



Bakalářská práce

A Contrastive Analysis of English and Czech Idioms Related to Nature

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A Contrastive Analysis of English and Czech Idioms Related to Nature

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Zásady pro vypracování:

Bakalářská práce bude zkoumat vybrané anglické a české idiomy s motivem 'příroda'. Hlavním cílem práce bude analyzovat idiomy z hlediska sémantického a formálního, etymologického a (jejich regionální variace) a dále také z hlediska hlavní fráze, která může být nominální, adjektivní, slovesná, předložková či příslovečná. Práce bude rozdělena do dvou částí. Hlavní výzkumnou otázkou této srovnávací analýzy bude, do jaké míry se vybraná kategorie idiomů v anglickém a českém jazyce navzájem shoduje s přihlédnutím k již zmíněným kritériím. V teoretické části bude definován pojem idiom a jeho základní charakteristiky, dále popis funkcí a struktury idiomů a zejména několik možných druhů dělení idiomů. V praktické části bude provedena srovnávací analýza vybraných idiomů.

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Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou vybraných českých a anglických idiomů se zaměřením na přírodu. Zkoumá tři kategorie, jako jsou zvířata, počasí a další různé přírodní živly. Hlavním cílem práce bylo analyzovat idiomy z hlediska sémantického a formálního, etymologického a (jejich regionální variace) a dále také z hlediska hlavní fráze, která může být nominální, adjektivní, slovesná, předložková či příslovečná. Práce byla rozdělena do dvou částí. V teoretické části byl definován pojem idiom a jeho základní charakteristiky, dále popis funkcí a struktury idiomů a zejména několik možných druhů dělení idiomů. V praktické části byly analyzovány idiomatické výrazy z hledisek výše uvedených. Výsledky ukázaly, že většina idiomatických dvojic je částečně korespondujících. Tyto dvojice korespondují na lexikální a syntaktické úrovni nebo pouze na sémantické úrovni, ale také musí obsahovat zvíře. Výsledky týkající se hlavní fráze dokazují, že většina vybraných idiomů působí jako nominální fráze v obou jazycích.

Klíčová slova

idiomy, sémantika, význam, etymologie, regionální variace, hlavní fráze, korespondence

Abstract

This bachelor's thesis deals with the analysis of selected Czech and English idioms related to nature. It concentrates on three categories like animals, weather and other miscellaneous natural elements. The main aim of this thesis was to analyze idioms from the point of view of semantic and formal, etymological and (their regional variations) and also from the point of view of the main phrase, which can be nominal, adjectival, verbal, prepositional or adverbial. The thesis was divided into two parts. In the theoretical part, the definition of an idiom and its basic characteristics were explained, as well as a description of the functions and structure of idioms and several possible types of division of idioms. In the practical part, idiomatic expressions were analyzed from the points of view already mentioned. The results showed that most idiomatic pairs are partially corresponding, which means that they agree on the lexical and syntactical level or only on the semantic level, but the two idioms have to contain an animal. The results concerning the main phrase demonstrated that most of the selected idioms act as nominal phrases in both languages.

Key words

idioms, semantics, meaning, etymology, regional variations, main phrase, correspondence

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List of Abbreviations

BNC – British National Corpus

COCA – American English Corpus

CNC – Czech National Corpus

N – Noun

Adj – Adjective

Adv – Adverb

V – Verb

Prep – Preposition

Conj. – Conjunction

Introduction

This thesis is a comparative analysis of Czech and English idioms related to nature. It deals with three categories such as animals, weather and other miscellaneous natural elements. There are many idioms related to nature that is why this category was selected. The main aim of the thesis is to analyze the selected idioms from the point of view of semantic and formal, etymological and (their regional variations) and also from the point of view of the main phrase, which can be nominal, adjectival, verbal, prepositional or adverbial. Furthermore, the type of correspondence is stated.

The theoretical part provides the definition of an idiom in general and by linguists, the origin of idioms, use of idioms, function of idioms and it explains the regional variations. Furthermore, information about semantics, the structure of idioms which may be nominal, adjectival, verbal, prepositional or adverbial is provided and the types of correspondence are explained along with the method of gathering information.

The analytical part consists of analyzing the idioms as already mentioned above. It is divided into three categories (animals, weather and other miscellaneous natural elements). In the end of this thesis the idioms are put into figures depending on their level of correspondence and their main phrase.

The theoretical part provides useful information for translators. Analyzing idioms helps translators and interpreters in finding equivalent expressions in languages, maintaining the original meaning and cultural context.

The practical part provides students and teachers of English a short dictionary of idioms. Students can understand the formation of idioms and the literal translation from the examples in the tables. Teachers can implement the tables from this analysis into teaching and make learning entertaining. This analysis could also be useful for future studies. Potential

students who are interested in expanding this dictionary could address a different category of idioms.

1. Theoretical Framework

The following chapters will discuss idioms in more detail regarding their definitions from general sources, origin, usage, function and lastly, their regional variations.

1.1. Definition of Idioms

It is complex to define idioms, because of their differential characteristics. An idiom is a type of compound word made up of two or more words. These words can be used in other phrases or alone, but they have different meanings in those cases. They only keep the idiom's meaning when used together in the specific phrase. The characteristics of the words can vary, changing the nature of the idiom. This is why there is not just one definition for the term idiom. Every author focuses on different characteristics. Kavka (2003, 16) states: “the category can be defined in different ways for diverse purposes.”

The following chapters will attempt to provide various definitions from linguistic scholars and explore the criteria that distinguish idioms from other language expressions.

1.1.1. General Definition

Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1976, 533) defines an idiom as “peculiarity of phraseology approved by usage though having meaning not deducible from those of the separate words.”

However, Webster's New World Dictionary (1991, 670) gives a more detail-oriented definition: “a phrase, construction, or expression that is recognized as a unit in the usage of a given language and either differs from the usual syntactic patterns or has a meaning that differs from the literal meaning of its parts taken together.”

The third source, The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy (2004) explains that an idiom is “a traditional way of saying something. Often an idiom, such as “under the weather,”

does not seem to make sense if taken literally. Someone unfamiliar with English idioms would probably not understand that to be “under the weather” is to be sick.”

To sum up, there are multiple definitions of what an idiom is, but still, most of them share a similar point of view of this term. Idioms are frequently used expressions which are put together in a way that does not seem logical and their meaning cannot be understood from the individual words and their grammatical relationships. An idiom is also considered a single unit in a language and it can have a different structure from usual patterns.

1.1.2. Linguists’ Definitions of Idioms

Čermák (2007, 74) states that idioms are known to be the most significant part of stereotypes, particularly verbal. A *language stereotype* is a lexical combination entering a text as a unit that is fixed and also as a unit with an underlying model with similarly small or almost non-existent productivity.

A different definition by Čermák clarifies that “the idiom can be viewed as a unique and fixed combination of at least two elements some of which do not function in the same way in any other combination (of the kind) or occur only in a highly restricted number” (Čermák 2007, 142). He also talks about anomalous features of idioms and explains that “the more anomalies a phraseme displays, the more idiomatic it is and vice versa” (Čermák, 2007, 84).

Seidl and McMordie (1978, 5) state that there are distinct sources of idioms and one of the most important things about idioms is their meaning, because if the source of an idiom is known, it is sometimes easier to imagine its meaning. In addition, they also take different forms or structures. Idioms either appear quite short or very long. Most of the time, idioms consist of some combination of nouns and adjectives. But also, they can have a regular structure, an irregular or even a grammatically incorrect structure.

In communication, the area of motivation from which idioms stem is significant. Čechová (2017, 153) clarifies that the most common sources of inspiration for idiom creation often come from the realm of the human body therefore phraseology has an anthropocentric character (frequent key expressions being names of body parts and organs such as head, tongue, foot, hand, heart).

Lastly, from the perspective of different authors: “idioms are expressions whose meaning is often difficult to understand by looking at the individual words. Seeing idioms in context can sometimes make them clearer” (Gairns and Redman 2013, 14).

To conclude, according to Čermák idioms are fixed word combinations used in language. Secondly, Seidl and McMordie explain that idioms come from various sources and can vary in form, often combining nouns and adjectives. Thirdly, Čechová notes that idioms are often inspired by the human body. In general, idioms are expressions whose meanings are hard to understand from individual words but can be clarified by context.

1.1.3. Definition for this Thesis

There are many definitions concerning idioms, but for the purposes of this thesis, idioms are defined as a group of words that hold either all or most of the following features:

- the meaning cannot be figured out from its parts
- the idiom is a combination of at least two words
- they are included in the idiom dictionary
- their origin is not always known
- ready-made expressions
- economical quality - idioms use few words to express a concept
- they have a limited ability of grammatical and lexical variation

The most suitable explanation of an idiom for this thesis is that it is a fixed combination of two or more words which has a different meaning than the individual words alone. This might be confusing for foreign speakers.

1.2. Origin of Idioms

The origins of some idioms are clear, however some are unknown. Although many idioms originate from metaphors or metonymy, their frequent use often leads people to think of them in their idiomatic sense rather than their original metaphorical meaning. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the idiom “the apple of my eye” is thought to be derived from Old English *āpul* (meaning fruit) and *ġeógn* (meaning eye). However, idioms originate from different languages. Many come from influential languages like Latin and French and also Greek mythology influenced many idioms.

Kvetko explains that “idioms are formed by the idiomatization of free word groups and fixed word combinations, idiomatic derivation from the existing idioms, or by borrowing” (Kvetko 2006, 23).

In general, idioms can often be traced back to historical events, cultural references, literary works, folklore, or practical situations. Over time, these phrases became ingrained in language and evolved into expressions with figurative meanings that may not be directly related to their literal components.

Čechová (2012, 162) explains that they may be related to conveying information about wars and other significant historical events; idioms also bear witness to the political, economic, and possibly cultural circumstances of the era in which they originated.

In conclusion, idioms have varied origins, some clear and others unknown, often starting as metaphors but evolving into phrases understood idiomatically. Moreover, they often trace back to historical events, cultural references, literature, folklore, or practical situations,

gaining figurative meanings over time. And according to Kvetko (2006), idioms form through idiomatization, from existing idioms or from other languages.

1.3. Use and Function of Idioms

Idioms are a crucial part of the English and Czech language, therefore it is important to know why they exist and when they are used. Idioms add variety and color to speech or writing, help emphasize a point, and make statements more memorable. They are primarily used in spoken conversations, but they can also be found in writing as Holíková (2019, 4) states idioms may sometimes be used in formal or academic writing and also in books and literature, newspapers, and magazines, television and movies, language learning resources and in podcasts and radio shows, however, it is important to use idioms in the appropriate context.

Even though native speakers use idioms everyday, they are usually not aware of it. Holíková (2019, 4) explains that idioms are usually well-known expressions to native speakers and when a person is familiar with a certain idiom and its meaning, they immediately think of the metaphorical meaning and not the literal meaning of the certain idiom. They are also used to simplify complex ideas and help in effective communication. Čermák (2007, 127) also agrees that idioms are very important for language economy because the likelihood of encountering a long idiom is small and additionally, they carry a complex meaning and function. As well, they are a marked opposition to the means of regular language.

Furthermore, Čermák explains that “due to the fact that most collocational idioms have a verbal character, it appears that the primary function of this type of idioms is to provide its users with a stock of ready-made predicates”. Čermák also states that “a major nominative function of idiom is to primarily serve as expressions with a high amount of subjective evaluative and emotional load” (Čermák 2007, 146–147). In other words, most idioms are

verbal, providing users with ready-made phrases and they often hold subjective and emotional connotations.

Like all types of figurative language, idioms can be a powerful tool when used appropriately. Idioms make the writing sound more conversational. They can help add stress to important points and catch the reader's attention (ProWritingAid 2019). Similarly, Brenner (2003, 1) states that they are often used to replace a literal word while often describing the full meaning. The following function of idioms may be social bonding. However, it is easier if the two speakers come from the same country, because they will have more in common.

To summarize, idioms are a key part of the English language, adding variety, color, and emphasis to speech and writing, making statements more memorable. While primarily used in spoken conversations, idioms are also found in various forms of writing. Native speakers use idioms daily, but they often do not realize it. In addition, idioms contribute to language economy by offering expressions with complex meanings and often carry strong emotional connotations.

1.4. Regional Variations

Most English idioms are known throughout all English-speaking countries. However, there are certain differences between British and American idioms.

For some examples, in British and American English, the following types of idioms may be compared. Firstly, *identical idioms* are used to express the same meaning in the same contexts, but they differ in how often they are used (e.g., live from hand to mouth – to have just enough money to live on and nothing extra). Secondly, *different idioms* differ in the various countries, therefore some may appear only in British or only in American English (Kvetko, 2006, 47–50).

Thirdly, *partially different idioms* exist in both types of English, the difference may be in spelling, word choice and grammar (e.g., of spelling variants: on second thoughts (Br. Eng.), on second thought (Am. Eng.), lexicological change is usually seen in nouns (e.g., a skeleton in the cupboard (Br. Eng.), a skeleton in the closet (Am. Eng.) or in cases of using prepositions (e.g., on the cards (Br. Eng.), in the cards (Am. Eng.) (Kvetko, 2006, 47–50).

There are *deceptive idioms* which look identical, but their meaning is different in both languages. In the difference between British and American English, they occur rarely (e.g., be on the up and up which in British English means to become more successful, whereas in American English it means not to hide anything and to be honest) (Kvetko, 2006, 47–50).

The differences between the idioms may be either orthographic (a grey / gray area), grammatical (at a loose end / at loose ends) or lexical (a skeleton in the cupboard / closet) (Kvetko 2009, 48–9).

However, from the point of view of the Czech language, phrases may vary from the morphological, syntactic, and lexical point of view. Most of the differences in Czech are found in verb phrases in which the verbal component may be altered regarding modal pairs (e.g., hodit/házet flintu do žita) and synonyms (e.g., zdvihnout/přijmout hozenou rukavici) (Čermák 2009, vol. 3).

But the phrase can also be supplemented and expanded (mít s někým (hotové/učiněné) peklo), stylistic variants are also common (zamést/zahladit za sebou/po sobě stopy) or regional variants (dostat přes hubu/papulu) and others. Idioms used in the part of Moravia may differ slightly from the rest of the Czech Republic. For example: mít v sobě Moravu – to be proud of one's Moravian roots (Čermák 2009, vol. 3).

For the purposes of this thesis, there may be differences between British and American idioms. There will not be specified differences in the particular country. While many idioms in

the Czech Republic are widely understood throughout the country, some may be more common or have slight variations in specific regions or dialects. Differences may be found in Moravia and in Bohemia.

1.5. Semantic and Formal Point of View

Meaning is an important feature of an idiom and even a small change can change the meaning of the idiom. According to Holíková (2019, 8) the meaning stays the same when it is used in the correct form. There exist some rules for the use of idiomatic expressions. The keyword must be accurate, the word-order must remain unchanged and articles should not be added or lost.

Furthermore, another important feature of idioms is their usage in a sentence. However, this does not make the whole sentence idiomatic, as Cruse (2011, 10) states, only the set expression is idiomatic and this idiom holds the same meaning as a single word since it may often be replaced by one. The other words in a sentence may not be changed without losing its original meaning.

1.5.1. Semantics

The term semantics is concerned with the study of meaning and interpretation of idioms. Idioms hold a meaning, but the meaning is not obvious from the individual words. The definition of semantics may be also explained by Kearns and his excerpt from the year 2000: “semantics deals with the literal meaning of words and the meaning of the way they are combined which taken together form the core of meaning, or the starting point from which the whole meaning of a particular utterance is constructed” (Kearns 2000, 1).

Language is a system. They have specific properties and determine how a linguistic sign functions as a sign. There exist two subfields of semantics. Geeraerts (2019, 63) explains that the two subfields are *lexical* and *phrasal semantics*. Lexical semantics are concerned with meanings of words and their relationships. Phrasal semantics are concerned with the meaning

of syntactic units larger than words. For the purpose of this thesis, the phrasal semantics will be relevant, because the analysis is concerned with the types of phrases of the idioms.

Three semantic properties may be differentiated due to the interpretation of idioms. The properties are *conventionality*, *compositionality*, and *transparency*. According to Nunberg (1994, 491–538) the conventionality of idioms refers to the lack of compatibility between the figurative reading and the predicted literal meaning of the expression (e.g., kick the bucket – to die suddenly).

Furthermore, compositionality refers to the meaning of a phrase by looking at the meaning of the individual words (e.g., kick the bucket – literally means to kick a container). However, the whole idiom means: to die.

Transparency may be applied to an idiomatic expression when there is a metaphorical motivation for the meaning it involves (e.g., break the ice – the literal meanings of the words: break and ice, contribute to the figurative meaning of initiating a conversation in a social setting). For this thesis, conventionality is relevant, because the semantic analysis will explain the meaning of the certain idiom. It is usually difficult to understand the meaning from only seeing the whole idiom written down.

In conclusion, semantics focuses on the meaning of words. Semantics has two subfields: lexical (word meanings) and phrasal (phrase meanings). This thesis focuses on phrasal semantics and idioms. Also, idioms have three properties: conventionality (figurative vs. literal meaning), compositionality (literal meanings of words), and transparency (literal words contribute to figurative meaning). This thesis will focus on conventionality to explain idioms' meanings, which are often hard to understand literally.

1.5.2. Structure of Idioms

Idioms can consist of flexible and inflexible parts of speech. They may contain nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, particles, interjections.

Čermák (2007, 87) explains that the structure of a phraseme depends on the way words and phrases are put together and appear in a sentence. To connect and measure how many words are involved, valency is used.

Nevertheless, Čermák (2007, 88) clarifies the term *fixedness* which is relevant when discussing the structure of idioms. The word combinations form groups that cannot be easily changed. This is because the order of the words is fixed (e.g., těžkou hlavou z toho má, to s ním umí).

There exist three types of idioms regarding structure. The most common is the *regular form and unclear meaning*. It refers to idioms which have the correct grammatical form, but the meaning cannot be described without prior knowledge because it does not correspond to the literal translation. When put into context, the understanding may become clearer (e.g., to have a bee in one's bonnet) (Seidl, McMordie 1988, 2–6).

Secondly, *irregular structure and clear meaning* refers to idioms which have a grammatically incorrect expression, but it does not interfere with understanding its meaning. A native speaker is often not even surprised by the use of incorrect grammar (e.g., I am good friends with him) (Seidl, McMordie 1988, 2–6).

Lastly, *irregular structure and unclear meaning*, the idioms are grammatically incorrect and it is impossible to know the meaning of an idiom without prior knowledge (e.g., To be at large – someone who is dangerous is free, but should be in prison) (The structure verb + preposition + adjective) (Seidl, McMordie 1988, 2–6).

The author, Cowie, suggests two main types of expressions which are phrase idioms and clause idioms. The most common phrase patterns are as follows:

Firstly, there are *noun phrases* which may function as the direct object, the complement or as the object of a preposition. (determiner + adjective + noun + prepositional phrase/clause) (e.g., a clean bill of health).

Secondly, there are *adjective phrases* which may function as complement of a clause or adjunct. (adv modifier + adjective + prepositional phrase/infinitive/clause) (e.g., as busy as a bee).

Thirdly, there are *prepositional phrases* that may function as an adjunct, complement, disjunct or conjunct. (preposition + object of preposition) (e.g., under one's feet).

Furthermore, there are *adverbial phrases* which usually function as adjunct. (adv modifier + adverb + prepositional phrase) (e.g., as soon as possible).

The most common clause (*verbal phrases*) patterns are as follows.

- a) verb + complement (e.g., to be out of one's element)
- b) verb + direct object (e.g., to bite the dust)
- c) verb + direct object + complement (e.g., to hold someone responsible)
- d) verb + indirect object + direct object (e.g., to pay someone a compliment)
- e) verb + direct object + adjunct (e.g., to avoid something like the plague)

Another possible pattern is *phrases with repeated elements*, called *binomials*. In most cases they must appear in the same order to be considered idiomatic.

- a) noun + noun (e.g., peace and quiet)
- b) adjective + adjective (e.g., sick and tired)
- c) verb + verb (e.g., wait and see)
- d) determiner + determiner (e.g., each and every)
- e) adverb + adverb (e.g., now and again)

f) two words from different categories (e.g., home and dry)

g) identical pairs (e.g., step by step) (Cowie 1983).

To conclude, idioms may have three different structures. Regular structure + unclear meaning, which means that the idioms are grammatically correct, but require prior knowledge to be understood. Secondly, irregular structure + clear meaning, they are grammatically incorrect, but understandable and lastly, irregular structure + unclear meaning, they are grammatically incorrect and require prior knowledge to be understood. Moreover, Cowie identifies two main types of idioms (phrase idioms and clause idioms), with common patterns such as:

- Noun phrases (e.g., a clean bill of health)
- Adjective phrases (e.g., as busy as a bee)
- Verbal phrases (e.g., to bite the dust)
- Adverbial phrases (e.g., as soon as possible)
- Prepositional phrases (e.g., under one's feet)

1.6. Correspondence and Equivalence

The level of correspondence is affected by various elements. It is known that the Czech language belongs to the branch of West Slavic languages, while English is part of the subgroup of Germanic languages. Consequently, this will determine how similar the idioms will be in terms of formal structure and lexical items. Also, Kvetko (2009, 53) claims that idioms are influenced “by different semantic structure of individual idioms, presence or absence of variants, geographical variations, stylistic value of particular idioms, and other factors.”

According to Kvetko (2009, 52) the term equivalence means that an idiom “can substitute the idiom of L1 in L2 without any change of meaning”. The rules inspired by Kvetko’s contrastive approach used in this thesis are as follows:

syntactical structure	++	total equivalence in terms of structure without taking into account English articles
syntactical structure	+ -	slight difference according to the syntactic structure (there is one extra element or one is missing)
syntactical structure	--	idioms are completely different according to their syntactic structure
lexical components	++	all of the words can undergo a word for word translation into the Czech language and still have its idiomatic nature
lexical components	+ -	a slight difference according to the lexical components (one is in plural form and the other in singular)
lexical components	--	the lexical components are totally different

TABLE 1: EQUIVALENCE

Putting the idioms together will determine the overall equivalence. However, it needs to be noted that the boundaries are not clear-cut, therefore sometimes it is difficult to put them into one category.

To select the correct type of correspondence, the method used in this thesis is inspired by Jana Vokáčová and her PhD. Dissertation *A Comparative Study of English, Czech, French, and German Idioms*. The idioms were divided into three categories and their subcategories based on the level of correspondence between the English and Czech idioms.

Total Correspondence	idioms correspond on all studied levels (semantic structure, lexical components and semantic correspondence)
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Total Correspondence - Correspondence on all levels	idioms correspond on all levels
Total Correspondence - Slight Variations I.	idioms that contain some slight differences
Total Correspondence - Slight Variations II.	idioms correspond on the semantic and lexical level (the syntactic structure differs slightly)
Partial Correspondence	idioms which correspond on two levels or only on the semantic level and they contain an animal
Partial Correspondence - Type I.	idioms correspond on the syntactic and lexical level, they do not correspond on the semantic level
Partial Correspondence - Type II.	idioms correspond on all levels except on the lexical level
Partial Correspondence - Type III.	idioms correspond on all levels except on the syntactic level
Partial Correspondence - Type IV.	idioms correspond only on the semantic level and contain an animal
Non-correspondence	the rest of the idioms that do not fit in the categories above
Non-correspondence - Type I.	idioms that correspond only on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal idiom in both languages

Non-correspondence - Type II.	idioms do not correspond on any of the levels, even their semantic meaning slightly differs
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TABLE 2: TYPES OF CORRESPONDENCE

2. Method

This thesis is a comparative analysis of English and Czech idioms related to nature. The first step was to choose the idioms and put them into three categories (animals, weather and other miscellaneous natural elements). The second step was to analyze the idioms from the semantic, formal and etymological point of view. Their regional variations were analyzed and also from the point of view of the main phrase, which can be nominal, adjectival, verbal, prepositional or adverbial. The type of correspondence was also determined.

2.1.1. Objectives and Research Questions

The objectives of this thesis are to provide an analysis of the selected idioms from the point of view of semantic and formal, etymological and (their regional variations) and also from the point of view of the main phrase, which can be nominal, adjectival, verbal, prepositional or adverbial. Furthermore, the type of correspondence is stated. Also, students and teachers of English and Czech language will be provided with a pocket dictionary of analyzed idioms regarding nature. Because these idioms were analyzed regarding different perspectives, it is believed that it will help with the understanding and usage of idioms. The category regarding animal idioms is one of the most substantial and weather idioms are frequently used in everyday situations.

The central question for this analysis was as follows:

1) *To what extent do selected Czech and English nature-related idioms correspond in terms of syntax, lexis, semantics and the main phrase?*

2.1.2. Data Collection

In total, 40 Czech idioms related to nature and 40 English counterparts were collected. This number was divided into categories (20 animal idioms, 10 idioms related to other miscellaneous natural elements and 10 weather idioms) in both languages. Two main sources

were used for this research. One of the main sources for this thesis was the book called: *Příroda Země-Vesmír-Život-Smrt Barvy-Prostor-Čas v České Frazeologii a Idiomatice* by Eva Mrháčová (2006). The second main source used for the English counterparts was: the Cambridge Idioms Dictionary. Furthermore, the etymology of the idioms was found in an online source: The Idioms, Largest Idiom Dictionary. An exemplary sentence in both languages was provided, this data was collected from the British National Corpus (BNC), American English Corpus (COCA) and Czech National Corpus (CNC). Lastly, in order to collect missing information, various internet sources were used for this purpose.

2.1.3. Analysis

40 Czech idioms related to nature that are frequently used and 40 English counterparts were chosen. These idioms were analyzed from the following perspectives. One of the points of this analysis was to create a semantic analysis of the chosen idioms, in other words, to examine the meaning of the idiom. Following with a formal analysis which explained the internal structure of the idioms. The etymological analysis gave information on the origin of an idiom. The origin of idioms may be traceable or untraceable. In some cases, it was intuitive and it was difficult to be 100% sure of the origin.

Another part consisted of analyzing the particular idioms regarding the type of phrase. In addition, some idioms have regional variations such as American, British or they are simply used generally throughout the English-speaking countries. In the Czech language, there are not many regional variations, because the language does not change significantly throughout the parts of the country. There may be a slight difference in Moravia and Bohemia, but otherwise, most idioms are used generally throughout the whole country without major changes. The analysis of the phrase was provided which might have been nominal, adjectival, adverbial, verbal and prepositional. Lastly, the types of correspondence were explained. Because English

and Czech are two different languages, the presumption is that the most numerous category is the Non-correspondence category.

An Example of a Table

This is an example of a table that was used in this thesis.

a guinea pig (morče)	pokusný králík (an experimental rabbit)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: He *has also volunteered to be used as a guinea pig*.

CNC: *Zřejmě jsi něco jako pokusný králík, jehož utracení nebude nikdo litovat.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is used as a testing sample for new ideas or products. The meaning of the Czech idiom is identical to the English meaning. From the lexical point of view, the components differ. The English language uses the noun: guinea pig, whereas the Czech language uses a different noun: pokusný králík (an experimental rabbit). Regarding their semantic correspondence, both the English and Czech idioms have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase and their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

The origin of the English idiom according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2023) “dates to the 17th century when guinea pigs were used in experiments due to their availability and ease of breeding. The earliest known use of the noun *guinea pig* is in the mid-1600s. OED's earliest evidence for *guinea pig* is from 1664, in the writing of Henry Power, natural philosopher and physician.”

There has not been found a source for the origin of the Czech idiom, but likely it originated from the use of rabbits in experiments due to their availability and similarities with humans in certain aspects. They were used in testing of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because they agree on the syntactical and semantic level, but do not agree on the lexical level.

3. Analysis

The main part of this thesis is the analysis of the chosen idioms. Before continuing with the analysis itself, a clarification must be made. The author of this thesis is aware of some minor details which may have been analyzed in a slightly different way than usual. According to various dictionaries the words *like* and *as* may function as a conjunction, preposition or an adverb. However, the chosen idioms containing the words *like* and *as* in this thesis are used in context where they function as adverbs. The Czech word *jako* is always referred to as a conjunction in the Czech language, because it can connect two complements by both a coordinate relation and a dependency relation. To simplify, this thesis referred to the word *jako* as a conjunction and the words: *like* and *as* were referred to as an adverb. Even though the certain idioms containing these words agree syntactically, in this thesis there is a minor difference between them.

3.1.1. Animal Idioms

a guinea pig (morče)	pokusný králík (an experimental rabbit)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: He *has also volunteered to be used as a guinea pig*.

CNC: *Zřejmě jsi něco jako pokusný králík, jehož utracení nebude nikdo litovat.*

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noun: guinea pig, whereas the Czech language uses a different noun: pokusný králík (an experimental rabbit). Regarding their semantic correspondence, both the English and Czech idioms have the same meaning.

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There has not been found a source for the origin of the Czech idiom, but likely it originated from the use of rabbits in experiments due to their availability and similarities with humans in certain aspects. They were used in testing of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because they agree on the syntactical and semantic level, but do not agree on the lexical level.

a pig in a poke (prase v pytli)	zajíc v pytli (a rabbit in a poke)
N + prep + N	N + prep + N
AmE	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

COCA: *Our winners will help you avoid buying a pig in a poke.*

CNC: *Zásadně nekupují zajíce v pytli, všechno zkoumají.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as something that you can buy or accept without first seeing it or knowing what it is like, with the result that it might not be what you want. The meaning of the Czech idiom is very similar to the English meaning. The meaning: to buy or pay without verification that ends up not meeting the receiving party's expectations, often contrary to what the seller claims before the transaction. From the lexical point of view, the components slightly differ. The English language uses the noun: pig, whereas the Czech language uses a different noun: zajíc (a rabbit). But the rest of the idiom contains the same components. Regarding their semantic correspondence, both the English and Czech idioms have the same meaning

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase and their syntactical structure is identical (N + prep + N).

According to the online dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the English idiom “is quite an ancient one and has been used in the literal sense. A poke is a sack or a bag. The idiom implies that if a pig is bought when it is in a poke, or bag, the customer might be cheated on. Written citations of the phrase have been found since the mid 1500's.” According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024) the first use of the Czech idiom was in 1555.

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because they agree on the syntactical and semantic level, but do not agree on the lexical level.

an early bird (ranní ptáče)	ranní ptáče (an early bird)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *He was always **an early bird**. Early to bed, early to rise.*

CNC: *Panenko skákavá ona je fakt **ranní ptáče**, ona vstává.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who gets up or arrives early, or who does something before other people do. The meaning of the Czech idiom is identical, just said in different words (expressing the belief that if a person gets up early in the morning, he/she has more chances of success and manages more). From the lexical point of view, the components are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, both the English and Czech idioms have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase and their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

As claimed by the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom “dates to the earliest printed record found in a collection of proverbs published in 1636 titled “Remaines Concerning Britaine” by William Camden. The 1636 edition was posthumous because Camden had died in 1623. Later, this idiom appeared in 1732 “Gnomologia: Adagies and Proverbs; Wise Sentences and Witty Sayings” composed by Thomas Fuller.” As stated by the Dictionary.com (2024) the Czech idiom was first recorded in 1855–90.

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels, because they agree on all levels.

(as) busy as a bee (pilný jako včelička)	pilný jako včelička (busy as a bee)
(Adv) + Adj + Adv + N	Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence - -	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type I.	

COCA: *She left. Something about being as busy as a bee.*

CNC: *Budeme pilné jako včeličky a bude se nám to líbit, uvidíš!*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is very busy or active. The meaning of the Czech idiom is different (to be a hard-working person). From the lexical point of view, the components are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, there is a difference, even though it does not look like it at first sight.

Both of the idioms are an adjective phrase, their syntactical structure is slightly different due to the different language structure (Eng: be as x as y, Cz: be x as y).

According to the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom “is quite easy to determine. Bees are very hardworking creatures and can always be seen buzzing around. They collect pollen and nectar in order to pollinate plants and flowers. It is clear that the observation was made early on and that people were later compared to these industrious creatures. The phrase dates back to at least the 1300s. An example can be found in The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer.” The Czech idiom is just translated from English. According to the source: Phrases.org.uk (2024) “the first person to record the use of the simile 'as busy as a bee' was Geoffrey Chaucer, in The Canterbury Tales, (tTe Squire's Tale), 1386-1400.”

These idioms are partially correspondent – type I. because they differ semantically and their syntactical structure is slightly different.

(as) slippery as an eel (kluzký jako úhoř)	kluzký jako úhoř (as slippery as an eel)
(Adv) + Adj + Adv + N	Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Slight Variations II.	

BNC: *The train of thought that begins like this is **as slippery as an eel**, and the only effective way to catch it is to examine the truth of the matter.*

CNC: *Tomuto člověku se nedá věřit, je **kluzký jako úhoř**.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is difficult to catch or it is difficult to get information from him. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, just said in different words (someone who cannot be trusted). From the lexical point of view, the components are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are an adjective phrase, their syntactical structure is slightly different due to the different language structure (Eng: be as x as y, Cz: be x as y).

As stated by Dictionary.com (2024) the origin of the English idiom was “first recorded about 1412, alluding to the eel's skin, which has tiny scales and is quite slippery when wet.” The exact origin of the Czech idiom has not been found. Maybe it was taken from the English language.

These idioms are totally correspondent – slight variations II. because they agree almost on all levels. The syntactical structure is a bit different, because of the language difference.

(be) a dog in a manger (být) jako pes v jeslích	žába na prameni (a frog on a spring)
(V) + N + prep + N	N + prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *We do welcome this Act cos y'know we're not **dog in a manger**, when there's a good Act, we'll welcome it and we'll say so.*

CNC: *Správná cesta je co nejdůkladněji poznat nepřítele. Pokud chce najít **žábu na prameni**.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who keeps something that they do not really want, to prevent anyone else from having it. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, just said in different words (a person who prevents others from using something he or she has no use for). From the lexical point of view, the components are different, there is no similarity. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (N + prep + N).

According to the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom “comes from a fable of the same name written by Aesop, who was possibly Ethiopian but spent much of his life in Athens. It is not known exactly when the first of Aesop’s fables were written as the fables were originally handed down from one generation to the next just like a myth or a legend. It is, however, believed that Aesop lived from about 620 to 560 B.C.” As stated in the book of Erben (1914, 128) “the frog on the spring can be found in Erben’s collection of fairy tales, specifically in the fairy tale Three Golden Hairs of Grandpa Vseved. Other sources do not mention it. Therefore, it can only be the author’s invention.”

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because they only differ according to the lexical components.

(be) fit as a fiddle (být) v kondici jako housle)	(být) zdravý jako rybička (be) healthy as a fish)
(V) + Adj + Adv + N	(V) + Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: He was *fit as a fiddle* when he was a hundred, doing his own gardening.

CNC: *Druhý den budeš zdravý jako rybička.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is very healthy and strong. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (to be in very good health). From the lexical point of view, the components are different, there is no similarity. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are an adjective phrase, their syntactical structure slightly varies due to the language structure which is different in both languages.

According to the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom: “fiddle refers to stringed musical instruments, especially violin, which had to be kept in good condition (fit). The phrase was recorded in a book entitled Englishmen for my Money, written in the year 1616 by Haughton William.”

The origin of the Czech idiom is not entirely clear, but it is known that fish are often considered healthy creatures, especially when they are alive in their natural environment and given plenty of food and exercise.

These idioms are non-correspondent - type I. because they correspond only on the semantic level and the English idiom does not involve an animal.

crocodile tears (krokodýlí slzy)	krokodýlí slzy (crocodile tears)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *They are always ready to shed **crocodile tears** for the camera on behalf of victims.*

CNC: *Většina lidí sem ale chodila se objímat a ronit **krokodýlí slzy**, jak šité do reportážních záběrů pro televizní zpravodajství.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as fake crying. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (they indicate false regret, perhaps even "crying for show"). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom is “derived from an old legend that states that crocodiles cry while eating their prey. Crocodiles blow out large quantities of air while eating and that can cause their eyes to tear up. They are not actually crying, though. One of the first documented examples of this myth dates back to the 1500s. The stories of the travels of Sir John Mandeville.” According to Pokorný (1976, 219–220) the origin of the Czech idiom is associated with crocodiles who used to be pests, they proliferated near the Nile River. They are said to have wailed with children's cries. The person who came across this cry was never seen again.

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels. There is no difference between them.

(feel/be) like a fish out of water (být/cítit se jako ryba z vody)	(být) jako ryba na suchu (be) like a fish on land)
(V) + Adv + N + prep + N	(V) + conj. + N + prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure - +	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type IV.	

BNC: *Alyssia watched from the sidelines, feeling like a fish out of water.*

CNC: *V téhle oblasti jsem jak ryba na suchu.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who feels awkward because he is not familiar with a situation or because he is very different from the people around him. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (to feel uncomfortable or out of place in a situation). From the lexical point of view, the components are slightly different. The English idiom contains: out of water (z vody), but the Czech idiom contains: na suchu (on land). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure slightly varies due to the language structure which is different in both languages.

As stated by the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom: “the idiom fish out of water alludes to someone exposed to an unknown situation. This expression refers to the fact that fish cannot survive on dry land for a long time which is out of their habitat. The earliest reference to be traced is in Samuel Purchas’s Pilgrimage in 1613.” The origin of the Czech idiom is not entirely clear.

These idioms are partially correspondent - type IV. because they correspond only on the semantic level.

cheeky monkey (drzá opice)	drzá opice (cheeky monkey)
Adj + N	Adj + N
BrE, AustrE	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence - Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *"He's in the wholesale business, isn't he? We might get our tiger nuts cheaper." You're a cheeky monkey.*

CNC: *Seš drzej jako opice.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is mischievous, usually a child. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (usually a child who does not behave). From the lexical point of view, the components are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

As stated by the Oxford English Dictionary (2023) “the earliest known use of the English idiom *cheeky monkey* is in the 1880 s. OED's earliest evidence for *cheeky monkey* is from 1880, in the writing of ‘Eona’.” The origin of the Czech idiom may be connected with monkeys being cheeky. It is known that monkeys can misbehave. Therefore, probably the idiom derived from this observation.

These idioms are totally correspondent - correspondence on all levels. There is no difference.

drink like a fish (pít jako ryba)	pít jako Dán (drink like a Dane)
V + Adv + N	V + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type IV.	

BNC: *A true Scotsman. He could **drink like a fish**, and I couldn't understand his coarse speech.*

CNC: *My jsme měli jednoho Dána v kurzu. A **pít jako Dán**?*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who regularly drinks a lot of alcohol. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (someone who consumes excessive alcohol, someone who drinks in a reckless way). From the lexical point of view, there is a slight difference. In English, they say: drink like a fish, but in Czech they say: pít jako Dán (drink like a Dane). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a verb phrase, their syntactical structure slightly differs. The English language uses an adverb (like), but the Czech language uses a conjunction (jako).

Regarding the dictionary: the Idioms (2024) “a fish can drink a lot of water while being encompassed by it. The phrase originates in 1640 in the literary work of Fletcher and Shirley in the book titled ‘The night walker, or the little thiefe’. This was made popular in 2005 by a biological brewery in China who claimed that their fermentation was so good that they could turn fish into wine.”

The source: Naše Řeč (2011) claims that “the younger generations use this common idiom 'drinks like a Dane', members of the older generations mostly do not know this saying, perhaps because it did not become widespread until after the Second World War.”

These idioms are partially correspondent - type IV. because they correspond completely only on the semantic level.

(fight) like cat and dog (bojovat se jako kočka a pes)	(chovají se) jako kočka a pes (they (behave) like cat and dog)
(V) + Adv + N + conj. + N	(V) + conj. + N + conj. + N
BrE, AustrE	Especially Bohemia
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure - +	
Lexical Components - +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type IV.	

BNC: *Get on with her when we start working together. We'd fight **like cat and dog**. Hell, we still have our spats.*

CNC: *Ale všimli jsme si, že se k sobě chováte **jako kočka a pes**.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as two people who argue violently all the time. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (to argue frequently). From the lexical point of view, there is a slight difference. In English, they say: fight like cat and dog, but in

Czech they say: chovají se jako kočka a pes (they behave like cat and dog). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure slightly differs. The English language uses an adverb (like), but the Czech language uses a conjunction (jako).

The dictionary: the Idioms (2024) claims that “the origin of the English idiom is seen to be quite ambiguous, and the domestication of cats and dogs plays a key role. The phrase dates to 1611, when it was performed at the Globe Theatre. The play was about the Celtic legend of King Cunobelinus. Some critics found the play to be a disaster, while others saw it as a romantic gesture. However, the word ‘fight’ does not appear in the passage, but the reference to destroying and killing creatures clearly signifies the fight between cats and dogs.” It is difficult to pinpoint the exact origin of the Czech, but maybe the relationship between dogs and cats has something to do with the origin. Dogs and cats can be seen as incompatible species and have different natures. Therefore, the expression "like a dog and a cat" acquired its meaning as a metaphor for a conflictual and hostile relationship between people.

These idioms are partially correspondent - type IV. because they correspond completely only on the semantic level.

fish in troubled waters (rybařit v neklidných vodách)	lovit v kalných vodách (hunt in murky waters)
V + prep + Adj + N	V + prep + Adj + N
BrE	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *Thus the USSR would be able to fish profitably in the troubled waters of economic chaos.*

CNC: *Že by se tady nenašlo pár takových, kteří loví v kalných vodách a krouží kolem dokola s těmi nejpochybnějšími úmysly?*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone trying to gain an advantage from a difficult situation or from someone else's problems. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (use confusion, disorder, social crisis, chaos, etc. for your own benefit). From the lexical point of view, there is a slight difference. In English, they say: fish in troubled waters, but in Czech they say: *lovit v kalných vodách* (fish in murky waters). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a verb phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (V + prep + Adj + N).

The dictionary: the Idioms (2024) states that “the origin of the English idiom may be found in the history of English literature. We have seen it to be used as an idiom with other phrases such as ‘bridge over troubled waters’ which means to provide relief, ‘fish in troubled waters’ which means indulging ourselves into a dangerous situation and ‘to pour oil on troubled waters’ which means settling down the disputes between the two parties.” Pokorný (1976, 238–239) states that “the origin of the Czech idiom is very old. Two ancient sources are cited where it occurs, each time slightly differently. It first appears in a fable written by the writer Aesop. Finally, I must add that the oldest literary work that talks about the hardening of water is the Old Testament. Here, in Ezekiel's prophecy, it is said: “..thou art as a whale in the sea, when he walketh in his streams, and muddyeth the water with thy feet, and steereth the streams thereof.”

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because their lexical components are slightly different.

(go) hog wild (zbláznit se)	(být) jako utržený ze řetězu (to be) as if torn from a chain)
(V) + N + Adj	(V) + conj. + Adj + prep + N
AmE	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

COCA: *Don't go hog wild. Take two days off a week to recover from your effort.*

CNC: *Jako že se přestaneš ovládat a jsi jak utržený ze řetězu?*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who becomes too excited and eager about something, often so that you do too much. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (to do something in an extreme or excessive way: to go wild). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are totally different. In English, they say: go hog wild, but in Czech they say: být jako utržený ze řetězu (to be as if torn from a chain). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is completely different. The English idiom uses: (V) + N + Adj), however the Czech idiom uses: (V) + conj. + Adj + prep + N).

The Oxford English Dictionary (2023) states that “the earliest known use of the adjective hog-wild is in the 1890s. OED's earliest evidence for hog-wild is from 1893, in the Galveston Daily News (Galveston, Texas).”

The origin of the Czech idiom probably comes from a figurative expression of how a dog behaves when it is "torn from the chain". When a dog is permanently chained and is suddenly released or breaks free for some reason, it may react with excitement or aggression because it finally has freedom of movement.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and the Czech idiom does not contain an animal.

happy as a clam (šťastný jako škeble)	šťastný jako blecha (happy as a flea)
Adj + Adv + N	Adj + conj. + N
AmE	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type IV.	

COCA: *He's smiling and nodding, as **happy as a clam**.*

CNC: *Prostě nádhera. Odjžděla **šťastná jako blecha**. Ted' jsem jim to natřela.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is very happy. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (someone who is content and which shows on him). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are slightly different. In English, they say: happy as a clam, but in Czech they say: šťastný jako blecha (happy as a flea). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are an adjective phrase, their syntactical structure is slightly different due to the language differences (as - Adv, jako - conj.).

The dictionary: the Idioms (2024) claims that “the origin of the English idiom may be associated with Open clams which often give a picture of a smile. Hence the origin is speculated to be from an open clam rather than a closed one. It originated in the United States, speculated around the beginning of the 19th century. It has been used exactly as it is seen today in 1833’s ‘The Harpe’s Head – A Legend of Kentucky’. In 1848, John Russell Bartlett used it in his ‘Dictionary Of Americanisms – A Glossary of Words And Phrases Usually Regarded As Peculiar To The United States’.”

The origin of the Czech idiom is not entirely clear, but it probably comes from observing the

behaviour of fleas. Generally, fleas are not associated with positive feelings, but maybe because they are quick and nimble. This may be the source of inspiration for this simile.

These idioms are partially correspondent – type IV. because they only agree on the semantic level.

make a mountain out of a molehill (udělat z malého kopce horu)	dělat z komára velblouda (make a camel out of a mosquito)
V + N + prep + N	V + prep + N + N
Used generally	Especialy Bohemia
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *They were too embarrassed or didn't want to **make a mountain out of a molehill**.*

CNC: *Nechci tomu věnovat zbytečnou pozornost a **dělat z komára velblouda**.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who makes a slight difficulty seem like a serious problem. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (someone who exaggerates something inappropriately). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are completely different as this can be seen from the table. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a verb phrase, their syntactical structure is different. The English idiom uses: (V + N + prep + N), but the Czech idiom uses: (V + prep + N + N).

The dictionary: the Idioms (2024) states that “the oldest record of the idiom “making a mountain out of a molehill” is to be found in Nicholas Udall’s translation, 1548. He is comparing a fly with an elephant which is a clear reflection of exaggeration. It is impossible to compare an elephant with a fly because of the difference in their size. Since then, this idiom

has been used rapidly in order to highlight the dramatisation.”

The origin of the Czech idiom refers to the sizes of the animals, but the exact origin is unknown.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and the English idiom does not contain an animal.

(on) Shank's pony (po vlastních)	po vlastních (by foot)
(Prep) + Adj + N	Prep + Adj
BrE	Used generally
AdvP	AdvP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *We have lots of buses up London. And **Shanks's pony**. 'It isn't far, just down to the village and back.*

CNC: *Byl jsem rozhodnut jít **po vlastních** tak dlouho, dokud budu moci.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as one's own legs as a means of conveyance. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (to walk by foot). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are completely different as it can be seen from the table. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are an adverb phrase, their syntactical structure is different. The English idiom uses: (Prep) + Adj + N), but the Czech idiom uses: (Prep + Adj).

The source: Word Histories (2016) states that “the origin of the English idiom: shanks' (or shanks's) mare (or nag or pony) derives from the name of the lower part of the leg between the knee and ankle – the shank, nowadays more often known as the shin-bone or tibia. This was alluded to in the early form of this term – shank's nag. It originated in Scotland in the 18th century.”

A source for the origin of the Czech idiom has not been found, but it is probably related to the

human experience that learning to walk and move is one of the first and most important steps towards independence. When a child begins to walk "on his own", it means that he has learned to walk without the help of others.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and the Czech idiom does not contain an animal.

swan song (labutí píseň)	labutí zpěv (swan singing)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *This is my last assignment. My swan song.*

CNC: *Mrtvý admirál prochází se po ledu s mužem trestaným. Labutí zpěv v nesmírné kráse zmírá jako na scéně mim.*

The English idiom has a meaning: the final performance or activity of a person's career. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (the last good creation or great performance of an actor, whether in art, architecture, sports). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are slightly different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a verb phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

According to this source: Phrases.org.uk (2023) “the actual term 'swan song', with its current figurative meaning, didn't crop up in print until the 18th century. The Scottish cleric Jon Willison used the expression in one of his *Scripture Songs*, 1767, where he refers to "*King David's swan-song*". The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) turned the phrase on its head in the poem: *On a Volunteer Singer.*”

Pokorný (1976, 230–231) explains that “the Czech idiom is connected to Apollo, because he

got swans to pull the chariot from Zeus. They saved the queens, and the swan's song usually did not portend anything good, rather death. However, it doesn't always sound sad, but it's the ultimate celebration of life, the earth and its beauty, stripped of pettiness.”

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because their lexical components are slightly different.

the black sheep (černá ovce)	černá ovce (the black sheep)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *They soon learn that anyone referred to as **a black sheep**, is not only different, but is regarded as being in disgrace.*

CNC: *Byl jsem **černá ovce** rodiny, šprt, co mu všichni dávali zabrat.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as someone who is thought to be a bad person by the rest of their family. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (A person who is different from the majority, they usually evaluate him negatively). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) “the wool of a sheep can be dyed different colors. Black sheep have a recessive gene that makes their wool black in color. This means that it cannot be dyed a different color and makes it less valuable than white wool. In the 16th century sheep with black wool were seen as carrying the mark of the devil. The phrase has been used, in the same context as we use it today, since the 18th century. The phrase is used less

now than it was in the past. The color black has less of a negative connotation and the phrase is often seen as being racist and offensive.”

The origin of the Czech idiom is the same. A black sheep was sometimes seen as a deviation from the normal white color of sheep and could be seen as something less valuable or undesirable. This metaphor then made its way into human language and came to be used to refer to unusual or problematic individuals in a family or social context.

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels. There is no difference between them.

the lion's share (lví podíl)	lví podíl (the lion's share)
Adj + N	Adj + N
BrE	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *Convincingly winning the dozen strong mixed teams also secured **the lion's share** of individual medals.*

CNC: *Jízda ale vyšla skvěle a ve filmu je celá. **Lví podíl** na tom měli ovšem technici z Hollywoodu.*

The meaning of the English idiom may be explained as the biggest part of something. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (the largest share). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

The source: the Idioms (2024) claims that “the origin of the English idiom: the idiomatic expression is originally derived from one of Aesop's fables. Aesop was a Greek slave and we

can trace one of his fables about a lion, according to which, the lion asks the other animals to hunt along with him and kept the major part of the killed ones being the king of the jungle, while the other animals received a very small part.” Pokorný (1976, 246–247) states that “the origin of the Czech idiom is the same: can be traced back to Aesop's fables, specifically to a story where animals go hunting together and the lion claims the largest portion of the spoils.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels. There is no difference.

3.1.2. Weather Idioms

a snowball effect (efekt sněhové koule)	efekt sněhové koule (a snowball effect)
Adj + N	N + Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure - +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type III.	

BNC: *The bustle enhances the impression of good business. All this has a snowball effect on the day's turnover and on the individual dealers' commissions.*

CNC: *Pokud je intenzita takového šíření vysoká, dostavuje se efekt sněhové koule.*

The English idiom can be a situation in which something increases in size or importance at a faster and faster rate. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same ("Chaining" of events and processes (cause and effect, tipping point) that can no longer be stopped, similar to dominoes). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is slightly different as it can be seen from the table.

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) “the origin of the English idiom and the Czech idiom comes from imagining a snowball as it rolls down a hill. It continuously gets larger with more snow and becomes more powerful and faster while moving downward. People mainly use it symbolically in texts to describe a situation that starts small and builds up, increasing in momentum and power as it grows. A snowball effect can be positive or negative. Things that could get snowballed include fortune, importance, fame, and danger. Several authors like Robert David Strawn, Deb Loughead, and Holly Nicole Hoxter have used the phrase as a title in their books. Also used in economics.” This economic meaning of the term was probably popularized during the 20th century.

These idioms are partially correspondent – type III. because they differ according to the syntactical structure.

a storm in a teacup (bouře v hrníčku)	bouře ve sklenici (a storm in a glass)
N + prep + N	N + prep + N
BrE, AustrE	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *Both are trying to present the disagreement as **a storm in a teacup**. Yet it could turn nasty.*

CNC: *Možná jsou ale všechny tyto vize jen **bouří ve sklenici** vody a v praxi se nestane naprosto nic.*

The English idiom can be a situation where people get very angry or worried about something that is not important. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (a passionate dispute over a matter that is in fact petty). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are slightly different because of their last words (teacup and glass). Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a noun phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (N + prep +N).

The source: the Idioms (2024) claims that “the most used in Britain, “storm in a teacup” is first recorded in a book by a Scottish novelist Catherine Sinclair, *Modern Accomplishments, or the March of Intellect*, 1838. However, there have been similar phrases preceding it in Britain like “storm in a wash-hand basin.” The origin of the Czech idiom according to Pokorný (1976, 65–66) “lies in the imagery, it evokes a storm in nature which can be powerful and destructive, a storm occurring in a small teacup or glass is insignificant. This idiom has its origin in Latin, first used by Cicero, a Roman philosopher.”

These idioms are partially correspondent – type II. because their lexical components are slightly different.

(as) fast/quick as lightning (rychlý jako blesk)	rychlý jako blesk (as) quick as lightning)
(Adv) + Adj + Adv + N	Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Slight Variations II.	

BNC: *Finally they stopped at a house surrounded by a high wall. As **quick as lightning**, Toby climbed up and pulled Oliver after him.*

CNC: *Jedl s očima sklopenýma ke stolu, ale byl **rychlý jako blesk** a i poslepu mířil přesně.*

The English idiom is associated with someone who moves very fast. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same (someone who is extremely quick.). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are an adjective phrase, their syntactical structure is slightly different due to language differences (Eng - Adv, Cz - conj.).

As stated by the source: the Idioms (2024) these English and Czech idioms “trace back to the early 17th century. This common phrase gets its name from lightning. Lightning in the sky moves very quickly. Sometimes it moves so fast a person can barely see it. When a person uses this phrase, they are describing something that can move fast. This centuries-old idiom grew in popularity when people began to discover more about the weather. As electricity was discovered, this idiom grew even more. Nowadays this idiom is a familiar phrase that is used frequently.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – slight variations II. because their syntactical structure slightly differs.

break the ice (prolomit ledy)	prolomit ledy (break the ice)
V + N	V + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *Here was the opportunity to get it over, make a start, **break the ice**.*

CNC: *Všichni se krátce zasmáli, čímž se **prolomily ledy**. Následovalo pár vtipných narážek.*

The English idiom is associated with making people who have not met before feeling more relaxed with each other. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (breaking down a barrier to make communication more comfortable and relaxed). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are a verb phrase, their syntactical structure is identical (V + N).

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) “this English idiom “break the ice” means to clear a blocked path and make way for others and is related to boat navigation by breaking the ice. The metaphoric use is ancient and was documented in 1579 by Sir Thomas North in his translation of Plutarch’s Lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes. But the idiom (in its present meaning) first appeared in the 17th century in an English mock-heroic narrative poem titled *Hudibras* by Samuel Butler published in 1663.”

The Word Histories (2017) claims that “the Czech idiom “prolomit ledy” originally meant to make a beginning in an undertaking or enterprise, especially in the face of difficulty or resistance. (The sense evolution of the French phrase *rompre*, or *briser*, *la glace* has been identical.) The underlying image is to break the frozen surface of a river, lake, etc., in order to make a passage for boats, etc. This is clear from post-classical Latin *scindere glaciem* (the probable origin of the English and French phrases) as used by the Dutch humanist and scholar Desiderius Erasmus (circa 1469-1536) in *Adagiorum chiliades* (*Thousands of adages* – 1508), an annotated collection of Greek and Latin proverbs.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels.

come rain or shine (ať prší nebo svítí)	za každého počasí (in any weather)
V + N + conj. + N	Prep + Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	PrepP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *Every morning at about 5am, come rain or shine, James Zarei leaves his South Croydon home on his morning run.*

CNC: *Jezdí na vyjížďku každý den několik hodin za každého počasí. Vráti se až po setmění.*

The English idiom means to do something no matter what. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (to go through with the plan even if it rains). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are completely different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

The English idiom is a verb phrase, but the Czech idiom is a prepositional phrase. Their syntactical structure is different (Eng: V + N + conj. + N), (Cz: Prep + Adj + N).

As stated by the source: the Idioms (2024) “the earliest printed record of the English idiom dates to 1699 by John Goad in his work, *Astro-meteorologica, or Aphorisms and Large Significant Discourses on the Natures and Influences of Celestial Bodies.*” The origin of the Czech idiom is not completely clear, but it can be traced back to the fact that humans have historically had to face adverse weather conditions, so the dedication or ability to act "in all weathers" has been valued and important in many aspects of life.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

feel under the weather (necítit se dobře)	cítit se pod psa (feel under the weather)
V + prep + N	V + prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *Where did you pick up this bug? I don't know. I began to **feel under the weather** on Thursday morning after leaving Haslemere.*

CNC: *Abych byl úplně upřímný, **cítím se pod psa**. Nejen fyzicky, ale hlavně psychicky.*

The English idiom means to feel ill. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (to not feel very well). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are slightly different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are a verb phrase. Their syntactical structure is identical (V + prep + N).

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) “the origin of the English idiom can be traced back to maritime sources. In the old days, sailors who weren’t feeling well were often sent below deck, so they could get out of the weather. The term we use today has been shortened, originally, the idiom was 'under the weather bow' which was the side of a ship from which the bad weather was coming.” According to the source Naše Řeč (n.d.) “the origin of the Czech idiom can be associated with the ancient Jews who had bad experiences with dogs in those ancient times when the Old Testament was written, worse than we have today. Back then, they were stray animals that mostly moved around hostilely on the outskirts of the settlements of the ancient Hebrews. And the Bible had, and in fact still has, such power that its bad evaluation of dogs, although obviously contrary to the current everyday reality, still works in the language - in the figurative meanings of the word dog and in many derogatory phrases and sayings. So the dog named something worthless, bad, cruel, it was suffering, evil - that's why life under the dog was the same.”

These idioms are partially correspondent - type II. because they differ according to the lexical components.

have (your) head in the clouds (mít hlavu v oblacích)	mít hlavu v oblacích (have (your) head in the clouds)
V + (pronoun) + N + prep + N	V + N + prep + N
Used generally	Especially Bohemia
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *I don't suppose he notices. He's always got his **head in the clouds** or down a tunnel.*

CNC: *Nestavíme si žádné vzdušné zámky, ani nemáme **hlavu v oblacích**.*

The English idiom means to not know what is really happening around you because you are paying too much attention to your own ideas. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (someone who is daydreaming and not paying attention to reality). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are a verb phrase. Their syntactical structure is identical (V + N + prep + N).

As claimed by the source: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the English idiom and Czech idiom “can be traced back to the mid-1600 s. An image of a very creative person may be connected to this idiom. At that time humans did not have airplanes, so aviation was not a concept that inspired the idiom. Clouds were considered out of reach to humans. When a person used to say impossible things, people used to refer to him as his head is in the clouds and they used to tell him to consider the ground realities seriously and come down from the clouds.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels.

on cloud nine (na devátém mraku)	v sedmém nebi (in seventh heaven)
Prep + N + Numeral	Prep + Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
PrepP	PrepP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *For the past five days now, she had been living somewhere **on cloud nine**, and had decided that she might just as well set up home there.*

CNC: *Zato Dakota byla **v sedmém nebi**. Ty obrovské snídaně jsou úžasné.*

The English idiom means to be very happy. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (it mainly expresses the state or feeling of great happiness, bliss and the height of pleasure). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are prepositional phrases. Their syntactical structure is different (Eng: V + N + prep + N), (Cz: Prep + Adj + N).

The origin of the English idiom as stated by the source: the Idioms (2024) “comes from the 1896 edition of the International Cloud Atlas, clouds were assigned numerical orders. The cumulonimbus cloud was assigned the number 9. The phrase has been used since the 1950s. One of the first examples that can be found is from the Denton Record Chronicle, May 1949, when Betty Hutton – a woman who was happy to have been selected for a film role.” Pokorný (1976, 392–394) “states that the origin of the Czech idiom is associated with Allah's Prophet Muhammad. He saw to it that the number of the heavens settled on a seed. It is written in the Koran: It is God who created the seven heavens and as many earths... God is the one who created the seven heavens in the floors above him... And it is in the seventh heaven, today the proverbial peak of happiness and well-being, that he allows them to linger in the greatest nearness to Allah himself.”

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

pure as the driven snow (čistý jako ujetý sních)	bílý jako sních (white as snow)
Adj + Adv + Adj + N	Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure - -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *Perhaps there was nothing to know. Perhaps Gwen Evans was as **pure as the driven snow**. Perhaps. But it didn't matter.*

CNC: *Ale moje sestra, Osceola, se narodila **bílá jako sních**.*

The English idiom means to be morally good. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (to describe someone or something that is completely pure or innocent). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are adjective phrases. Their syntactical structure is different (Eng: Adj + Adv + Adj + N), (Cz: Adj + conj. + N).

The source: Dictionary.com (2024) states that the origin of the English idiom “dates from the late 1500s, although driven, which means “carried by the wind into drifts,” was occasionally omitted. It is heard less often today.” The Phrases.org.uk (2023) “claims that the idiom (bílý jako sních) was used by Chaucer, Shakespeare (1602) and the Bible (1611) contains it as well. The simile 'as white as ...' is found in many forms in early English. The white thing in question was variously milk, flour, whale bone, blossom or snow. To find the earliest use of 'as white as snow' we need to go back to Old English texts, like this from the *West Saxon Gospels*, circa 1150.”

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

the calm before the storm (klid před bouří)	klid před bouří (the calm before the storm)
N + prep + N	N + prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *His body stilled like **the calm before the storm**.*

CNC: *Následovalo ohromné ticho, podobné **klidu před bouří**.*

The English idiom may be understood as a peaceful and quiet period before a period of activity or trouble. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (an apparent calmness preceding an event of fundamental importance). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are noun phrases. Their syntactical structure is identical (N + prep + N).

The source: the Idioms (2024) claims that the English and Czech idiom “were originally used by sailors. They observed that right before a storm hit the weather became eerily calm. The phrase has been used (in various forms) since the 1700 s. It was mentioned in the 1601 play “The Dumb Knight.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels.

3.1.3. Other Miscellaneous Natural Elements

a hot potato (horký brambor)	horký brambor (a hot potato)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *The desperate need for more golf courses in the UK has already become **a hot potato** within the sport.*

CNC: *Tento úkol předávaly jednotlivé vlády jako **horký brambor**, měnili se premiéři i ministři.*

The English idiom may be understood as something that is difficult to deal with. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (something seen as uncomfortable or dangerous). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are noun phrases. Their syntactical structure is identical (Adj+ N).

The source: the Idioms (2024) states that the English idiom “originated in the mid 1800s and is derived from the slightly older term "to drop like a hot potato", meaning "to abandon something or someone quickly" (lest one be burned). It alludes to the fact that cooked potatoes retain considerable heat because they contain a lot of water.” The Czech idiom was taken from the English language.

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels. There is no difference between them.

add fuel to fire/flames (přilévat oleje do ohně)	přilévat oleje do ohně (add fuel to fire/flames)
V + N + prep + N	V + N + prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Correspondence on all levels	

BNC: *London's Evening Standard was moved to **add fuel to the fire** and proclaim' this year, the long knives were out', but it was only the tall tales that were really in evidence.*

CNC: *Západoněmecké noviny štvaly proti vládcům z Pankowa. Katolická církev **přilévala oleje do ohně**, především z Mnichova a z Říma.*

The English idiom may be understood as to make an argument or a bad situation worse. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (an action, whether verbal or physical, that makes a bad situation even worse). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are identical. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are verb phrases. Their syntactical structure is identical (V + N + prep + N).

According to the source: Phrases.org.uk (2023) the English idiom comes “from the 17th century from The United Kingdom.”

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) the origin of the Czech idiom “relates to practical experience from the past. Many centuries ago, it was common to use oil to start a fire. Adding oil to the fire caused the flames to spread faster and increase the intensity of the fire. So, while this may initially seem like a measure that could help, it makes the situation worse.”

These idioms are totally correspondent – correspondence on all levels.

on the rocks (na kamenech)	v troskách (in ruins)
Prep + N	Prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
PrepP	PrepP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *Jim hurt her when they were going out, did you notice that things were a bit sort of **on the rocks** when they came back at first?*

CNC: *Všichni se dozvěděli o tom, že její manželství je **v troskách**.*

The English idiom may be understood as being in a state of difficulty, ruin or that a relationship might fail. The meaning of the Czech idiom is the same, but described in different words (that something is ruined). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both idioms are prepositional phrases. Their syntactical structure is identical (Prep + N).

According to the source: the Idioms (2024) “the phrase “on the rocks” was originally used for ships which ran aground on rocks and broke apart. Since the late 1800s it has been used figuratively for other disasters or problems.” The origin of the Czech idiom is unknown.

These idioms are partially correspondent - type II. because they differ according to the lexical components.

bark up the wrong tree (štěkat na špatný strom)	plakat na špatném hrobě (cry on a wrong grave)
V + prep + Adj + N	V + prep + Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *You may end up looking a bit foolish if you find you've been **barking up the wrong tree**. Be humble enough to learn from this.*

CNC: *Řada kritiků tak trochu **plakala na špatném hrobě**.*

The English idiom has a meaning: someone who is pursuing the wrong course of action or looking in the wrong place for an answer or solution. The Czech idiom has the same meaning, just said in different words (it refers to complaining in the wrong place). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are completely different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

Both of the idioms are verb phrases. The syntactical structure is identical (V + Prep + Adj + N).

As stated by the source: the Idioms (2024) “this phrase originated in the US and alludes to hunting dogs barking under a tree where they mistakenly think their prey is hiding. The first known usage in print was in James Kirke Paulding’s novel *Westward Ho!* in 1832.” The origin of the Czech idioms is probably associated with the image of a person who mistakenly believes that he is at the grave of his deceased loved one, when in fact he is at the grave of another person. This image symbolizes the loss and misunderstanding that a person can experience when they deal with the wrong things or people in an attempt to solve their problems or express their feelings. This is just a probability.

These idioms are partially correspondent - type II. because they differ according to the lexical components.

green as grass (zelený jako tráva)	zelený jako tráva (green as grass)
Adj + Adv + N	Adj + conj. + N
BrE	Moravia
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Total Correspondence – Slight Variations II.	

BNC: *The law centre's representative on the Strike Committee: They were as **green as grass**; they were like a bunch of lost chickens outside the coop.*

CNC: *Když jsem se pokoušel pochopit složité finanční trhy, cítil jsem se **zelený jako tráva**.*

The English idioms can be understood as someone who is completely inexperienced or naive. The Czech idiom has the same meaning (people who lack training, it is often said about jobs). Regarding their lexical components, the idioms are identical. According to their semantic correspondence, the meanings are identical as well.

Both of the idioms are adjective phrases. The syntactical structure is slightly different. The English idiom uses (Adj + Adv + N), however the Czech idiom uses (Adj + conj. + N).

The origins of the idioms had not been found.

These idioms are totally correspondent – slight variations II. because their syntactical structure slightly differs.

hale and hearty (zdravý a čilý)	zdravý jako buk (healthy as a beech tree)
Adj + conj. + Adj	Adj + conj. + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdjP	AdjP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *Josh had come back from the war in one piece, **hale and hearty**.*

CNC: *Dost, to stačí. Děti jsou **zdravé jako buk** a jediným zdrojem je Holloway sám.*

The English idiom can be understood as someone usually old is still very healthy and strong. The Czech idiom has the same meaning (someone who is in very good health or is generally healthy and strong). From the lexical point of view, the idioms are different. Regarding the semantic correspondence, the meaning of the idioms are the same.

Both of the idioms are adjective phrases. The syntactical structure is slightly different. The English idiom uses (Adj + conj. + Adj), however the Czech idiom uses (Adj + conj. + N).

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2023) “the origin of this phrase dates to the Middle English period 1500s, where "hale" meant "whole" or "healthy," and "hearty" meant "strong" or "vigorous." Over time, the phrase evolved to its current form, combining both terms to emphasize a person's overall good health and vitality.” The origin of this idiom can be found in the natural observation of the beech tree and its characteristic properties. In the Czech environment, the beech tree is considered a symbol of strength, strength and resistance. Its robust condition and longevity provide the inspiration for the expression.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

in the hot seat (na horkém sedadle)	horká půda (hot soil)
Prep + Adj + N	Adj + N
AmE	Used generally
PrepP	NP
Syntactical Structure - +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

COCA: *And if Mavis ever dared to press him for some inkling of a guilty conscience, he would raise his voice, and turn the tables on her so that she was the one sitting **in the hot seat**.*

CNC: *Je to **horká půda** se vším všudy.*

The meaning of the English idioms can be seen as a position where you are responsible for important or difficult things. The Czech idiom has the same meaning, but said in different words (being in an uncomfortable position). According to their lexical components, the idioms are different. Regarding their semantic correspondence, they have the same meaning.

The syntactical structure is slightly different. The English idiom uses (Prep + Adj + N) and is a prepositional phrase, however the Czech idiom uses (Adj + N) and is a noun phrase.

The Oxford English Dictionary (2023) “claims that the earliest known use of the noun *hot seat* is in the 1920 s. OED's earliest evidence for *hot seat* is from 1925, in *Waterloo (Iowa) Evening Courier*.”

The exact date or place of origin of this expression is unknown, but it seems that it is widely used in the Czech language.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

out of the woods (in a safe space)	v suchu (in the dry)
Adv + prep + N	Prep + N
Used generally	Used generally
AdvP	PrepP
Syntactical Structure - +	
Lexical Components - -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *They weren't **out of the woods** yet -- far from it.*

CNC: *Ve zkušebce, ale už jenom měsíc a bude to **v suchu**, pak si konečně trochu dáchnu.*

The English idiom can be understood as not being in danger. The Czech idiom is just explained in different words, but it keeps the identical meaning (to be out of difficulties or danger). The lexical components are different, the idioms use unrelated words. The semantic correspondence is identical.

The syntactical structure is slightly different. The English idiom uses (Adv + prep + N) and is an adverb phrase, however the Czech idiom uses (Prep + N) and is a prepositional phrase.

Dictionary.com (2024) “states that the idiom *out of the woods* originated in the United States and has been traced back to the Papers of Benjamin Franklin. It gained notable recognition when Abigail Adams (1744-1818) used it in a letter dated November 13, 1800, contributing to its early documentation in American literature. This historical usage further solidifies its American roots and places it within the lexicon of idiomatic expressions that convey overcoming challenges.” The origin is not precisely documented.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

promise the earth (slibovat někomu zemi)	slibovat hory doly (promise the mountains and mines)
V + N	V + N + N
BrE, AustrE	Used generally
VP	VP
Syntactical Structure + -	
Lexical Components + -	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Non-Correspondence – Type I.	

BNC: *The Conservative Party's commitment to the environment is beyond doubt. Other parties **promise the earth**. We have taken action -- both nationally and internationally.*

CNC: ***Slibovali hory doly**, jen aby ty kompromitující fotografické dokumenty získali.*

To promise something impossible is what the idiom: promise the earth means. The Czech idiom has the same meaning (to say that you will achieve things that are not achievable). Regarding the lexical correspondence, the idioms differ slightly. The semantic correspondence of these idioms is identical.

Both of the idioms are verb phrases. The syntactical structure has some differences. The English idiom uses (V + N), but the Czech idiom uses (V + N +N).

The origin of this phrase is not definitively documented. Maybe it comes from the idea of promising something as valuable as the Earth itself. Earth is considered a symbol of wealth and importance, so promising that it would mean offering something extraordinary which is not possible to fulfill. The exact origin is not certain.

These idioms are non-correspondent – type I. because they only agree on the semantic level and they do not contain an animal.

rocky road (kamenitá cesta)	trnitá cesta (a thorny road)
Adj + N	Adj + N
Used generally	Used generally
NP	NP
Syntactical Structure + +	
Lexical Components - +	
Semantic Correspondence + +	
Correspondence: Partial Correspondence – Type II.	

BNC: *He had toyed with the idea of taking her to Dublin anyway, but they had had a **rocky road** enough already and perhaps she would be better at home.*

CNC: *Všechno, co člověk udělal, celá ta **trnitá cesta**, učení, hledání, přemýšlení, vyústí teď.*

The meaning of the English idiom can be explained as experiencing a difficult period. The Czech idiom has the same meaning (to be in a difficult situation). The lexical components are slightly different (the word - road is used in both idioms, but the first words are different). They have the same meaning, therefore the semantic correspondence is identical.

Both of the idioms are noun phrases. The syntactical structure is identical (Adj + N).

The exact origin of the English idiom is unknown, but it can be traced to rocky rocks. It likely emerged as people began to apply the characteristics of a physically challenging journey to describe metaphorical challenges in life. The origin of the Czech idiom is also not known. Maybe it is associated with thorns being something unpleasant.

These idioms are partially correspondent - type II. because they differ according to the lexical components.

3.1.4. Results

The idioms above have been analyzed according to the criteria already mentioned and now the summary of the results follows - the correspondence and the main phrase of the idioms.

Correspondence:

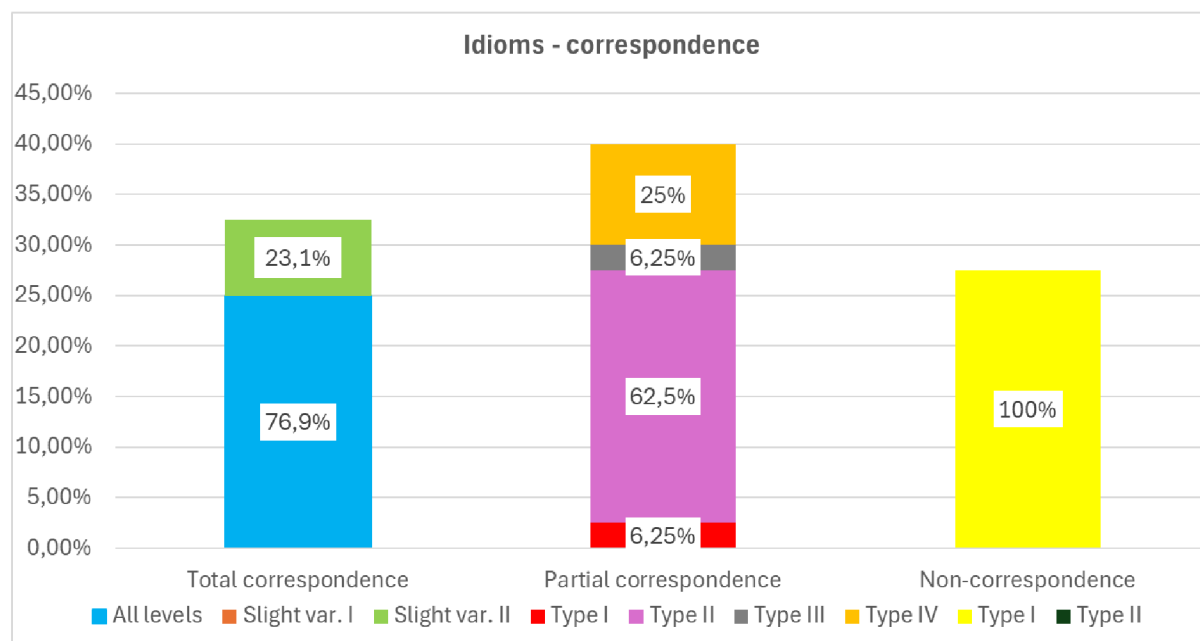


FIGURE 1: CORRESPONDENCE BASED ON ALL IDIOMS

Figure 1 shows all of the chosen idioms based on their correspondence with the total number of the idioms being 40 pairs. The term correspondence may be explained as a particular similarity, in this case, how are the English and Czech idioms similar according to the analyzed criteria. The three main categories are Total, Partial and Non-correspondence which act as 100%. As seen, the most frequent category is Partial correspondence 40%, this category is suitable for idioms which correspond on two levels or only on the semantic level, but the two idioms have to contain an animal. The second most frequent category is Total correspondence which contains 32,5%, it encompasses idioms which correspond on all studied levels, such as their semantic structure, their lexical components and semantic correspondence. The least number of idioms may be found in the category Non-correspondence, there are 27,5% of idioms. These

idioms only correspond on the semantic level, but do not contain any animals or they do not correspond on any levels.

The following section provides an overview of the distribution of all of the subcategories related to the main categories for more precise results. The subcategory Partial correspondence type I contains 6,25 %, these idioms correspond on all levels apart from the semantic level. That means that they correspond on the lexical and formal levels. The second subcategory, type II is the most numerous - 62,5 %, these idioms correspond on all levels apart from the lexical level. That means they correspond on the semantic level and the formal level. However, the subcategory type III contains 6,25 %, these idioms correspond on all levels apart from the formal level, therefore they correspond on the semantic level and the lexical level. Lastly, the category type IV contains 25 %, these idioms correspond only on the semantic level, however they all contain an animal and therefore they are considered to be members of the partial correspondence group.

This section focuses on the subcategories of the Total correspondence category. Because there is a minimum of idioms which correspond completely on all levels, subcategories were added to this analysis. The subcategory Total correspondence on all levels contains 76,9 %, these idioms agree on all levels. The least number of idioms belong to the subcategory slight variations II - 23,1 %, these idioms correspond on the semantic and lexical level; however, they differ slightly on the formal level. There exists one more subcategory, slight variations I, however there are no idioms in this analysis which belong to this subcategory.

The category Non-correspondence only consists of the subcategory type I., therefore there are 27,5 % of idioms as already mentioned. They only correspond on the semantic level, but do not contain any animals or they do not correspond on any levels.

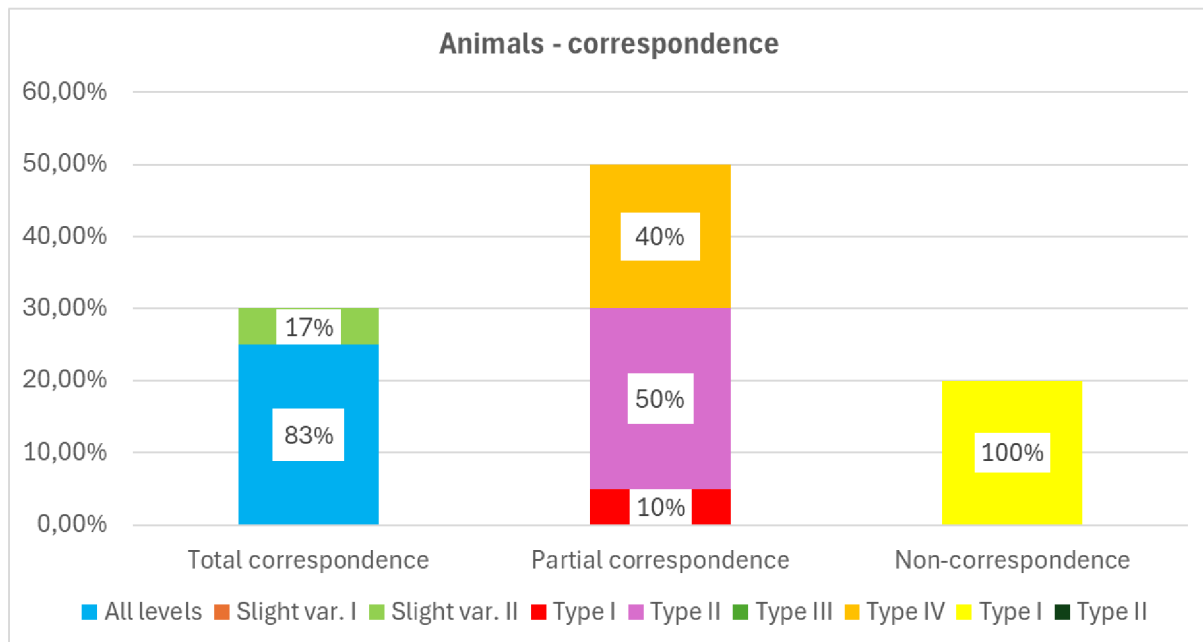


FIGURE 2: CORRESPONDENCE BASED ON ANIMAL IDIOMS

Figure 2 illustrates animal idioms, there are 20 English and 20 Czech idioms in this category. It can be seen that the vast majority of the idioms belong to the category Partial correspondence 50 %. The second most numerous category is Total correspondence with 30 % and the least number of idioms are in the Non-correspondence category 20 %.

Furthermore, this section focuses on the subcategories of Partial correspondence. As already mentioned, there are 4 types - type I only contains 10 % of idioms, whereas the subcategory type II contains the most idioms from this category 50 %. There are no idioms in the subcategory type III and the rest of the idioms belong to the category type IV 40 %.

As seen, the subcategory Total correspondence on all levels contains 83 %, as already mentioned these idioms agree on all levels. The remaining percentage of idioms encompasses the subcategory slight variations II 17 %, because there are no idioms in the category slight variations I.

The subcategory Non-correspondence type I holds 20 % of the idioms.

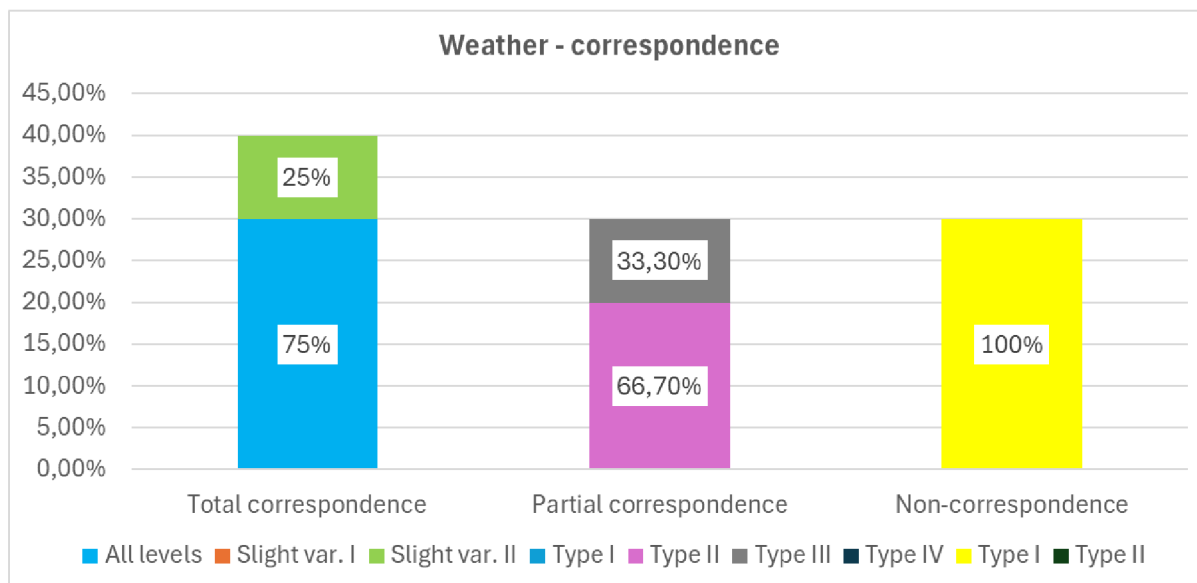


FIGURE 3: CORRESPONDENCE BASED ON WEATHER IDIOMS

Figure 3 shows the correspondence of weather idioms, there are 10 English and 10 Czech idioms in this category. The most numerous category here is Total correspondence 40 %, following with 30 % in the Partial correspondence category and Non-correspondence category.

The subcategory Total correspondence on all levels contains 75 % and the other subcategory slight variations II contains 25 %. As already mentioned, there are no idioms in the category slight variations I.

The subcategories Partial correspondence type I and type IV contain zero idioms, whereas the category type II contains 66,70 % and the category type III contains 33,30 %.

Lastly, only the subcategory Non-correspondence type I is represented in this analysis with 30 %.

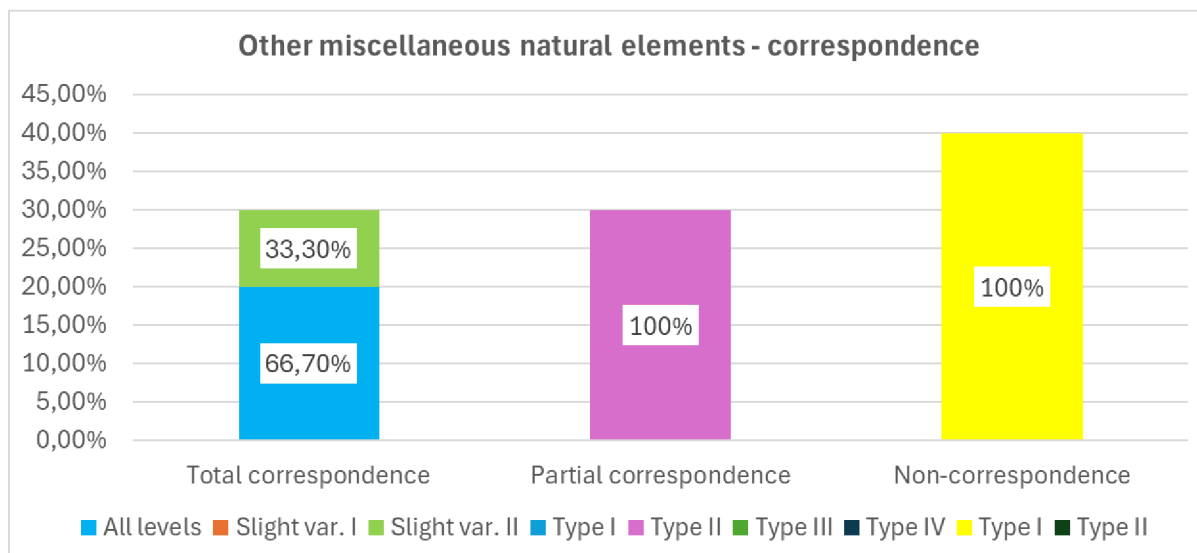


FIGURE 4: CORRESPONDENCE BASED ON IDIOMS IN THE CATEGORY OF OTHER MISCELLANEOUS NATURAL ELEMENTS

The Figure 4 concerning correspondence, focuses on the last category of idioms. It is visible that most of the idioms belong to the category Non-correspondence 40 %. As already mentioned, these idioms only correspond on the semantic level, but do not contain any animals or they do not correspond on any levels. Only this category has fulfilled the presumption that the Non-correspondence category would be the most numerous due to the difference between the two languages. Both the Total correspondence category and Partial correspondence contain 30 % of idioms.

The Non-correspondence subcategory type I contains 40 %. The subcategory Total correspondence on all levels contains 66,70 % and the subcategory slight variations II contains 33,30 %. The Partial correspondence category consists of 4 subcategories, however only type III is presented here, therefore this category contains 30 %, these idioms correspond on all levels apart from the formal level.

Main phrase:

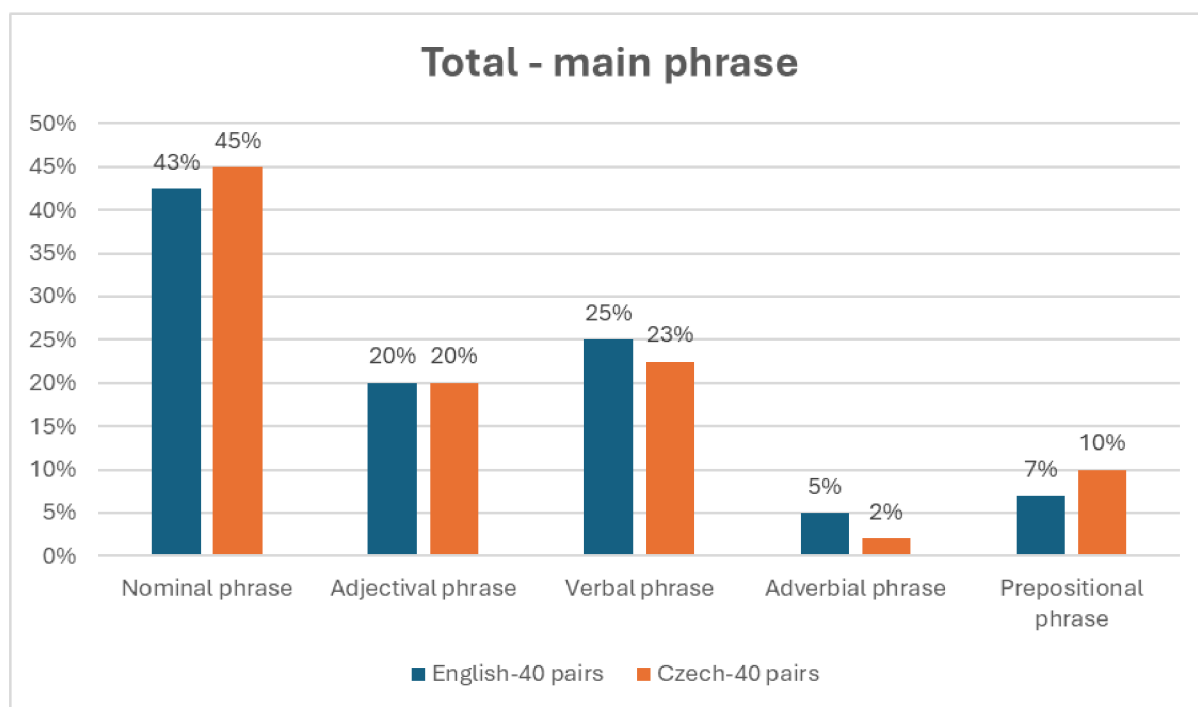


FIGURE 5: ALL IDIOMS AND THEIR MAIN PHRASE

Figure 5 shows all of the idioms chosen for this analysis, 40 English idioms and 40 Czech idioms related to nature. It can be seen that most of the English and Czech idioms act as a nominal phrase: 43 % in English and 45 % in Czech, these idioms have a noun as its head.

The second most numerous category, verbal phrases, holds 25 % in English and 23 % in Czech, these idioms express an action or a state of being.

The third category, adjectival phrases, contains 20 % of idioms in both languages; these idioms act as an adjective to modify a noun or a pronoun.

Idioms acting as a prepositional phrase only cover 7 % in English and 10 % in Czech. There are not many idioms which act as a prepositional phrase in general. These idioms begin with a preposition and end with a noun, pronoun or a noun phrase.

Lastly, the category adverbial phrase contains the least number of idioms, only 5 % in English and 2 % in Czech. It was quite difficult to find idioms that would fit into this category, because they are not very common, they modify other expressions.

In summary, it can be seen that most of the English and Czech idioms act as a nominal phrase 43 % in English and 45 % in Czech. Nevertheless, it has to be taken into consideration that the results are not fixed and they may vary if different idioms are chosen. On the other hand, there are not many idioms which act as adverbial phrases; only 5 % in English and 2 % in Czech.

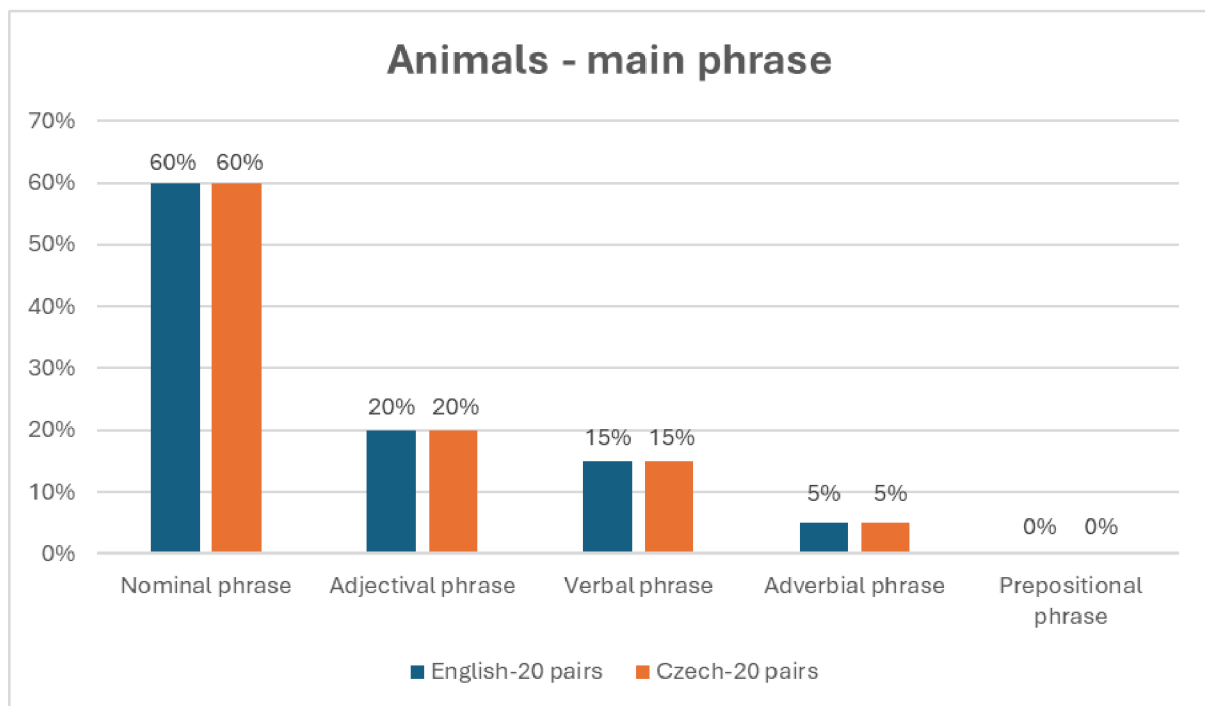


FIGURE 6: ANIMAL IDIOMS AND THEIR MAIN PHRASE

Figure 6 illustrates only the animal category, there are 20 English idioms and 20 Czech counterparts. This Figure shows identical percentages in both languages in all of the phrase categories. It can be seen that the vast majority of the English and Czech idioms related to animals are a nominal phrase, 60 %.

There are only 20 % of idioms acting as an adjectival phrase. The verbal phrase category contains even less, 15 %. Only 5 % act as an adverbial phrase and there are no idioms related to animals (from the ones that were chosen) which act as prepositional phrases.

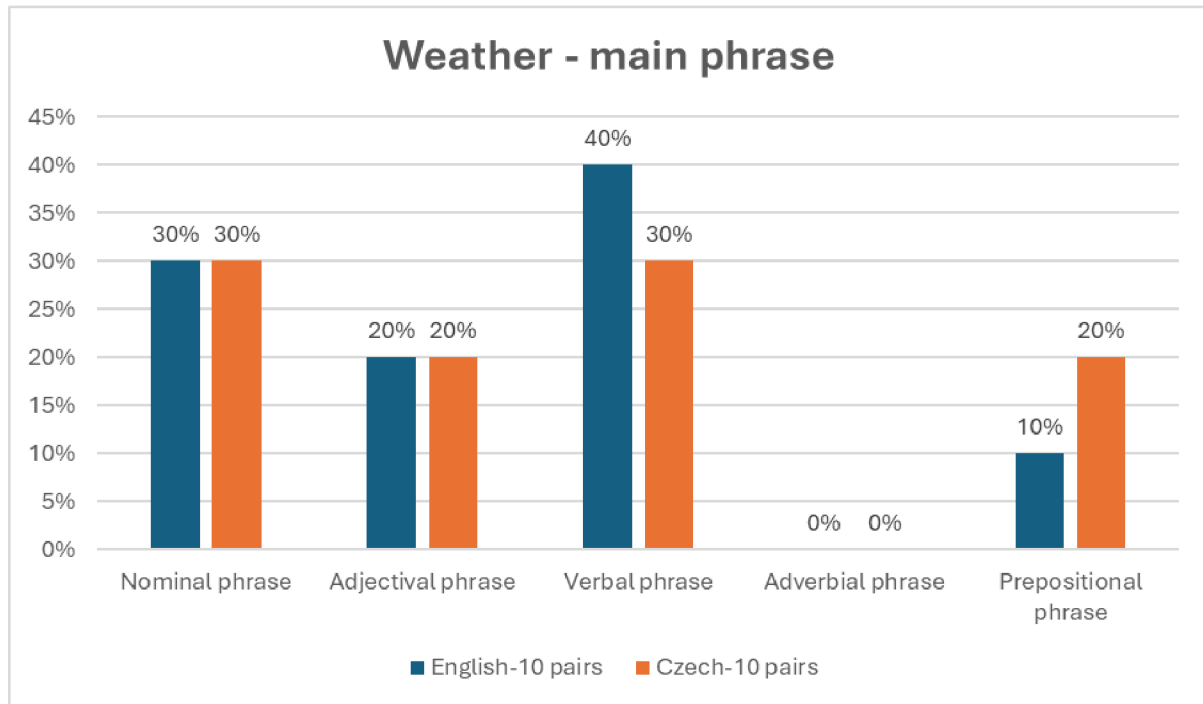


FIGURE 7: WEATHER IDIOMS AND THEIR MAIN PHRASE

Figure 7 focuses on weather idioms, 10 English idioms and 10 Czech idioms, it is visible that most of the idioms are a verbal phrase 40 % and 30 %.

The second most numerous category are the idioms which act as a noun phrase 30 % in both languages. The overall representation of the nominal phrase is high in this analysis.

The adjectival phrase category follows with 20 % in both languages. Lastly, the two least numerous categories are the prepositional phrase with 10 % in English and 20 % in Czech and adverbial phrase with 0 idioms.

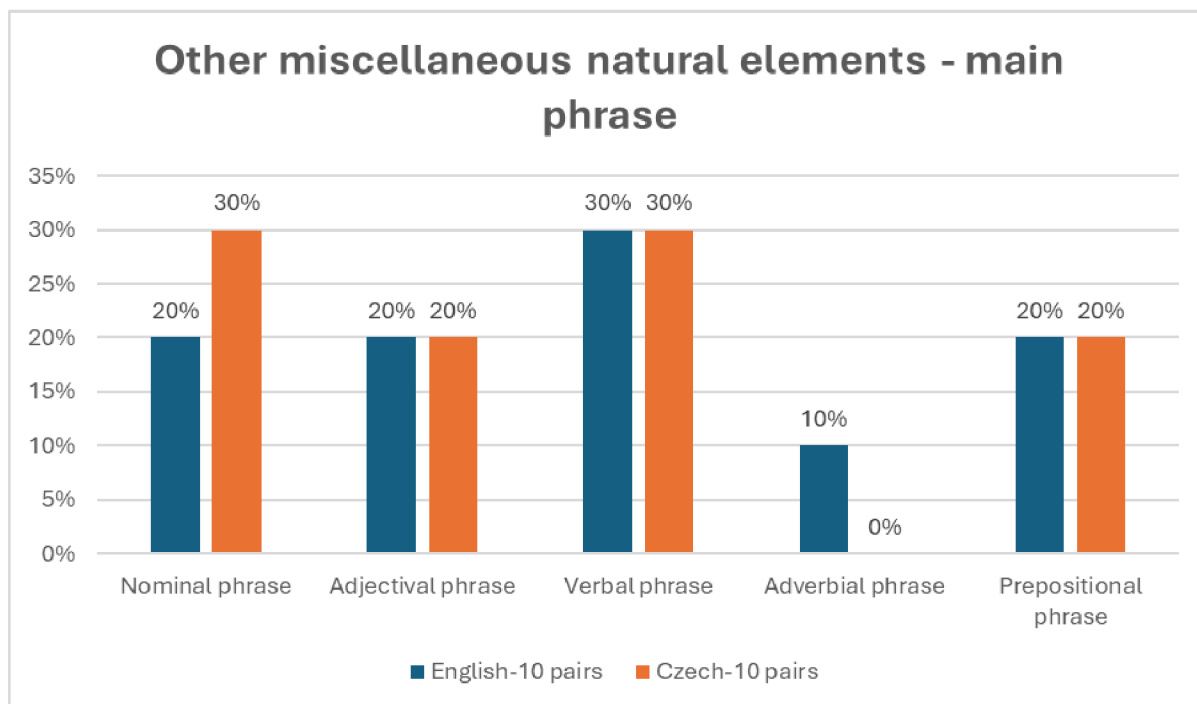


FIGURE 8: OTHER MISCELLANEOUS NATURAL ELEMENTS AND THEIR MAIN PHRASE

Figure 8 concentrates on the category of other miscellaneous natural elements: 10 English idioms and 10 Czech idioms. It illustrates that the vast majority of the English and Czech idioms in this category act as a verbal phrase, 30 % in both languages. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of idioms are in the adverbial phrase category: 10 % of idioms in English and zero idioms in Czech.

According to all of the figures, it is clear that there are not many adverbial idioms. The remaining idioms act as nominal phrases, adjectival phrases or prepositional phrases. All of these categories contain 20 % of idioms, except for one. There are 30 % of Czech idioms which act as a nominal phrase.

4. Summary of Results

Idioms in total												
Correspondence			Main phrase									
T	P	N	N		Adj		V		Adv		Prep	
			Eng	Cz	Eng	Cz	Eng	Cz	Eng	Cz	Eng	Cz
32,5 %	40 %	27,5 %	43 %	45 %	20 %	20 %	25 %	23 %	5 %	2 %	7 %	10 %

TABLE 3: CORRESPONDENCE AND THE MAIN PHRASE BASED ON ALL OF THE IDIOMS

For the overall summary of the obtained results, the main research questions for this analysis was: To what extent do selected Czech and English nature-related idioms correspond in terms of syntax, lexis, semantics and the main phrase?

Overall, most nature-related idioms 40 % fall into the Partial Correspondence category, matching on two levels or only semantically and must include an animal. 32,5 % of idioms belong to the Total Correspondence category, aligning on all studied levels: semantic structure, lexical components, and semantic correspondence. The last category - Non-correspondence contains 27,5 % of idioms, matching only semantically without animals or not matching at all. Regarding the main phrase, the majority of nature idioms function as nominal phrases 43 % in English, 45 % in Czech. The second most common phrase is the verbal phrase with 25 % of idioms in English and 23 % in Czech. There are 20 % of idioms in both languages that act as an adjective phrase. The two last categories contain the lowest percentage of idioms - the prepositional phrase with 7 % in English and 10 % in Czech and the least number of idioms act as an adverbial phrase 5 % in English and 2 % in Czech. Nevertheless, it has to be taken into consideration that the results are not fixed and they may vary in different idioms are chosen.

Conclusion

The bachelor's thesis aimed to analyze Czech and English idioms related to nature. Furthermore, there were three categories selected, animal idioms, weather idioms and idioms which belong to the category: other miscellaneous natural elements.

The central question for this analysis was as follows:

1) To what extent do selected Czech and English nature-related idioms correspond in terms of syntax, lexis, semantics and the main phrase?

The necessary data were collected from various sources. The idiomatic pairs were gathered mostly from books by Eva Mrháčová (2006) and the Cambridge Idioms Dictionary (2006), three national corpuses, BNC, COCA and CNC were also used to gather the missing information. All of this information had been put into tables for better orientation.

The results showed that the majority of the idiomatic pairs are Partially Correspondent, this means that that they agree on the lexical and syntactical level or only on the semantic level, but the two idioms have to contain an animal. Secondly, to summarize the results concerning the main phrase it can be seen that the most of the selected idioms act as a nominal phrase.

The first difficulty when creating this analysis was that there are not many sources concerning the origin of Czech idioms. Therefore, not all of the chosen Czech idioms have a traceable origin. The second difficult part was to collect information on Czech regional variations. The Czech language is only spoken in one country - the Czech Republic, therefore the same vocabulary is used throughout the country. There are two parts, Moravia and Bohemia, where there may be minor differences regarding Czech language. Still, it was difficult to collect Moravian and Bohemian idioms. In other words, this analysis has shown that there are not enough sources regarding Czech idioms in general.

There are limitations regarding this thesis. First of all, the range of the chosen idioms is small, therefore the results of the present study are only representative for this particular set of idiomatic expressions and not for all English-Czech idiomatic pairs in general. To better understand the implications of these results, future studies could address a different category of idioms. These findings could either confirm the results or disprove them. This analysis contains useful information for translators. Analyzing idioms helps translators and interpreters in finding equivalent expressions while preserving meaning and cultural context. The practical part offers a short dictionary of idioms for students and teachers, illustrating idiom formation and literal translations. Teachers can implement the tables from this analysis into teaching and make learning entertaining. This analysis could also be useful for future studies, with the potential for expanding the dictionary to cover different idiomatic categories.

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