is not further discussed. Unless otherwise stated, all examples given in the classification come from the original examples given by Makkai.

#### 2.1.1 Lexemic Idioms and their Classification

The definition stated by Makkai says that "any polylexonic lexeme which is made up of more than one minimal free form or word . . . each lexon of which can occur in other environments as the realization of a monolexonic lexeme is a lexemic idiom" (1972, 122). Liu explains that 'polylexonic lexeme' is a multiword expression which has a one-word equivalent, and as an example mentions the idiom *kick the bucket* which has the one-word equivalent 'die' (2008, 16–17). For the lexemic idioms is typical that the meaning of the individual words can cause the listener to misunderstand the actual meaning of the idiom (Makkai 1972, 122).



Makkai has divided lexemic idioms into six different groups. The first type of lexemic idioms is ‘phrasal verb idioms’. The basic structure of these expressions is *verb + adverb* (1972, 135). The issue highlighted by Makkai himself is that many English verbs can be found next to adverbs in eight different ways. Some phrasal verbs can only be expressed literally (e.g., *go away*), some may have a literal meaning as well as an idiomatic meaning (e.g., *come up*), while others do not have literal meaning at all (e.g., *give in*) and some can even have more idiomatic meanings as well as a literal meaning. Some phrasal verbs do not have literal meaning but they can be found as part of idioms (e.g., *\*work up* in the sentence *I worked up to six o'clock*) (1972, 135–136). See Makkai (1972, 135–137) for more structural possibilities of phrasal verbs.

The second type is called ‘tournure idioms’ (hereinafter referred to as ‘tournures’), which consists of a verb and two or more lexons (Makkai 1972, 148; Liu 2008, 17). Of the subcategory of lexemic idioms, tournures are the most complex (Makkai 1972, 148). Makkai also claims that tournures occur in a “phrase-like structure” (e.g., *to X the Y* is the structure of *to kick the bucket*) although not all phrases having these structures are idiomatic, and actually may be found in greater numbers than the idiomatic ones (1972, 149). For further subclassification of tournures see Makkai (1972, 153–154).

‘Irreversible binomial idioms’ are the third class of lexemic idioms. Makkai discusses another linguist Malkiel (1959) who states that the typical structure of binomials is *constituent A + a link + constituent B*, e.g., *assault and battery, back and forth* (1972, 155, 314). Makkai also provides further classification made by Malkiel (1959), in which he divides the irreversible binomials according to seven principles. For example, the two parts of the binomial A and B can be the same word, e.g., *class against class*; they can be opposites, e.g., *sink or swim*; or B can be the consequence of A, e.g., *the rise and fall*. Most English binomials can be classified as idioms (Makkai, 1972, 155–156, 158).

Another two classes of idioms are ‘phrasal compound idioms’ and ‘incorporating verb idioms’. The phrasal compounds mostly occur in the structure of *adjective + noun* or *noun + noun*, e.g., *greenhouse* or *housewife* but other combinations are also possible. (Makkai 1972, 321, 323, 326). Incorporating verb idiom usually consists of a verb, which is the main part of the structure, preceded by a noun or an adjective, which together function as a verb. Other forms like *adjective + noun* and *noun + noun* are also possible. As prototypical examples of this class Makkai provides *to apple-polish* and *to brown-nose* (Makkai 1972, 168-169, 339).

The last type of lexemic idiom is called ‘pseudo-idioms’. Makkai points out that some pseudo-idioms can be found in other classes like in the class of irreversible binominals or phrasal compounds. For the members of this class is typical that they are all lexemic idioms which contain one component called “cranberry morph” (Makkai 1972, 169).

### 2.1.2 Sememic Idioms and their Classification

Sememic idioms are, just like the lexemic idioms, multiword expressions. However, they can also occur in the form of full sentences (Liu 2008, 17). The definition states that “a polylexemic construction whose aggregate literal meaning derived from its constituent lexemes functions additionally as the realization of an unpredictable sememic network is a sememic idiom” (Makkai 1972, 128). Sememic idioms consist of nine classes. For better clarity, the following table of sememic idioms with examples is provided.

**Table 1. The classification of sememic idioms**

	Name of the class	Features, structure	Examples
Class S/1	‘First base’ idioms	Connected to national game “institutions”, e.g., American baseball	<i>to have two strikes against one, never to get to first base</i>
Class S/2	Idioms of institutionalized politeness	<i>May I ... X?</i> <i>Could you ... X?</i> <i>Would you mind ...X-ing the Y?</i> etc.	<i>May I ask who’s calling?</i> <i>Could you pass me the sugar?</i> <i>Would you mind closing the window?</i>
Class S/3	Idioms of institutionalized detachment or indirectness	<i>It seems that/to X ...</i> <i>It seems (not) + (can), etc.</i>	<i>It seems to be raining.</i> <i>She seems to be late again.</i> <i>I can’t seem to find my glasses.</i>
Class S/4	Idioms of proposals encoded as questions	<i>Would you care to... X?</i> <i>Would you like to ... X?, etc.</i>	<i>Would you care to see our new baby?</i> <i>Would you like to sit over here where it’s more comfortable?</i>
Class S/5	Idioms of institutionalized greeting	Greeting of a structure that is not possible to change	<i>How do you do?</i> <i>What do you say?</i> <i>How have you been?</i>
Class S/6	Proverbial idioms with a ‘moral’ (i.e., a message)	Mostly used in the original form without grammatical changes	<i>Don’t carry coals to Newcastle.</i> <i>Too many cooks spoil the broth.</i>
Class S/7	Familiar quotations as idioms	Familiarity is the main requirement; must be generally recognizable among speakers	<i>Neither a borrower, nor a lender be</i> (Hamlet, I. iv. 90). <i>Brevity is the soul of wit</i> (Hamlet, II. ii. 90).
Class S/8	Idiomatycity in institutionalized understatement	“Lessen impact” (1972, 178)	<i>I wasn’t too crazy about it (him).</i> <i>It (he) wasn’t exactly my cup of tea.</i>
Class S/9	Idiomatycity in institutionalized hyperbole	Can be vulgar, slang, can show regional variations	<i>He won’t even lift a finger.</i>

Source: Data from Makkai 1972, 172-179.

Makkai (1972) includes these different types of expressions into the group of idioms because they show some idiomatic characteristics. The common characteristics of classes S/2, S/4 and S/5 are that they are usually not answered literally, and the question is rather a statement than a question. For example, the question *Could you pass me the sugar?* is actually an imperative ‘Pass the sugar.’ (1972, 172–175). On the contrary, in case of other classes, it is rather about expressing indirect thought or a feeling (class S/3), “understatement” (class S/8), or exaggerating the reality (class S/9) (1972, 173–174, 178–179).

Czech learners of English may find both sub-classifications of lexemic and sememic idioms valuable because it shows which different types of phrases or even sentences can express idiomaticity, as well as very confusing because it is too broad, and it may give the impression that idiomaticity is completely everywhere. Equally confusing are the two definitions of lexemic and sememic idioms because they are quite technical. There is a reason to believe that most of the sememic idioms should not be included directly in the group of idioms, because not all of them are fully idiomatic and they are longer than other idioms. However, proverbs have been included in the group of idioms also by Kvetko, and they deserve a further analysis of their idiomaticity, which is provided in chapter 5.1.4. The very first class of sememic idioms, the group of ‘first base idioms’, is different from the other classes of sememic idioms and is also a subject of further analysis.

## 2.2 Classification of Idioms According to Fernando

Fernando claims that idioms and idiomaticity are not the same thing, even though there is a connection between them. Although idiomaticity applies to all idioms, other expressions which are not idioms and still express idiomaticity do exist. Therefore, Fernando divides multiword expressions into two main groups: ‘idioms’ and ‘habitual collocations’. Moreover, habitual collocations allow higher degree of variations (e.g., *rosy/plump cheeks*, *rosy dawn*, *sallow skin*) unlike idioms, which are usually fixed in form or allow only a limited number of variations. Both groups of multiword expressions are interconnected and some subclasses, as Fernando admits herself, may overlap. Furthermore, the subclasses of idioms are not strictly separated either and some idioms may be at the borderline of two sub-classes. (1996, 30–33). The group of habitual collocations is not discussed any further and this chapter is therefore focused on the subcategorization of idioms, which are divided into three main sub-classes: ‘pure idioms’, ‘semi-literal idioms’ and ‘literal idioms’. All examples of idioms provided come from Fernando (1996).

Fernando considers compounds as idioms, because they fulfil the criteria of co-occurrence of specific words as well as being multiword expressions. Moreover, compounds can have both literal and non-literal meaning. In some cases, compounds have been created from semi-clausal idioms, e.g., *break the ice* → *ice-breaker*. Fernando attributes these characteristics to be the reason why many scholars have included compounds in the group of idioms (1996, 41). Although Fernando describes idioms as multiword expressions and does not consider single words to be idioms, she claims that there is a limit on the size of idioms (1996, 40).

### 2.2.1 Pure Idioms

Pure idioms are non-literal multiword expressions, which can be further subdivided into ‘invariant idioms’ or ‘idioms of restricted variance’. The meaning of these expressions cannot be guessed from the meanings of the individual words. Idioms that Fernando classifies as invariant pure idioms are, e.g., *spill the beans*, *red herring*, *smell a rat* or *chin wag*. On the other hand, idioms such as *seize/grasp the nettle*, or *get/have cold feet*, which allow a certain degree of lexical changes, are examples of pure idioms of restricted variance (Fernando 1996, 32, 35–36).

### 2.2.2 Semi-literal Idioms

The second group of idioms is subdivided into idioms of invariant or restricted variance as well. In general, an idiom that fits into this category contains at least one lexical item that is non-literal, and one or more literal items. Fernando claims that the non-literal items usually have their non-literal meaning only when they “co-occur” with specific literal items. As an example, she states that in case of the invariant semi-literal idiom *drop names*, *names* is the literal item and *drop* is non-literal, but the non-literal meaning of *drop* only exists when it appears as part of this idiom (Fernando 1996, 32, 36).

### 2.2.3 Literal Idioms

The last group of idioms is semantically simpler than the previous two groups. Fernando classifies these expressions as idioms, because just as pure and semi-literal idioms they can be invariant or of restricted variance and therefore they fulfil the most important criterion which Fernando assigns to idioms. Literal idioms which do not allow any variance are, e.g., *in the meantime*, or *happy New Year*, while in the case of other literal idioms such as *happy/merry Christmas* and *for example/instance*, some variants are possible (Fernando 1996, 32, 36).

### 2.3 Classification According to Kvetko

Kvetko defines idioms as institutionalized, relatively fixed multiword expressions, which are opaque or partially opaque in meaning, and which express semantic and syntactic integrity. He states that these are the common characteristics that most linguists attribute to idioms. However, the range of idioms that should be considered idioms vary. Kvetko does not exclude these types of expressions from the group of idioms and perceives them as a part of ‘idioms in a broader sense’ (2009, 16, 19).

Kvetko divides idioms into ‘pure idioms’, ‘semi opaque idioms’ and ‘semi-idioms’ according to the “degree of opacity/transparency”, and the “degree of motivation” (2009, 31). The main difference between Kvetko (2009) and Fernando (1996) is that Kvetko does not include the literal idioms in his categorization but provides an additional group of semi opaque idioms, where the meaning of individual words is interwoven with the meaning of the whole expression, therefore the idiomatic meaning indicates the literal meaning of the idiom. Perhaps, that is the reason why Kvetko also suggests the additional name ‘figurative idioms’ for this group. Kvetko also states that these three groups are not strictly separated from one another. In fact, there is a thin line between them and some of the idioms could fit into more than one group, which is another similarity to Fernando’s categorization (2009, 30–33). This classification of idioms is not further discussed as it is very similar to the one introduced by Fernando (1996), and therefore does not need a further discussion. Instead, the following chapters are focused on the comparison of English and Slovak idiom equivalents.

Kvetko has compared English and Slovak idioms according to the ‘contrastive approach’ and the ‘translation approach’. In this thesis, the attention is aimed at the contrastive approach of comparison, where Kvetko introduces a categorisation of systemic equivalents. These equivalents consist of two groups: ‘absolute and relative equivalents’ and ‘deceptive equivalents’. Kvetko points out that not all idioms have these forms of equivalents. In some cases, the idiom from L2 (i.e., second or other than first language) can be substituted by a single word or collocation in L1 (i.e., first language), not necessarily by an idiom. The geographical variations, different semantic structures, or existence of different variants are some of the factors that can influence the equivalence of idioms (2009, 51–53). Examples provided in the following classification have been given by Kvetko (2009), unless otherwise stated.

### 2.3.1 Absolute Equivalents

These idioms have the same meanings in both languages and the same or very similar structure. Since there can be a little difference in structure, another two subcategories which deal with these differences have been introduced. The first subcategory is called ‘absolute equivalents proper’, which are completely identical in the sense of grammaticality and lexicality. These idioms might be found among different languages, and many of them have the same origin, e.g., they come from the Bible - *forbidden fruit* or *an eye for an eye*, therefore these idioms also have the same imagery and symbolism. For example, the idiom *cry over spilt milk* has an absolute equivalent proper both in Czech *plakat nad rozlitym mlékem* and Slovak *plakať nad rozliatym mliekom*.

The second subcategory is called ‘similar equivalents’. These idioms have the same meaning, but the lexical and grammatical structure can be different. One of the examples that Kvetko mentions is to *give sb/sth the green light* (2009, 53–54), which means “to give permission for someone to do something or for something to happen” (Walter 2006, 170). The Slovak and Czech equivalents are *dať niekomu/niečomu zelenú* (Kvetko 2009, 54) and *dát někomu/něčemu zelenou*, therefore the word “light” is missing in the Czech and Slovak idioms, although the symbolism for green light on a traffic light applies in all the three cases.

### 2.3.2 Relative Equivalents

Idioms that are ‘relative equivalents’ do not have the same form in English and Slovak, but they have the same or very similar meaning. However, in contrast to the absolute equivalents, relative equivalents do not share the same “symbolism and imagery” cross-linguistically (Kvetko, 2009, 54). This group of idioms can be divided into two subcategories. Idioms which have a same meaning, but their form is completely different, belong to the subcategory of ‘relative equivalents proper’ The idiom which clearly shows the complete difference of the lexical components is the idiom *kick the bucket*, which has a Slovak equivalent *otrčiť kopytá* (\*turn up hoofs) (Kvetko, 2009, 54) and a Czech equivalent *natáhnout bačkory* (1000 anglických frází ‘1000 English Phrases’ 2009, 31).

In case of ‘partially different equivalents’, the symbolism and imagery are also different between the two languages just like in the case of proper idioms. However, at least one component of the idiom is the same both in L1 and L2 (Kvetko, 2009, 54). For example, the English idiom *still waters run deep* has a Czech equivalent *tichá voda břehy mele* ‘still water mills the banks’ (Bočánková and Kalina 2007, 323).

### 2.3.3 Deceptive Equivalents

The last category is rather small but should not be omitted. In some cases, idioms may mislead L2 learners, because they may look like they fit into the category of absolute equivalents since they have the same lexical components, but the meaning of the whole idioms is different. This group includes, e.g., false friends, interlingual homonyms and paronyms. The English idiom *lead somebody by the nose* and the Slovak idiom *vodit' niekoho za nos* (in Czech 'vodit někoho za nos') may seem to be absolute equivalents but according to Kvetko, the correct equivalent is *mat' niekoho okrutného okolo prsta*. The correct equivalent for *vodit' niekoho za nos* is the English idiom *lead somebody up the garden path* (Kvetko 2009, 55).

## 2.4 Perceptions and Observations of Other Linguists

As stated above, there is not a complete agreement among scholars on what types of expressions should be included in the group of idioms. Espinal and Mateu (2019) list different categories of idioms and formulaic language (proverbs, phrasal verbs, collocations, formulaic expressions, idioms, and others), and strictly emphasize that “these terms do in no way represent a systematic taxonomy of multiword units, and in fact describe different sets of idiomatic expressions” (2019, 4). Philip (2010) assigns the disunity among scholars to the “heterogeneity” of the group and, in contrast to Espinal and Mateu (2019), she would not include expressions such as collocations precisely in the group of idioms, although they evince certain idiomatic characteristics (2010, 266). Cooper states that idioms, metaphors, similes, and proverbs are all members of “nonliteral or figurative language” (1998, 255).

Grant and Bauer (2004) state that the disagreement on defining idioms create a great struggle for learners as well as teachers (2004, 44). They have introduced a narrower definition of idioms and speak about three main groups of MWUs: ‘core idioms’, ‘figuratives’, ‘ONCEs’, where the group of core idioms is the most problematic for learners and the group of figuratives is the broadest. In contrast to Makkai (1972) and Fernando (1996), Grant and Bauer (2004) do not consider phrasal verbs or compound nouns, adjectives, and verbs to be idioms. They have decided not to include phrasal verbs into the group of idioms due to their large number and because they believe that individual research should be devoted to them. (2004, 38–39). In terms of criteria, they consider “frozenness/fixedness, compositionality, and institutionalization” to be the reoccurring



features of idiom definitions which are interconnected; therefore, they mainly focus on (non-) compositionality, which they believe has not yet been well-defined (2004, 44–46).

Grant and Bauer point out that in case of idioms like *kick the bucket* or *red herring*, linguists do not have doubts about their idiomaticity, but it is not the case of other MWUs, e.g., *spill the beans*, *by and large* (2004, 44). This discrepancy can be observed between Fernando (1996) and Cieślícka (2015). While Fernando classifies, as already has been stated in chapter 2.2.1, the expression *spill the beans* as an invariant pure idiom, Cieślícka claims that there is an interconnection between the individual words and the figurative meaning (2015, 213). The linguists' different perceptions of idioms only show the complexity and difficulty to introduce one definition that would provide Czech learners of English with a simple determination which words or phrases still fit into this category.

Lastly, Liu has highlighted a possibility of incorrect information presented in bilingual dictionaries (2008, 165). This is an important observation for the foreign learners of English who may get confused by these inconsistencies among dictionaries when studying idioms. Seidl (1990) even claims that “it is extremely unwise to translate idioms into or from one's native language” (1990, 13). Liu recommends comparing the information from the bilingual dictionary with the one in a monolingual dictionary (2008, 165). An analysis of selected idiom equivalents among dictionaries is provided in chapter 5.3.3.1.

### 3 COMPREHENSION TECHNIQUES USED BY L2 LEARNERS

Learners of English may struggle with learning and understanding idioms. However, as Cooper (1999) has emphasized, it is very important for the learners to comprehend idioms because they are frequently used items of English language, both in spoken and written discourse (1999, 233). Liu describes four techniques that L2 learners usually use to help themselves with understanding the meaning of idioms. These techniques have been mentioned in several studies dedicated L2 idiom comprehension: ‘use of contextual information’, ‘use of L1’, ‘use of pragmatic knowledge/knowledge of the world’, and ‘use or interface of L1 cultural knowledge’ (2008, 65–73).

The most used technique in the process of understanding idioms by L2 learners is looking at the context. L2 learners try to look at the idiom from a bigger picture and the context of the whole sentence can help them to guess the meaning of the idiom itself. Although this technique was considered the most effective in several research, it does not mean that the L2 learners were always successful in guessing the meaning correctly. In fact, they were successful only in a little over half of the cases (Liu 2008, 66). Another technique that L2 learners have used is comparing the idioms with the equivalents in their mother tongue. However, this technique is highly dependent on whether the same or similar idiom exists in the target language (Liu 2008, 66–67).

The last two techniques are the ‘use of pragmatic knowledge or knowledge of the world’ and the ‘use or interference of L1 cultural knowledge’ (2008, 69–70). According to several studies that has Liu discussed, some L2 learners used their pragmatic knowledge and metaphorical associations to guess the meaning of the idioms which they were able to partially understand without the need to use their L1. However, just like the second technique (i.e., the comparison of the equivalents in L1 and L2), it cannot be applied in each case, because there are other factors that influence the understanding, e.g., cultural knowledge (Liu 2008, 69–71).

## **II. ANALYSIS**

## 4 METHODS AND SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF IDIOMS

To make the definition and classification of English idioms simpler for the Czech learners of English, three main characteristics of idioms have been selected that expressions must meet in order to be classified as idioms. Based on the selected characteristics and further analysis of selected idioms in chapter 5, the most appropriate classes of idioms from Fernando, Makkai, and Kvetkos' classifications are determined for the purpose of learning English idioms more effectively. The main characteristics (or criteria) on the basis of which expressions should be classified as idioms from the point of view of a Czech learner of English, are the following:

- a) multiple-word character,
- b) non-compositionality,
- c) relative fixedness and limited variations.

Two of these characteristics, namely 'non-compositionality' and 'frozenness/fixedness' have been claimed by Grant and Bauer to be the reoccurring features of idioms along with 'institutionalization' (2004, 44), as already stated in chapter 2.4. The last-mentioned have been replaced by the multiple-word character because it fits better the needs of foreign learners of English.

### 4.1.1 Multiple-word Character

The first important characteristic of idioms is their multiple-word structure. The general definition of idioms accepted among linguists states that idioms are multiword expressions. This means that even compounds can be included in the group of idioms. However, in contrast to Makkai (1972) and Fernando (1996), compound words are not considered multiword idioms in this thesis based on the observation made by Liu that L2 learners perceive any single word, although it might be idiomatic, as any other piece of vocabulary (2008, 15), which applies to Czech learners of English as a foreign language as well.

Moreover, as stated by Fernando (1996), although sentences are internally connected to multiword expressions (and words), they are "two different phenomena" (Fernando, 1996, 27). Based on her statement that idioms should be limited in size (1996, 40), expressions as long as sentences (hereinafter referred to as 'sentential expressions') are not considered idioms in this thesis, only the idiomaticity of proverbs is discussed in chapter 5.1.4. Criticism of including sentential expressions in the group of idioms is part of the evaluation of Makkai's classification in chapter 5.1.

#### 4.1.2 Non-compositionality

The second feature of idioms is a complete idiomatic meaning, i.e., the meaning of the idiom cannot be guessed from the individual words, nor can there be a connection between the literal and figurative meaning. This feature narrows down the total number of expressions classified as idioms for Czech learners of English a lot. Even though the generally accepted definition mentioned by scholars does not exclude the expressions of which the figurative meaning can help to guess the true meaning of the expression, to make it easier for the learner, a complete idiomatic meaning is required.

An important fact to consider is that each learner has a different level of cultural knowledge and they encountered and used different idioms during their learning process, therefore their perception of idioms in terms of their transparency (i.e., the expression and its meaning are connected) as well as opacity, is difficult to measure (Philip 2010, 266–267). This is the reason why the exclusion of transparent (or figurative) expressions, which do not have a completely idiomatic meanings, is appropriate for Czech learners of English because it is very difficult to presuppose which expressions will learners be able to interpret correctly and it would therefore be more appropriate to separate these expressions from idioms, just as Grant and Bauer (2004) have separated ‘core idioms’ and ‘figuratives’.

#### 4.1.3 Relative fixedness and Limited Variations

When classifying idioms, it is important to determine their degree of flexibility. Some idioms may undergo certain grammatical changes. For example, the idiom *pull someone’s leg* is typically used in the progressive aspect (in some cases also in the perfect aspect) and the present tense (Liu 2008, 170). However, changes in number would make some idioms literal, e.g., the idiom *kick the bucket* becomes literal when changed into *kick the buckets* (Makkai 1972, 149). Makkai has also claimed that it is not possible to make lexical changes like *kick the pail* or *strike the bucket* (1972, 150). On the other hand, Grant has stated that the idiom *red herring* can be used in plural and still remain in the group of ‘core idioms’ (2005, 441–442). Idioms therefore do allow certain types of variations, but the number of possible variations is limited. Philip states that idioms which do not have a completely fixed structure still have a “stable form” in which they are remembered (2010, 268). Based on these statements, expressions which are stable in form and allow limited number of variations (in vocabulary, grammar, number, etc.) are considered idioms in this thesis.

## 5 EVALUATIONS OF DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS

In this chapter, problems, and inconsistencies in Makkai, Fernando, and Kvetko's classifications are evaluated from the point of view of a learner of English as a foreign language. Evaluation of the usefulness of these classifications for the learners as well as analysis of the idiomaticity of chosen idioms, more precisely expressions which the linguists consider to be idioms, is provided in this chapter. In case of Makkai, a brief evaluation of his classification as a whole is provided, but the focus is mainly aimed at phrasal verbs, tournures irréversibles binominales, 'first base' idioms and proverbs.

### 5.1 Makkai

Makkai has introduced a broad and detailed classification of idioms. However, from the point of view of a Czech learner of English, Makkai's classification seems to be too broad and covering way too many different types of expressions. The previous chapter has determined, based on Liu (2008, 15), that only phrases with multiple-word structure should be considered idioms, because single words or compound words must be learned as any other vocabulary item. Therefore, three classes of the lexemic idioms, namely 'phrasal compounds', 'incorporating verbs', and 'pseudo-idioms' can be excluded from the group of idioms because most of them have a single word structure (although they are polymorphemic) therefore they do not fulfil the criterion for multiple-word structure. Additionally, not all of these expressions have a completely idiomatic meaning. For example, the expression *darkroom*, which was defined by Makkai as "a room in which film is made, handled, or developed and from which the actinic rays of light are excluded" (Makkai 1972, 322) implies that both of the lexemes 'dark' and 'room' are used with their literal meaning as the room where films are made must be dark because light could damage the photographic materials. This is the reason why these classes are not discussed any further.

In terms of sememic idioms, only 'first base idioms' and 'proverbial idioms' are discussed in the following sub-subchapters. The other types of expressions have a sentential structure which makes them different from most of the other idioms that are mostly phrases. Moreover, classes like 'idioms of institutionalized politeness', 'idioms of institutionalized detachment or indirectness', and 'idioms of proposals encoded as questions' have a sentential structure, where only a part of the sentence is idiomatic, therefore they do not fulfil the criterion of a complete idiomatic meaning. Although it is understandable that Makkai has included the class of 'idioms of institutionalized greeting'

because expressions like *How do you do?* cannot be answered literally, their sentential structure makes them different from the other idioms.

### 5.1.1 Tournures and ‘First Base’ idioms

Liu finds some of the classes in Makkai’s classification of idioms quite questionable and provides two reasons as his arguments. The first argument is that one of the sememic subcategorizations is called ‘first base’ idioms, but the idioms that fit into this category could fit into the lexemic subcategory called ‘tournures’ because “expressions that are based on cultural institutions” are more of “lexemes” than “complete statements” as all the other sememic idioms are (2008, 17–18). As a second argument, Liu states that various tournures are also connected to the cultural institutions, which is the main feature of the ‘first base’ idioms, therefore there is no clear distinction between those two subcategories (2008, 18). Although Makkai does not provide any list of the ‘first base’ idioms, except the two examples mentioned in Table 1. in this thesis, demonstrating more concretely which expressions has been categorized in this class, Liu (2008) has provided valid reasons for combining the two classes together. The culturally based character makes these two classes important for the Czech learners of English.

Compared to the other classes, the idioms classified as tournures fulfil the criteria established in the previous chapter the most. They are all multiword expressions, fixed in form and, predominantly, fully idiomatic. However, there are few expressions, where only one word is idiomatic, e.g., in the tournure *to miss the boat*, paraphrased by Makkai as “to miss one’s chance or opportunity” (1972, 331), only the word ‘boat’ is idiomatic, therefore this expression does not fit the second criterion of being fully idiomatic and should not be classified as an idiom.

### 5.1.2 Phrasal Verbs

Even though some phrasal verbs evince idiomaticity, e.g., because their meaning cannot always be interpreted literally from the individual parts, they have their own rules in terms of structure and division. In general, they mostly occur in four different structures: *verb + adverb*, *verb + preposition*, *verb + particle + preposition*, and *verb + adverb + object* (Kvetko 2009, 21). Moreover, phrasal verbs are mostly taught in smaller parts throughout the lessons in Czech schools and separate exercises in coursebooks are often devoted to them. They are also explained separately in the grammar section of the coursebooks.

The issue presented by Makkai that verbs and adverbs occur very often together in English (1972, 135–137), could make classification of phrasal verbs as idioms quite



confusing. Since some phrasal verbs have a literal meaning only, they should not be included in the group of idioms. Although Liu states that most phrasal verbs should be classified as idioms because they do not have a literal meaning (or they are semi-literal in meaning) and are mostly fixed in form (2008, 21–23), Grant and Bauers' statement that phrasal verbs deserve an individual focus (2004, 39) makes more sense for the Czech learners of English. Therefore, phrasal verbs should be separated from idioms and hold a separate position in learners' lexicon.

### 5.1.3 Irreversible Binomials

The group of 'irreversible binomials' is quite questionable, mainly their idiomaticity, because some binomials seem to be more idiomatic than others. For example, the binomial *salt and pepper* is more of a literal collocation, however the binomial *pepper and salt*, which means "greying hair" (Makkai 1972, 316) is fully idiomatic. The binomial *by and large* has even been classified by Grant (2005, 434) as a 'core idiom'. However, there are many binomials which Makkai classifies as non-idiomatic binomials, e.g., *assets and liabilities*, *fish and chips*, or *this and that* (Makkai 1972, 316–317). For the reason of high number of binomials and the fact that not all binomials are fully idiomatic, they should rather be treated as a separate category of expressions showing idiomaticity.

### 5.1.4 Proverbs

As has been discussed previously, Makkai and Kvetko include proverbs into the group of idioms. However, proverbs are usually not completely idiomatic, but rather figurative, as can be seen in the following examples which Makkai has included in the class of 'proverbial idioms with a moral' (Makkai 1972, 176):

(1) *Birds of a feather flock together.*

Meaning: "something that you say which means people who have similar characters or similar interests will often choose to spend time together" (Walter 2006, 34).

(2) *Too many cooks spoil the broth.*

Meaning: "something that you say which means that if too many people try to work on the same piece of work, they will spoil it" (Walter 2006, 81).

(3) *Don't carry coals to Newcastle.*

Meaning: "to take something to a place or a person that has a lot of that thing already" (Walter 2006, 76).

All these proverbs have a figurative meaning. In case of the example (1), the first part *birds of a feather* implies people who have something in common, and the second part *flock together* implies that these people tend to seek each other's company. Moreover, there is a Czech equivalent *vrána k vráně sedá (rovný rovného si hledá)* (Bočánková and Kalina 2007, 274), in which *vrána* means 'crow', therefore if the Czech learner knows the Czech proverb, they should not have a problem to uncover the meaning of the English proverb since in both languages a bird is the main element of the expression. The example (2) should not be a problem for the Czech learners of English either as the literal meaning of the proverb implies the figurative meaning explained above.

The last example (3) could be problematic for the learners if they do not know the history of Newcastle where coal used to be mined, as noted in the *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* (Walter 2006, 76). Lack of cultural knowledge is one of two things which Liu considers to be the reasons why learners may find proverbs difficult to acquire (2008, 101). The second reason is the sentential structure which means that they are "much longer and more complex than the other types of idioms" (2008, 101). However, as has been demonstrated on the examples above, there are proverbs which are not completely idiomatic, and their sentential structure makes them different from the other idioms, therefore they should not be included in the group of idioms.

Bočánková and Kalina, the authors of *Česko-anglický frazeologický slovník* 'Czech-English Phraseological Dictionary' and *Anglicko-český frazeologický slovník* 'English-Czech Phraseological Dictionary,' have decided to include proverbs in their dictionaries, but they have devoted them an independent second section at the end of the dictionaries. They state in the introduction that proverbs are connected, although indirectly, to the field of phraseology and idiomaticity (2004, 5; 2007, 7). This tendency to give proverbs a separate section implies that they are different from the other expressions in the dictionary and therefore should be treated as such.

## 5.2 Fernando

The main reason why Fernando's classification of idioms could be problematic for the Czech learners of English is that she puts many different types of expressions into one group. Liu states that Fernando's classification, although simpler than Makkai's classification, can be quite difficult to apply mainly because of the possibility of some idioms to be on the line of two classes. However, he highlights the division of all the tree classes into 'invariant idioms' and 'idioms of restricted variance' which could be useful for

L2 learners in better understanding the structure of idioms (2008, 18–19). The following sub-subchapters argue that this type of classification includes a large number of different types of expressions and therefore is too broad for the Czech learners of English and that not all of the included expressions fulfil the established criteria for idioms. All examples come from Fernando (1996, 32) and their meanings comes from the *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* (Walter 2006) or the *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

### 5.2.1 Pure Idioms

Pure idioms meet the criterion of limited number of variations of lexical items. However, Fernando has included compound words in this class, which Czech learners must remember as a new vocabulary item, and therefore should not be included in the group of idioms. The following analysis discusses the differences between expressions which has Fernando included in the same group, as well as their idiomaticity.

**Table 2. Chosen examples of non-literal invariant expressions**

Expression	Meaning
Chinwag	“A long and pleasant conversation between friends” (Cambridge Dictionary n.d.)
Smell a rat	“To start to believe that something is wrong about a situation, especially that someone is being dishonest” (Walter 2006, 385)

*Source:* Expressions taken from Chitra Fernando 1996, 32; meanings quoted from Cambridge Dictionary n.d. and Elizabeth Walter 2006, 385.

The first expression *chinwag* is a compound and therefore belongs to the group of expressions which learners must learn as a new vocabulary item. Moreover, Liu has noted that people would find *chinwag* to be more literal than other expressions such as *foot the bill* (2008, 18). Although the expression is fixed in form, it does not fulfil the other two criteria and should not be included in the group of idioms.

In case of the second expression *smell a rat*, the criteria for multiword expression and being stable in form are satisfied. The last criterion of non-compositionality is questionable in this case and depends highly on the learners’ ability to realize that the word ‘rat’ may imply a dishonest person. However, the meanings of the individual words do not imply the meaning of the expression and therefore it should be considered an idiom.

**Table 3. Chosen examples of non-literal expressions of restricted variance**

<b>Expression</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Pitter-patter/pit-a-pat	“A series of quick, light knocking sounds” (Cambridge Dictionary n.d.)
Get/have cold feet	“To suddenly become too frightened to do something you had planned to do, especially something important like getting married” (Walter 2006, 78)

*Source:* Expressions taken from Chitra Fernando 1996, 32; meanings quoted from Cambridge Dictionary n.d. and Elizabeth Walter 2006, 76.

The group of pure idioms should include expressions whose meaning cannot be interpreted from the individual parts, which would imply that they fulfil the criterion of a complete idiomatic meaning. However, the word *patter* is defined by the online *Cambridge Dictionary* as “the sound of a lot of things gently and repeatedly hitting a surface” (Cambridge Dictionary n.d.), therefore the expression contains a word with a literal meaning and is rather a semi-idiom than a pure idiom. On the contrary, the expression to *get/have cold feet* has a multiple-word structure, the meaning of the individual words does not correspond with the meaning of the whole idiom and is variance-restricted, therefore fulfils all the three criteria of being an idiom.

### 5.2.2 Semi-literal Idioms

All the idioms included in the list of semi-literal idioms in Fernando’s classification, e.g., *drop names*, or *foot the bill*, do fulfil the criteria of multiple-word character but they are not fully idiomatic as they contain at least one word with literal meaning. However, the group of invariant semi-literal idioms could be important for the Czech learners of English because when the learner encounter with these expressions for the first time, they may get confused whether the expression is completely idiomatic or if there is a literal word which could help them to guess the meaning of the whole phrase.

### 5.2.3 Literal Idioms

The last group of expressions in Fernando’s classification are literal idioms. As their name implies, they do not fulfil the criterion of a fully idiomatic meaning. Moreover, as stated by Liu, L2 learners usually do not have many problems understanding literal idioms (2008, 16), therefore these expressions should not be considered idioms at all.

### 5.3 Czech and English Equivalents Based on Kvetko's Classification

Kvetko (2009) has compared English and Slovak expressions which he considers to be idioms according to their level of similarity. This chapter evaluates Kvetko's categorization into equivalents in terms of comparing English and Czech expressions. Observations from other linguists regarded valuable in terms of learning idioms as a Czech learner of English in this thesis are also provided.

#### 5.3.1 Absolute Equivalents

Liu points out that a couple of studies showed that learners believed L2 equivalents of L1 idioms to be ungrammatical (Jordens 1977, Kellerman 1979) and preferred the avoidance of identical phrasal verbs (Hulstijin and Marchena 1989). Another study (Abdullah and Jackson 1998) has shown that learners were scared to use absolute equivalents in their translation of Syrian idioms into English because they assumed that such idioms do not exist in English (2008, 102). The fact that some students would rather avoid the word for word translation of idioms from their L1 into L2, could indicate that also for Czech learners of English is important to be aware of the fact that some idioms may have equivalents in other languages, which have the same or similar structure. Moreover, the learners of English should be aware of false friends as well. Despite of this possible inconvenience, Liu states that similar equivalents are generally easier to understand, and learners do not have much trouble remembering them. However, it is still important to introduce them to the learners because they need to realise that the similar equivalents do appear in the second language, so that they avoid the confusion mentioned in the first paragraph (2008, 112).

#### 5.3.2 Relative Equivalents

The group of equivalents which Kvetko calls the 'relative equivalents proper' could be quite problematic for L2 learners. As explained above, equivalents consisting of completely different words, symbolism and imagery are included in this subcategory. However, the expressions included are so different from each other that for the purpose of making it easier for L2 learners, different approach should be adapted and possibly not all of these expressions should be included in the group of idioms. Let's compare two expressions that Kvetko has included in this category—*kick the bucket* and *out of the frying pan into the fire*.

### Kick the Bucket

This idiom probably comes from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when animals (some sources mention pigs specifically) were slaughtered in the meat industry. Dead animals were then hung by their feet on a beam and because of a post-mortal spasm they kicked the beam. And since the beam (or yoke as mentioned in the source) used to be called a ‘bucket’ in the dialect of that time, the animal literally ‘kicked the bucket’ and the phrase with the meaning ‘to die’ was formed (Liu 2008, 18; Carrol 2019, 23).

Knowing about the origin of this idiom could help Czech learners of English to associate the true meaning with the expression because they would understand the underlying connection between them. This method of learning about the origin of idioms for better memorizing of idioms has been also introduced by Liu (2008, 161) along with (among other methods) the “semantic association” which is based on the creation of a link between the given idiom and other expressions with the same meaning (2008, 160). Of course, students need to be aware of the type of the context idioms can be used in. *Kick the bucket* is not the type of an expression a person would use when talking about someone close to them (Liu 2008, 35).

As has already been mentioned in the theoretical part, the idiom is fixed in terms of number (*\*kick the buckets*) but can be limitedly changed according to the tense of the sentence it appears in (*he kicked the bucket*, but *\*he is going to kick the bucket* or *\*he is kicking the bucket*). Other changes, in terms of changing the noun, changing the article *the* to an indefinite article or using the noun in plural, are not possible (Liu 2008, 8–9; Makkai 1972, 150) This is also important for students to learn and understand.

However, the expression itself or the individual words do not indicate what the true meaning is at all and for the Czech learners of English could be almost impossible to understand the expression without more information from the context which would indicate the true meaning of the idiom. One could assume that example sentences in dictionaries should accentuate the meaning of the idiom. However, the analysis of the example sentences from *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* (Walter 2006) and *Oxford Idioms (dictionary for learners of English)* (Oxford Idioms Dictionary 2001), shows that in some cases, not even context conveys the meaning accurately.

- (4) Didn't you hear? He *kicked the bucket*. Had a heart attack, I think. (Walter 2006, 220)
- (5) He got married for the first time when he was 85 and a week later he *kicked the bucket*. (Oxford Idioms Dictionary 2001, 191)

In case of both example sentences, the additional information around the idiom does not necessarily accentuate the true meaning of the idiom. Although the additional sentence “He had a heart attack, I think,” was probably intended to explain the meaning of the idiom, the fact that someone has a heart attack does not necessarily imply that they died because of it. Therefore, one could also assume that the person ended up in hospital and is still alive. In case of the second sentence, the age of the person should probably imply that he died soon after the marriage. However, the idiom could possibly mean ‘apply for divorce,’ although it may seem less likely. These examples show that the context does not always accentuate the meaning of the idiom, even in case of dictionaries.

### **Out of the Frying Pan (and) into the Fire**

In contrast to *kick the bucket*, this expression is a proverb, and its figurative meaning indicates the literal meaning “to go from a bad situation to an even worse one” (Walter 2006, 214). Moreover, because of the existing Czech equivalents that are similar to this idiom—*z deště pod okap* ‘out of the rain under the gutter’ and *z bláta do louže* ‘out of the mud into the puddle’—the Czech learner of English can quite easily associate the English idiom with the Czech equivalent, which will make it easier for them to remember and use the idiom (provided he was already presented with the possibility of the existence of the same and similar idioms in both languages, as has been suggested when discussing complete equivalents).

The comparison of the idiom *kick the bucket* and the proverb *out of the frying pan into the fire* clearly shows that they are different from each other. *Kick the bucket* is a completely idiomatic idiom, while the proverb clearly suggests the intended meaning. The knowledge of relative equivalents could help the Czech learner to store the expressions in their lexicon, because they have a Czech expression to connect with the English one. However, Kvetko’s inclusion of very different expressions into the same group is not ideal and it would be more appropriate to narrow down the group of idioms first and then find the relative equivalents.

### **5.3.3 Deceptive equivalents**

The group of false friend idioms is relatively small, but definitely worth mentioning mainly because of the confusion that this group could possibly cause to the Czech learners of English. This type of idioms has the same “form” in L1 and L2, but the meanings of the individual phrases are different. The analysis of the false friend equivalents among

dictionaries shows that a large number of equivalents are usually presented and, in some cases, there is no consensus on the correct equivalents to English idioms.

### 5.3.3.1 Analysis of a Selected False Friend Idiom

As stated in the chapter 2.3.3, Kvetko (2009) finds the English idiom *lead sb by the nose* to be a false friend to the Slovak expression *vodit' niekoho za nos* (Czech 'vodit někoho za nos'). The correct equivalent for the Slovak expression, and therefore for the Czech expression as well, should be the English idiom *lead somebody up the garden path*. However, there is no absolute agreement on the correct equivalent among dictionaries and sometimes, more options are presented which could be confusing for the Czech learners of English. This is demonstrated in the following comparison of equivalents found in selected dictionaries.

**Table 4. CZE-ENG dictionary by Bočánková and Kalina (2004)**

Czech expression	English equivalent
Tahat koho za nos, utahovat si z koho, tropit si z koho šašky (216)	Pull sb's leg, lead sb up the garden path, take sb for a ride
Vodit koho za nos (245)	Lead sb by the nose, lead sb up the garden path, mess/muck sb about st, take the mickey out of sb, put on a show for sb's benefit, give sb the roundabout, take sb for a ride
Věšet komu bulíky na nos (243)	Pull the wool over sb's eyes, put one across sb, spin sb a yarn, tell sb tall stories, pull sb's leg, lead sb by the nose

Source: Expressions taken from Bočánková and Kalina 2004, 216, 243, 245.

The first dictionary *Česko-anglický frazeologický slovník* 'Czech-English Phraseological Dictionary' written by Bočánková and Kalina (2004) which introduces English equivalents for Czech expressions sometime presents more than one equivalent. In case of the first phrase *tahat koho za nos*, other two variations of the Czech phrase are provided and one of the three English equivalents—*lead somebody up the garden path*—corresponds with the translation introduced by Kvetko. However, in case of the second Czech phrase *vodit koho za nos*, not only that both idioms *lead somebody by the nose* and *lead somebody up the garden path* are presented as the equivalents to the Czech expressions, but other five English idioms are also introduced as possible equivalents, which is very confusing for the learners of English.



**Table 5. ENG-CZE dictionary by Bočánková and Kalina (2007)**

English idiom	Czech equivalent
Lead sb by the nose	Věšet komu bulíky na nos (142)
Don't lead me up the garden path	Netahej mě za nos (142)

Source: Bočánková and Kalina 2007, 142.

This has changed in the second dictionary *Anglicko-český frazeologický slovník* 'English-Czech Phraseological Dictionary,' also written by Bočánková and Kalina (2007), in which only one Czech equivalent is presented for each English idiom and the Czech phrase *netahej mě za nos* is presented as the equivalent to the English idiom *don't lead me up the garden path*, which corresponds with Kvetko. In case of the English idiom *lead somebody by the nose*, the only Czech equivalent presented is *věšet komu bulíky na nos*, which has not been mentioned by Kvetko, but can be found in the first dictionary by Bočánková and Kalina (2004), in which five English expressions have been suggested as the equivalents.

**Table 6. CZE-ENG dictionary by Chromečka (2004)**

Czech expression	English equivalent
Vodit koho za nos (34)	Lead sb by the nose
Věšet komu bulíky na nos (34)	Pull the wool over sb's eyes
Not found	Lead sb up the garden path

Source: Chromečka 2004, 34.

*Stručný česko-anglický slovník frází a idiomů* 'A Brief Czech-English Dictionary of Phrases and Idioms' written by Chromečka (2004) presents only one equivalent for each Czech expression. Interestingly, the English expression *lead somebody by the nose* is presented as a corresponding equivalent to the Czech expression *vodit koho za nos*, which Kvetko (2009) has stated clearly to be the false friend. Moreover, the English equivalent *lead somebody up the garden path* has not been linked to any of the Czech expressions.

**Table 7. ENG-CZE dictionary by Krouhlik and Krouhliková (1993)**

English idiom	Czech equivalent
Lead sb by the nose	Not found
Lead sb up the garden path	Vodit za nos (102)

Source: Krouhlik and Krouhliková 1993, 102.

The last dictionary *Anglicko-český slovník idiomů (a ustálených rčení metaforických, obrazných a lidových* ‘English-Czech Dictionary of Idioms (and Set Sayings Metaphorical, Figurative and Vernacular)’ by Krouhlik and Krouhliková (1993) provides as the Czech equivalent *vodit za nos* to the English idiom *lead somebody up the garden path*. This corresponds to the Kvetko’s (2009) statement that these two expressions are the correct equivalents. However, in contrast to the other dictionaries discussed above, this dictionary does not provide any equivalent to the English idiom *lead somebody by the nose*.

One more dictionary has been found during the analysis of Czech and English idiomatic equivalents. The dictionary *1000 anglických frází* ‘1000 English phrases’ contains translations of English expressions along with example sentences, which are also translated to Czech. What is interesting about this dictionary is that it has been translated from a German original *1000 englische Redensarten*. Translating idioms through another language could cause even more differences in the choice of the correct equivalents.

## 6 THE MOST BENEFICIAL CLASSES OF IDIOMS FOR CZECH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

Makkai's classification is useful in the sense that it shows how idiomaticity is interconnected via different expressions no matter if it is a single compound word or a whole sentence. However, it can also cause confusion as it is too broad. Therefore, the most useful and important classes for the Czech learners of English are tournure idioms and first base idioms which, as Liu (2008) has suggested, are interconnected.

In terms of Fernando's perception of idioms, the statement that some expressions may express idiomaticity even though they are not idioms is certainly valid and learners of English should be aware of it. However, since some of the idioms in Fernando's classification may fit into more than one category, and as has been demonstrated in the analysis, not all pure idioms are completely idiomatic, there is a reason to believe that for foreign learners it is not well-defined. Pure idioms and semi-idioms shall be fine-tuned and specified more strictly to fit the needs of learners of English.

The comparison of English and Czech false friend equivalents, based on Kvetko's comparison of English and Slovak equivalents, has shown that bilingual dictionaries may sometimes confuse the learner as they offer more than one equivalent and usually do not provide any example sentences where the learner could see the context in which these expressions are normally used. Moreover, the inconsistencies discovered in the translation of false friends among dictionaries support what Liu (2008) has brought attention to—that the learner should rather use an English dictionary with thorough description of the idioms' meanings. However, the Czech learners of English should know about the existence of different types of equivalents, especially false friends which may cause them to use certain idioms incorrectly. Absolute equivalents are also important for the learners because, as has been pointed out by Liu (2008), they are the easiest to understand.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to find the most beneficial classes of idioms based on evaluation of three selected classifications of idioms as a Czech learner of English as a foreign language. Three main characteristics of idioms have been introduced which helped to establish which expressions should be included in the group of idioms to make learning and understanding idioms easier for the Czech learners of English. Based on the analysis of different classes of idioms and expressions belonging to these classes, the tournure idioms and first base idioms, which are the classes introduced by Makkai, have been determined to fulfil the three main characteristics of idioms established for the analysis.

The analysis of selected idioms from Fernando's classification showed that the classification includes expressions which do not fulfil the established characteristics of idioms. Moreover, some idioms which Fernando included in the class of pure idioms are not fully idiomatic and rather belongs to the group of semi-literal idioms. On the other hand, the group of semi-idioms could be important for the Czech learners of English because they may consider these idioms to be fully idiomatic, although they are not.

Kvetko's classification showed that he includes very different types of expressions in the same group of idioms. Additional analysis of the group of false friend equivalents revealed inconsistencies in the choice of expressions presented as equivalents among different dictionaries. In some cases, the dictionaries presented both the corresponding expression as well as the false friend expression as the correct equivalents to one phrase, or only provided the incorrect false friend as an equivalent.

The evaluation of classifications has therefore proved that the classifications are too broad for the Czech learners of English. The main reason is that they include expressions which are not fully idiomatic and different types of expressions are included in the same classes of idioms. However, certain classes are valuable for the Czech learners of English because they meet the generally accepted characteristics of idioms, or they provide useful insights which can help the learner in idiom comprehension.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Abdullah, K., and H. Jackson. 1998. "Idioms and the Language Learner: Contrasting English and Syrian Arabic." *Language in Contrast*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January): 83–107.
- Bočánková, Milena, and Miroslav Kalina. 2004. *Česko-anglický frazeologický slovník: hovorové výrazy, idiomy, česko-anglická přísloví* [Czech-English Phraseological Dictionary: Colloquial Expressions, Idioms, Czech-English Proverbs]. Praha: Ekopress.
- Bočánková, Milena, and Miroslav Kalina. 2007. *Anglicko-český frazeologický slovník: ustálené fráze, expresivní výrazy a idiomy, anglicko-česká přísloví* [English-Czech Phraseological Dictionary: Set Phrases, Expressive Phrases and Idioms, English-Czech Proverbs]. Praha: Ekopress.
- Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English. 2001. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cambridge Dictionary. n.d. Accessed March, 2024. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>.
- Carrol, Gareth. 2019. "The Changing Face of English Idioms." *Babel: The Language Magazine*, vol. 26, pp. 21–25.
- Čermák, František. 2007. *Frazeologie a idiomatika česká a obecná / Czech and General Phraseology*. Prague: Karolinum.
- Chromečka, Julius. 2004. *Stručný česko-anglický slovník frází a idiomů* [A Brief Czech-English Dictionary of Phrases and Idioms]. Praha: Montanex.
- Ciešlicka, Anna B. 2015. "Idiom Acquisition and Processing by Second/Foreign Language Learners." *Bilingual Figurative Language Processing*: 208–244. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139342100.012>.
- Cooper, Thomas C. 1998. "Teaching Idioms." *Foreign Language Annals* 31, no. 2. 255–266.
- Cooper, Thomas C. 1999. "Processing of Idioms by L2 Learners of English." *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 2 (Summer): 233–262.
- Espinal, M. Teresa, and Jaume Mateu. 2019. "Idioms and Phraseology." *Oxford Research Encyclopedias, Linguistics*. (May): 1–37. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.51>.
- Fernando, Chitra. 1996. *Idioms and Idiomaticity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fraser, B. 1970. "Idioms within a Transformational Grammar." *Foundations of Language*, vol. 6, no. 1 (February): 22–42.

- Grant, Lynn, and Laurie Bauer. 2004. "Criteria for Re-defining Idioms: Are We Barking up the Wrong Tree?" *Applied Linguistics*, 25, no. 1 (March): 38–61.
- Grant, Lynn. 2005. "Frequency of 'Core Idioms' in the British National Corpus (BNC)." *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*. (November): 429–451.
- Hockett, C. F. 1958. *A Course in Modern Linguistics*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hulstijn, J. H., and E. Marchena. 1989. "Avoidance: Grammatical or Semantic Causes?" *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 11, no. 3 (September): 241–255.
- Jordens, P. 1977. "Rules, Grammatical Intuitions and Strategies in Foreign Language Learning." *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, vol. 2, no. 2, 5–76.
- Katz, J. J., and P. Postal. 1963. "Semantic Interpretation of Idioms and Sentences Containing Them." *MIT Research Laboratory of Electronic Quarterly Progress Report*, no. 70: 275–282.
- Kellerman, E. 1979. "Transfer and Non-transfer: Where We Are Now." *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 2, no. 1: 37–57.
- Krouhlik, Břetislav, and Barbora Krouhliková. 1993. *Anglicko-český slovník idiomů (a ustálených rčení metaforických, obrazných a lidových)* [English-Czech Dictionary of Idioms (and Set Sayings Metaphorical, Figurative and Vernacular)]. Praha: Svoboda-Libertas.
- Kvetko, Pavol. 2006. *An Outline of English Phraseology*. 2nd ed. Trnava: Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave.
- Liu, Dilin. 2008. *Idioms: Description, Comprehension, Acquisition, and Pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Makkai, Adam. 1972. *Idiom Structure in English*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Malkiel, Yakov. 1959. "Studies in Irreversible Binomials." *Lingua*, vol. 8, 113–160.
- Nunberg, Geoffrey, Ivan A. Sag, and Thomas Wasow. 1994. "Idioms." *Language* 70, No. 3 (September): 491–538. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/416483>.
- Philip, Gill S. 2010. "Idioms." *The Routledge Linguistics Encyclopedia*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge. 266–269.
- Seidl, Jennifer. 1990. *English Idioms*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Walter, Elizabeth, ed. 2006. *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- 1000 anglických frází (ustálená slovní spojení, idiomy, fráze)* [1000 English Phrases (Set Phrases, Idioms, Phrases)]. 2009. Praha: Grada Publishing, a. s.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

L1	First language
L2	Second language
MWU	Multiword expression
ONCEs	One non-compositional elements
Sb	Somebody
Sb's	Somebody's

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. The classification of sememic idioms.....	17
Table 2. Chosen examples of non-literal invariant expressions .....	32
Table 3. Chosen examples of non-literal expressions of restricted variance.....	33
Table 4. CZE-ENG dictionary by Bočánková and Kalina (2004).....	37
Table 5. ENG-CZE dictionary by Bočánková and Kalina (2007).....	38
Table 6. CZE-ENG dictionary by Chromečka (2004).....	38
Table 7. ENG-CZE dictionary by Krouhlík and Krouhlíková (1993).....	38