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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND CZECH IDIOMS RELATED TO  
ANIMALS

Bakalářská práce

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## **Prohlášení**

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracoval samostatně s využitím uvedených pramenů a literatury a souhlasím s uveřejněním této práce.

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## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis compares English and Czech idioms related to animals. The first part describes the theoretical background of idioms, define what idioms are and divide them into several groups according to their origin, structure and semantic features. The second part contains the comparison of the selected sample of idioms. Each English idiom was defined, and the Czech equivalent was assigned to it. This research was created to enable Czech students to understand the problematics of idioms.

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## 1. Introduction

The main aim of this project is to compare English and Czech idioms containing animal words in singular and plural forms. Idioms in this project are going to be compared on the semantic, lexical and formal level. In the comparison is also included the historical development of idioms with explanations why the English language uses different animals in idioms than the Czech language.

This bachelor's project contains more than 100 English idiomatic expressions related to animals which were taken from diverse sources, analysed and assigned to their Czech equivalents if there were any. The collection of idioms is based on printed dictionaries as well as on online sources which are listed at the end of this project in a section called "Bibliography".

The thesis is divided into four parts. The first part is the brief summary of the history of both languages, English and Czech. There is described how these languages developed, from which language family they came, most related languages and main differences between them.

The second part is focused on idioms. The theoretical background, the historical development and the usage of idioms in both languages are included in this part of the bachelor's project. Idioms are there divided into groups according to their structure, form and origin.

The third part includes an overview of all English idioms with animal words I have found and there is also a section with English idioms which correspond to their Czech equivalents. Each English idiom is explained by the definition found in dictionaries or on the internet and there is also a sentence that explains the meaning of the idiom.

The last, final part summarizes the whole thesis, highlights main differences between English and Czech and contains results of the analysis. Comments of results and observations are also included in this part as well as the list of sources.

## **2. A brief history of languages**

### **2.1. The English language**

The English language belongs to the Indo-European language family and this language family is further subdivided into two groups, satem languages and centum languages. English belongs to the western sub-branch of Germanic languages and that means it is the centum language. (McMordie, 1964, p. 1-3) Most related languages of English are for example Scots, German and Dutch.

Germanic tribes of Angles, Saxons and Jutes brought Old English into England in the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. These Germanic tribes outperformed the native Celtic population in martial skills and subdued them with ease. When the country was conquered, Germanic tribes (nowadays known as “Anglo-Saxons”) established seven kingdoms. The Kingdom of Wessex became the most important of these seven kingdoms, particularly during the reign of the King Alfred the Great (871-899). He made the Kingdom of Wessex a cultural and literary centre. The demise of the Kingdom of Wessex occurred in 1066 when King Harold was defeated by William the Conqueror, the duke of Normandy, in the battle of Hastings. (Vachek, 1978, p. 5-6)

The Invasion of William the Conqueror is the crucial event in the linguistic history of the English language. After this event, the society in England was divided into a lower class, which used solely Old English, and a higher class using Norman French (the Romance language) as the main language for communication. Despite this, English managed to maintain a Germanic character for the next hundred years, but after this time, languages began to mix, more precisely Norman French started to influence English vocabulary and grammar. In this time period (approximately 1100-1500) Old English developed into Middle English. As time went, Middle English became more popular than French in society. The peak of English prosperity at this time was Geoffrey Chaucer and his work. (Vachek, 1978, p. 6)

Besides Norman French, Old English and Middle English were also influenced by Scandinavian languages. During the 8th century, Scandinavians began to raid on the British Isles. In the following two centuries Scandinavians were settling in England and for this particular reason, the linguistic influences culminated at the beginning of the 10th century. The connection between Scandinavian languages and Old English deepened when Germanic and Scandinavian people united against the common enemy, William the Conqueror. (Vachek, 1978, p. 78)

As the language evolved over the time, there were significant changes in the system of vocalic phonemes and in other main phonological processes. At the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, English reached the next stage of development. This means, since the year 1500, Middle English developed into Modern English, which was further influenced by mixing languages during the Colonial era. Thanks to these events, English has become one of the most widely used languages and it was formed into its present form. (Vachek, 1978, p. 84)

## **2.2. The Czech language**

The Czech language belongs to the same language family as English, the Indo-European family. In spite of that these two languages belong to the same language family, they are considerably different. Czech does not belong to centrum languages, but it belongs to statem languages. The Czech language belongs to the group of languages that developed from the Proto-Slavic language and this group is called West-Slavic languages. Most similar languages are for example Polish, Slovak and Silesian. (Cvrček et al., 2010, p. 27)

Czech was greatly influenced by the German language, not only because Germany is the western neighbour of the Czech Republic, but also because Czech people lived under the Habsburg rule from 1620 to 1918 and in this time, German was an official language. (Cvrček, et al. 2010, p. 33-34)



### 3. Idioms

#### 3.1. What are idioms?

The word *idiom* comes from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This word was created by mixing three words from three different languages; *idiome* (Middle French), *idioma* (Latin), *idioma* (Greek), each of these three words indicated peculiarities in the language (“idiom”, Online Etymology Dictionary).

Currently, it is possible to find many definitions of this word in dictionaries, and all are slightly different. For example, the online version of *Cambridge dictionary* defines the term as “a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own.”

However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates idiom as “a form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase, etc., used in a distinctive way in a particular language, dialect, or language variety; *spec.* a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from the meanings of the individual words.”

The next dictionary called *Merriam-Webster* claims that idiom is “an expression in the usage of a language that is peculiar to itself either in having a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meanings of its elements (such as *up in the air* for “undecided”) or in its grammatically atypical use of words (such as *give way*).”

The next definition of idioms is that they “are formations of two or more words. Idioms are not a homogenous category and they differ considerably in their construction.” (Kvetko, 2009, p. 27)

Seidl and McMordie (1988) claim that “idioms are not only colloquial expressions, as many people believe. They appear in formal style and in slang, in poetry, in language of Shakespeare and the Bible. What then is an idiom? An idiom can be defined as a number of words which, when taken together, have a different meaning from the individual meanings of each word.” (Seidl and McMordie, 1988, p. 12-13)

“Under Idiom we include peculiar uses of particular words, and also particular phrases or turns of expression which, from long usage, have become stereotyped in English.” This definition can be found in the book called *English Idioms And How To Use Them* by W. McMordie (1964, p. 5).

It is clear from these definitions that it is not easy to determine exactly what an idiom is, although these definitions are very similar. I personally prefer the definition by Charles F. Hockett because it works with my imagination and it helps me realize how many idioms occur in the language. The definition: “Let us momentarily use the term Y for any grammatical form the meaning of which is not deducible from its structure. Any Y, in an occurrence in which it is not a constituent of a larger Y, is an idiom. A vast number of composite forms in any language are idioms. If we are to be consistent in our use of the definition, we are forced also to grant every morpheme idiomatic status, save when it is occurring as a constituent of a larger idiom, since a morpheme has no structure from which its meaning could be deduced.” (Makkai, 1972, p. 28)

In the general conclusion, the term *idiom* refers to a fixed set of words whose meaning cannot be deduced from the original meaning of individual words in the set. The English language has been influenced and is still influenced by many other languages. Therefore, it is a good language to express distinctions, and it is rich in vocabulary. In addition, the English language contains many idiomatic expressions and they are widely used in everyday life. (W. McMordie, 1964, p. 4-5)

## 3.2. The classification of idioms

### 3.2.1. The origin

A certain group of idioms originated many years or centuries ago. These idioms were usually formed to display everyday situations in the ordinary life – the acquisition of goods on the marketplace, woodcutting... The emergence of some idioms from this group is associated with specific personalities such as Thomas Hobson (*Hobson's choice* – Hobson lent horses to students and he wanted to be sure in that every horse was used equally. He contrived an exceptional strategy. Every time a customer came in his stable, Hobson convinced him to borrow a horse which was the nearest to the door. That means, even there was the stable full of horses, a customer had only one choice). (Applebee and Rush, 1992, p. 1-26)

Next idioms that originated in the past: *be on tenterhooks* – waiting nervously for something to happen; *carry the can* – to take the blame or responsibility for something that is wrong or has not succeeded; *eat a humble pie* – to admit that you were wrong; *money for old rope* – money you get for doing something very easy. (Applebee and Rush, 1992, p. 1-26)

Most languages in the world are constantly evolving and English is not an exception. That means new words and new idioms are being created. In the last few decades, many idioms connected to the media were created, especially those which are connected to the television and newspapers. Examples of newly formed idioms: *hype* – over-expose in the media in order to advertise/promote a film, book, person etc.; *junk food* – food that is unhealthy but is quick and easy to eat; *state-of-the-art* – the best technology which is currently available/can be achieved; *nightmare scenario* – the most awful series of events that can be imagined. (Applebee and Rush, 1992, p. 26-41)

The English vocabulary is very often enriched by “borrowing” (=acquiring new words from other languages. (Vachek, 1991, p. 77-78) Thanks to this phenomenon, English has taken on several idioms, however, they are spoken with an English accent. Examples of foreign idioms: *blitz* – a fast, violent attack on a town, city, etc., usually with bombs dropped from aircraft; *faux pas* – words or behaviour that are a social mistake or not polite; *paparazzi* – showbusiness photographers who follow the rich and famous anywhere to get a good picture; *brouhaha* – loud noises due to intense activity or a long and heated argument (Applebee and Rush, 1992, p. 53-65)

Idioms also come from informal sources such as Slang. Although Slang is informal, it is popular and widely used by people when they are talking to friends. A certain group of

Slang idioms comes from a secret language of criminals. These idioms became so popular that almost everybody uses them now (*rabbit* – talk too much; This expression comes from cockney rhyming slang). As examples from Slang idioms we can mention these: *bumf* – printed information, such as an advertisement or official document, that is usually unwanted and not interesting; *corny* – showing no new ideas or too often repeated, and therefore not funny or interesting; *duff someone up* – hit someone many times/beat someone up; *old banger* – an old, dirty car which is almost worn-out. (Applebee and Rush, 1992, p. 65-77)

### 3.2.2. The structure

According to the structure, we can divide idioms into large groups. These groups are a) idioms with the regular structure and without the clear meaning, b) idioms with the irregular structure and with the clear meaning, c) idioms with the irregular structure and with the meaning which is hard to guess. Some idioms are syntactically idiosyncratic, but these mistakes do not affect the meaning. Group “a” contains the largest number of idioms.

Examples: (Seidl and McMordie, 1988, p. 13)

- a) *Cut no ice, have a bee in one's bonnet*
- b) *Give someone to understand, do the dirty on someone*
- c) *Be at large, be at daggers drawn*

However, other authors, such as Kvetko (2009), prefer a different classification. Kvetko's classification (2009, p. 26-27) is focused on the construction of idioms and his main interest is in their length. According to Kvetko (2009, p. 26-27), there are two large groups – phrasal idioms and sentence idioms, which are divided into subgroups.

#### a) Phrasal idioms

##### a. Syntagmatic idioms

Phraseological units belonging to this subgroup can be further subdivided into next two groups, which are syntagmatic verbal idioms (shortly verbal idioms or semi-clause idioms) and non-verbal idioms. In following paragraphs are listed examples that Kvetko (2009) gives in his book called “An Outline of English Phraseology”.

- Verbal idioms (V + N, V + prep + N, V + Adv, V + Adj, etc.): *split hairs, smell a rat, kick the bucket, take off, come clean*

- Non-verbal idioms (Adj + N, (as) + Adj + as + N, N + and + N, like + N (+ Adj) + N, etc.): *big wheel, dark horse, (as) white as a sheet, (as) cool as a cucumber, tooth and nail, like a fish out of water*

b. Minimal idioms (non-syntagmatic phrasal idioms)

In other words, minimal idioms are non-syntagmatic phrasal idioms that contain at least one full word and one functional (form) word. Kvetko admits, that not every linguist regards minimal idioms as a full-fledged type of idioms. Examples: *of course, by the way, at all, like hell, to boot* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 27)

b) Sentence idioms

This group represents idioms with a complete clause (sentence) structure of a different kind. These sentence structures can be simple, compound, complex, etc. Examples: *The coast is clear. Take it easy. Spare the rod and spoil the child. He laughs best who laughs last.* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 28)

c) Mixed idioms

There are also idioms which have mixed structure (there is a possibility that different variants of one idiom belong to different types of idioms). Example: *at last – at long last* (minimal – syntagmatic) (Kvetko, 2009, p. 28)

### 3.2.3. Semantic features

#### 3.2.3.1. Literality of idioms

When we are talking about literalness in a connection with idioms then a context is a big factor, because it can totally change the meaning of an idiom. There is a certain group of idioms that has a twofold semantic structure – the first meaning represents the exact meaning of words and the second meaning represents the transferred meaning (example: *dark horse* – a horse of a dark colour, or a person who hides special personal qualities). It is obvious that most phraseological units cannot be taken literally, because they have features of metaphors, metonyms, personifications, hyperboles, exaggerations, ironies, etc. (example: *snake in the grass* – an unpleasant person who cannot be trusted, *a storm in a teacup* – a lot of unnecessary anger and worry about a matter that is not important, *it rains cats and dogs* – it rains very heavily). (Kvetko, 2009, p. 30-31)

Generally, in most cases we are more interested in the transferred meaning than in the exact meaning of the words which are in an idiom, because idioms are meant to express emotions and the transferred meaning is usually coloured with emotions. On the contrary, the literal meaning is usually without emotions. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 31)

According to Kvetko (2009, p. 31), idioms can be divided into three groups depending on the transferred meaning. These groups are pure idioms, semi-opaque idioms and semi-idioms. Unfortunately, it is not always easy to find boundaries between these groups.

- Pure idioms – In other words, demotivated idioms or opaque idioms. Idioms, which belong to this group, have not an obvious or clear connection between the transferred meaning and the exact meaning of words that create the idiom (it is hard to imagine the transferred meaning when we do not know it). As examples we can mention: *shoot the breeze* – to spend time talking things that are not important; *spill the beans* – tell somebody something that should be kept secret or private; *hair of the dog (that bit you)* – an alcoholic drink taken as a cure the morning after an occasion when you have drunk too much alcohol; *lock, stock and barrel* – including all or every part of something. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 31)
- Semi-opaque idioms – This group is also known as semi-transparent idioms or transparent metaphors. The difference between semi-opaque idioms and pure idioms we can find in that, there is a connection between the transferred meaning of the idiom and the exact meaning of words that create the idiom (it is easier to guess the transferred meaning from individual words). Examples: *add fuel to the flames* – to make an argument or bad situation worse, *throw in the towel* – to admit defeat, *behind closed doors* – hidden from public or in secret, *bring somebody to his/her knees* – make somebody feel defeated. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 31-32)
- Semi-idioms – There are phraseological units that contain at least one word that is used in the figurative meaning and the next word has the literal meaning, for example, *horse sense* – practical knowledge and good judgement about ordinary life, *promise the moon* – to say that you will do much greater things than you will ever be able to achieve, *white lie* – a lie that is told in order to be polite or to stop someone from being upset by the

truth, *dirty money* – money that someone gets in an unfair, illegal, or dishonest way. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 32)

Kvetko (2009) claims that there is a group of linguists who define the next type of idioms called Relatively transparent idioms. Idioms in this group are multi-word, but they function as a whole (*long time no see* – it is sad when you meet someone who you have not seen for a long period of time). (Kvetko, 2009, p. 32)

A similar classification can be found in Glucksberg's (2001) "Understanding Figurative Language: from Metaphors to Idioms". Glucksberg classifies idioms according to their compositionality; he recognizes three basic groups. (Glucksberg, 2001, p. 73)

- Noncompositional idioms – There is no obvious connection between the transferred meaning of the idiom and individual words that create the idiom. Glucksberg gives an example *spick and span* – very clean and neat.
- Partially compositional idioms – This group includes idioms, in which we can find a certain relationship between the transferred meaning and the exact meaning of words in the idiom. As an example, we can mention *kick the bucket* – to die.
- Fully compositional idioms – In this group is an evident relation between individual words in the idiom and the transferred meaning of the idiom, such as in the idiom *pop the question* – to ask someone to marry you. (Glucksberg, 2001, p. 73)

### 3.2.3.2. Polysemy

The difference between words and idioms in the English language is that most idioms have only one meaning (they are monosemantic), for an example we can mention *white elephant* – something that has cost a lot of money but has no useful purpose. On the other hand, there are idioms that are polysemantic even their amount is smaller (*make good* – a) do well in life and work, b) carry out, c) restore, repair, d) complete). It is important to discern polysemous idioms from homonymous idioms. Homonymous idioms are idioms with the distinct meaning, but with the same words used in them (*make hay while the sun shines* – to make good use of an opportunity while it lasts; *make hay* – make a mess). (Kvetko, 2009, p. 32-33)

### 3.2.4. Functions of idioms

Phraseological units have many functions in the language, people use them to describe situations, name objects or idioms can express certain generalizations, advice, truths or make an evaluation. According to their common usage, we can distinguish idioms into groups: idioms with nominative function, a communicative function, a combination of both and idioms without any of these functions. (Kvetko,2009, p. 37)

- Idioms with nominative function – These idioms name objects, states, actions, etc. Their structure is a phrase. Examples: *play second fiddle* – to be less important or in a weaker position than someone else; *as cool as a cucumber* – somebody is very calm
- Idioms with a communicative function – They describe situations and express independent statements. Their structure is a sentence. Examples: *The coast is clear.* – it is safe to do something or go somewhere because no one is watching or listening who would prevent you or catch you; *All that glitters is not gold.* - it is said about something that seems to be good on the surface, but might not be when you look at it more closely
- Idioms with both nominative and communicative functions – Idioms with a changeable structure. Examples: *break the ice/the ice is broken* – to make people who have not met before feel more relaxed with each other; *lead somebody by the nose/somebody is led by the nose* – to control someone and make them do exactly what you want
- Idioms without any of these functions – This group contains modal, interjectional idioms and idioms with cohesive function. Examples: *like hell* – very much; *by the way* – it is used to introduce a new subject or to give further information (Kvetko, 2009, p. 37-38)

### 3.2.5. The use of idioms

As well as the English language, idioms are still developing. New idioms are being created, but older ones are becoming archaic. From this point of view, we can say that some idioms are more important for English speakers than others because they are used more frequently. Idioms with the highest frequency of use are minimal idioms (phraseological units with simple structure). Most used idioms are *of course* on the first place, followed by *at all*, *all right*, *at least*, *in fact*, *after all*. These idioms are the backbone of the language. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 40)



A certain group of idioms is used predominantly by older people because young people consider them as old-fashioned (*baker's dozen* – a group of the set of thirteen; *what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander* – it is said to emphasize that if one person is allowed to do something or to behave in a particular way when another person must be allowed to do that thing or behave in that way too). “Fashionability” of idioms is often influenced by mass media, people consider some idioms that are used in mass media repeatedly as clichés (*captain of industry* – a person who has an important job in the industry and who can influence the company and national planning; *accidents will happen* – it is said after an accident in order to make it seem less bad). (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41)

From formality, many idioms are used when people are talking with their friends or close family members and that means they are used in informal situations especially by younger generations (*shut your mouth* – to stop talking; *full of crap/shit* – talking nonsense or rubbish). However, there are phraseological units that can be used in formal conversations or writings (*null and void* – having no legal force). Kvetko (2009, p. 41) divides idioms into several groups according to their formality and these groups are:

- Informal idioms – *be my guest* – something you say when you give someone permission to do or use something, *full of beans* – to have a lot of energy and enthusiasm, *a basket case* – someone who is extremely nervous or anxious and is therefore unable to organize their life, *bad hair day* – a day when you feel that you do not look attractive and everything seems to go wrong (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Very informal idioms – *get stuffed* – used to show anger or disagreement, *take a leak* – to urinate, *pissed as a newt* – be very drunk, *not give a monkey's* – do not care (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Formal idioms – *fall prey to somebody/something* – to be harmed or deceived by someone or something, *make so bold* – to act or speak in a daring and confident way, *of little avail* – not very helpful, *how do you do* – a formal greeting (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Literary idioms – *plough a lonely furrow* – to do something alone or do something that no one else will do, *the land of milk and honey* – a place where there is plenty of food and money and life is very easy, *cut the Gordian knot* – to solve a difficult problem in a very direct way by doing something forceful or extreme (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)

- Old fashioned idioms – *the old maid* – a woman who is not married or has not had a sexual relationship and is not now young, *not on your Nelly* – there is no possibility of that, *give up the ghost* – to die (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Foreign idioms – *enfant terrible* – a famous or successful person who likes to shock people, *persona non grata* – someone who is not popular or accepted by others, *lingua franca* – a language used for communication between groups of people who speak different languages, *mea culpa* – a formal acknowledgement of personal fault or error (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)

The use of idioms in spoken language is very often influenced by emotions. Idioms can be used to express both negative and positive emotions, the most common classification of idioms by emotions is this:

- Derogatory idioms – *fat cat* – a wealthy and privileged person, *be wet behind the ears* – to be young and without experiences, *a bag lady* – a woman who has no home and carries everything that she owns around with her in bags, *mutton dressed as a lamb* – a way of describing an older woman who is dressed in a style that is more suitable for a younger woman (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Offensive idioms – *go apeshit* – to become extremely angry, *son of a bitch* – an unpleasant man, *stick something up your ass* – it is used to tell someone angrily that you do not want or need something that they are offering you (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Humorous idioms – *have a bun in the oven* – to be pregnant, *be no spring chicken* – to be no longer young, *name your poison* – it is used to ask what type of alcoholic drink someone would like (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Ironic idioms – *a fine kettle of fish* – a very difficult and annoying situation, *big deal* – it is said when you do not think that what someone has said or done is important, *clear as mud* – very difficult to understand, *pigs might fly* – it is said when you think that there is no chance at all of something happening (Kvetko, 2009, p. 41-42)
- Euphemistic idioms – *be economical with the truth* – avoiding stating the true facts about a situation or lying about it, *spend a penny* – to urinate, *be*

*not all there* – to be slightly stupid or strange, *be in the family way* – to be pregnant (Kvetko, 2009, p. 42)

### 3.2.6. Geographical variations of idioms

The majority of English phraseological units have the same form all over the world, however, exceptions can be found. Idioms with the same meaning can have different forms in different countries (Great Britain, the USA, Australia). If we compare British and American idioms, we can divide them into the following groups: identical idioms, different idioms, partially different idioms, idiomatic false friends. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 47)

- Identical idioms – These idioms are common in all varieties. Examples: *live from hand to mouth* – to have just enough money to live on and nothing extra, *be in the red* – be spending and owing more money than is being earned. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 47-49)
- Different idioms – Phraseological units that are only used in American English or British English. Examples for American English: *beat the bushes* – to search thoroughly through all possible areas, *fish or cut bait* – to make a choice between alternatives. Examples for British English: *be in a cleft stick* – to be in a situation where it is very difficult to decide what you do, usually because both of your two choices of action would cause problems, *out of the ark* – to be very old-fashioned. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 47-49)
- Partially different idioms – These idioms have different imagery and symbolism, but they have one or more common components, for example, *if the cap fits (wear it) (Br.) / if the shoe fits (wear it) (Amer.)* – it is used to tell someone that they should accept a criticism that another person has made. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 47-49)
- False friends – Idioms from this group are quite rare. Individual words that create them are the same, but the transferred meaning is different. Examples: *be on the up and up* – Brit. improving, increasing, becoming more successful / Amer. not hiding anything, be honest. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 47-49)

Australian phraseological units are a mix of British and American idioms and there are idioms that are used only in Australia and this makes the situation with Australian idioms

complicated. Idioms typical for Australia are *be as full as a boot* – to be drunk, *come the raw prawn* – to try to deceive someone, etc. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 49)

### 3.3. The conversion of idioms

In the spoken language there can often occur situations in which native speakers or people who know idioms very well, modify the idiom so it fits better in this certain situation.

Between most common transformations belong separation, deletion, substitution, addition and blending. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 43)

- Separation – The idiom is divided into parts within one or more sentences.  
Examples: *as quick as lightning* – *Was James so quick yesterday? As lightning, said Rhonda.*

*don't wash your dirty linen in public* – *That's our dirty linen.*  
*We won't wash it in public.* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 44)

- Deletion – A certain part of idiom is omitted, or the idiom is shortened.  
Examples: *don't look a gift horse in the mouth* – *It's a little house in the woods ... and he asked me if I wanted it, I said sure. Don't look a gift horse, right?*

*cross the bridge when you come to it* – *Try not cross the bridges because you don't know what is going to happen.* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 44)

- Substitution – One or more parts of idiom are replaced by another word, meanwhile the structure of the original idioms remains the same.  
Examples: *a wolf in sheep's clothing* – *She suddenly felt insignificant ... and that being a wolf in spinster's clothing.*

*you can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink* –  
*You can take your son to college, but you can't make him think.* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 44)

- Addition – A new word is added to the idiom.  
Examples: *be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth* – *I even believe that someday we two outsiders ... having not been born with a silver espionage spoon in our mouth like Harry, may own two pieces of the Agency.*

*go through the motions* – *That way they could go through the frozen motions of being a family.* (Kvetko, 2009, p. 44)

- Blending – Two idiom are linked and used at the same time.

Examples: *like father, like son + like mother like daughter – Maybe her talent was inherited. Old James had always had quite a reputation with the ladies. Like father, like daughter.*

*have an old head on young shoulders + have one's head screwed on the right way – Toms got his head screwed on his shoulders the right way, and he is a lot older than you. (Kvetko, 2009, p. 44)*

## 4. The Corpus

### 4.1. The creation of the corpus

Idioms in this bachelor's project were taken from various sources. Most idioms come from printed books written by acclaimed authors which were evaluated as the most reliable source. On the other hand, the vast majority of definitions (that were used to explain the meaning of the idiom) come from online dictionaries. However, there are some problems connected to idioms that can be found in dictionaries and these problems are in that they are sorted alphabetically, which is useless for purposes of this project.

- Printed sources of idioms:

*English Idioms* by Jennifer Seidl, W. McMordie

*Illustrated American Idioms* by Dean Curry

*An Outline of English Phraseology* by Pavol Kvetko

*Help with Idioms* by Jane Applebee, Anton Rush

*English Idioms and how to use them* by W. McMordie

*A Book of English Idioms* by V. H. Collins

*A Second Book of English Idioms* by V. H. Collins

*Anglická frazeologie* by Karel Beneš, Alois Beneš

- Online sources of idioms:

*Cambridge Dictionary* ([www.dictionary.cambridge.org/](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org/))

*Merriam-Webster* ([www.merriam-webster.com/](http://www.merriam-webster.com/))

*Oxford English Dictionary* ([www.oed.com/](http://www.oed.com/))

*The Free Dictionary* ([www.thefreedictionary.com/](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/))

### 4.2. The methodology

Phraseological units mentioned in this section are going to be compared with their Czech equivalents (if there is any). English idioms are going to be mentioned first, then the transferred meaning is going to be explained and each English idiom is going to be used in a whole sentence. The Czech alternative is going to be given without a closer specification because the aim of this project is English idioms.

Idioms are going to be organized into three groups according to their Czech equivalents. The first group (A) contains English idioms that have Czech equivalents with the same individual words (which are related to the same animal) used in the idiom and also have the same or almost the same transferred meaning. The second group (B) comprises English

idioms with Czech equivalents that have the same transferred meaning, but individual words used in the idiom can differ a little bit (usually there is a different animal used in the idiom). In the next group (C), there are English idioms without Czech equivalents (there is a possibility that Czech equivalents exist but were not found). In my opinion, most idioms are going to be in group B and overall the similarity between English and Czech idioms is going to be about 83 %.

**The following is an excerpt from the data presented in total in the Appendix - Group A**

|                             |  |                            |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| A bear hug                  | the action of putting your arms around someone very tightly and quite roughly                        | medvědí objetí             |
|                             | He gave his friend a bear hug.   |                            |
| A big fish in a little pond | someone who is important only in a small community   | velká ryba v málem rybníce |
|                             | In school, he was a big fish in a little pond, but now he is just another unsuccessful artist.       |                            |
| A black sheep               | the one worthless member of family   | černá ovce                 |
|                             | She is the black sheep of our family.  |                            |
| A busy bee                  | a busy, active person who moves quickly from task to task  | pilný jako včelka          |
|                             | My father is a real busy bee around my birthday.   |                            |
| A cold fish                 | a cold aloof person  | leklá ryba                 |
|                             | I really like her, but her friend is a cold fish.  |                            |
| A dark horse                | a person who has greater abilities than he shows or than people are aware of                         | černý kůň                  |
|                             | James is a dark horse of this race, I think he will win.   |                            |
| A fish out of water         | someone who feels uncomfortable in unfamiliar surroundings or company                                | ryba na suchu              |
|                             | I feel like a fish out of water in my new job.   |                            |
| A snake in the grass        | an unpleasant person who cannot be trusted   | had v trávě                |
|                             | Did you hear that Eva's best friend stole money from her bank account?<br>What a snake in the grass. |                            |



**The following is an excerpt from the data presented in total in the Appendix - Group B**

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| A bird in the hand is worth two in a bush. | it is better to be content with what one has or could easily get than to take the risk of trying to get more and in the end have nothing | lepší vrabec v hrsti než holub na střeše |
|  | You should not quit your job before you find a new one even if you do not like it. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.          |  |
| A birdbrain                                | be really stupid   | slepičí mozek                            |
|  | I am a birdbrain! I forgot my ID!  |  |
| A cat nap                                  | a short sleep taken during the day   | šlofik                                   |
|  | I am really tired. I going to take a cat nap before we go.   |  |
| A different kettle of a fish               | something entirely different, usually more difficult   | jiný šálek čaje                          |
|  | Marek Vašut is a good actor but Dwayne Johnson is a different kettle of a fish.  |  |
| A Guinea pig                               | someone who is used in an experiment   | pokusný králik                           |
|  | He volunteered to act as a guinea pig in the experiment.   |  |
| A hen party                                | a social evening for women only where men are not invited, often held before a wedding   | dámská jízda                             |
|  | Every woman needs to meet girlfriends on a hen party.  |  |
| A home bird                                | someone who prefers to spend his social and free time at home  | povaleč                                  |
|  | I have not seen her for a while, because she does not like leaving her house. She is such a home bird.                                   |  |
| A lion in the path                         | an obstacle or danger in one's way   | házet klacky po nohy                     |
|  | I admire his decisiveness, he keeps going even the life puts lions in his path.  |  |

**The following is an excerpt from the data presented in total in the Appendix - Group C**

|                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| A bird of passage    | a person who stays for only a short period of time in one place, job, etc.:                                    | nestálý a přelétavý člověk                           |
|                      | Jerry often changes his job because he is a typical bird of passage.   |  |
| A lame duck          | an unsuccessful person or thing  | neúspěšný člověk                                     |
|                      | A lame duck tradesman cannot lead a successful business.   |  |
| A queer fish         | a person who is difficult to deal with because of his unusual character  | podivín  |
|                      | Everyone could tell he was a queer fish as soon as she arrived at the party with his weird hairstyle.          |  |
| A white elephant     | a possession that is burdensome in expense or trouble  | zbytečná přítěž (v jistém slova smyslu Danažský dar) |
|                      | At first, Anne was happy to inherit the house, but it soon proved to be a white elephant she could not afford. |  |
| A wild goose chase   | a prolonged or chaotic search for something that is difficult to find  | zbytečná námaha, plýtvání časem                      |
|                      | Those idiots sent me on a wild goose chase to watch a film that has not been released yet.                     |  |
| The shaggy dog story | a long joke that has an intentionally silly or meaningless ending  | zdlouhavý příběh bez pointy                          |
|                      | Jerry was known for telling shaggy dog stories every time he visited us, our children were annoyed.            |  |
| All geese are swans  | someone is overexaggerating and not in touch with reality  | zveličovat, přikrášlovat realitu                     |
|                      | All geese are swans if he thinks everybody at school likes him because nobody likes him!                       |  |

### 4.3. The result of the comparison

Idioms that were found in books (mentioned in the previous chapter) were sorted into three tables according to their Czech equivalents. Definitions explaining the meaning of idioms were assigned to appropriate idioms and were created sentences to a more detail explanation of phraseological units.

The number of idioms making up this comparison is 142. The result of this comparison is going to be presented in a table. In this table is going to be stated a percentage of phraseological units in each group, that means we can say how similar are English idioms containing animals and Czech idioms all of kinds (at the theoretical level).

Table 1. The percentage of idioms in each group

| Total number of idioms | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 142                    | 55      | 44      | 43      |
| Percentage             | 38,73 % | 30,99 % | 30,28 % |

As we can see in Table 1., there are only about 30 % phraseological units that have not Czech equivalents. However, English idioms mostly use words more general (example: *bird*) meanwhile Czech equivalents use more specific words such as *vrána*, *holub*, *vrabec* (this statement comes from a comparison in group B). Furthermore, the English language uses a word *fish* in its idioms more times than the Czech language uses a word *ryba* which is the exact translation (the word *fish* (or related shapes) was used in 13 idioms meanwhile *ryba* (or related shapes) was used only 5 times). Most English idioms related to animals contain words indicating domestic animals (*pig*, *horse*, *dog*, *cat*, ...) but there are exceptions in which words contain wildy living animals (*bear*, *bat*, *fox*, ...)

Furthermore, English idioms containing a word *dog* (or related shapes) occur predominantly in groups A and B. There are fourteen idioms with a word *dog* and only two of them are in group C – six is in group A and the rest is in group B. That means English and Czech idioms are relatively similar when they are containing a word *dog*, but there are words that have an even higher degree of similarity than a *dog*. This word is, for example, a *mouse*

that occurs only in group A and that means each idiom with the word *mouse* has the exact Czech equivalent. The next word with a high degree of similarity is a *bird*. From ten cases containing this word, there is only one idiom in group C. The *bird* occurs in group A three times and in group B it occurs six times that means this layout is considerably unbalanced because 60 % of idioms with a word *bird* is in group B. On the other hand, there are animals which were not so successful in the degree of similarity as these two. As an example, we can mention a word *horse* because in the research sample eleven cases contain this word and five of them occur in group C, three of them in group A and the rest in group B so almost a half of idioms with the word *horse* do not have any kind of the Czech equivalent.

As it was said, words denoting the *dog* and the *horse* are abundant in the research sample because there are twenty-five of them together. However, in the research sample are also words denoting other animals that are not so common and as examples, we can mention *cat*, *wolf*, *lion*, *bull*, *bear* or *duck*. The layout of *cat* idioms is interesting because in the sample there are six cases connected to *cat* and none of these phraseological units is in group A (four are in group B and two in C). The next animal that occurs only in two groups is a *wolf*, but unlike the *cat*, it does not occur in group B because in the research sample there are four idioms with a *wolf* and two of them are in group A, the rest is in group C. From animals that were not so abundant remain the *bull* and the *lion*. Both of these animals were represented in each group with the difference. The *lion* has most idioms in group B meanwhile *bull* idioms rather occur in group A and group C. As a rarity, we can highlight idioms with the *bear* because they occur only in group A as well as idioms with the *mouse*. However, there are only two cases that contain the word *bear*, so it is debatable how much of a coincidence it is.

Furthermore, I would like to mention information relating to group B. In this group, there are forty-four English idioms containing an animal word, but there are only sixteen Czech equivalents that contain any kind of animal. Moreover, there is an interesting fact that English idioms with the animal word *bird* create 62,5 % of English idioms which have the Czech equivalent that contains the animal word. For comparison, in group B there are ten idioms with the *bird* and the second most common animal word is the *pig* which occurs in two cases. The rest of words are the *horse*, *bull*, *owl*, *dog*, *goat*, *dog*, *lion*, *donkey* and *kitten* and these words have only one representative (this statement applies to English idioms that have the Czech equivalent containing the animal word in group B). However, the question arises here how much this phenomenon is affected by the random selection of idioms into the Corpus.

In conclusion, the English language has about 70 % of idioms that can be expressed in the Czech language. In more detail, about 39% of idioms have the exact equivalent, and about 31 % of idioms have a slightly different equivalent. This result is quite surprising for me because I would expect that the degree of similarity is going to be higher, about 83 % because both countries lie in the temperate zone and similar animals are living in these countries. On the other hand, England and the Czech Republic have a very different history and different geographical conditions (England lies on an island, meanwhile the Czech Republic is a landlocked state). This might be a reason why is the degree of similarity lower than I would expect.

#### **4.3.1. Idioms according to the character**

From the total of 142 idioms which are included in this research sample, there are forty-eight (33,80 %) idioms expressing the person character (these idioms are marked by letters PC in the Appendices).

In group A there are twenty-eight idioms expressing the person character and this group has the largest number of these idioms. The animal that most often expresses the person character in this group is a *fish* which is in three idioms (examples: *cold fish*, *swim like a fish*, ...). Next animals that express the person character most often are a *dog* and a *mouse*. Both of these two animals occur in three idioms (examples: *sick as a dog*, *a barking dog seldom bite*; *a little grey mouse*, *as quiet as a mouse*). Other animals that occurred more than once are a *bird* and a *bear* (examples: *an early bird*, *be like a bear with a sore head*, ...)

In group B there are twelve idioms describing person character and the animal that appeared for most times was a *bird*. This word was contained in three idioms (examples: *a rare bird*, *a home bird*, ...). Talking about the rest of the remaining animals, only one was used at least twice – a *duck* (example: *a dead duck*).

Group C has the smallest number of idioms expressing the person character, exactly nine. Only one animal appeared more than once in this group and that animal is a *fish* (example: *a queer fish*).

If we compare all groups together, interesting facts will be shown. Idioms containing the animal *fish* are the most abundant in groups A and C but there is only one idiom of this type in group B. However, a *fish* is still the most common animal expressing person character with the number of six idioms. Other animals that appeared in multiple cases are the *dog* and the *bird*. Both of these animals occur in six idioms across all groups. If we sum up idioms

with words *fish*, *dog* and *bird*, they will make eighteen idioms together which create 37,50 % of total idioms connected to the person character. In my opinion, this is an interesting fact because only three animals create more than a third of the total number of idioms related to the character.

#### 4.3.1.1. Positive and negative traits

After earmarking forty-eight idioms related to the personal character, we can focus on that which traits actually represent. Idioms were divided into three groups according to their nature, whether they express predominantly positive human traits (the group marked with the letter P), predominantly negative (the group marked with the letter N) or it depends on the situation (the group marked with letters DOS).

Group P contains twelve examples of idioms from the research sample. That means 25 % of all idioms related to the personal character express positive traits. Animals that appeared for most times were the *dog* and the *bird*. Together these animals create 33,33 % of the whole group P. Next animals in this group were *a fox*, *an elephant*, *a fish*, *a fly*, *deer* and *a bee*.

In group N there are thirty idioms which is more than twice as much as in group P. The most common animal in this group is *a fish* with four recorded cases. However, there are three animals (*a bird*, *a dog*, *a duck*) that have also appeared in more than two idioms. Each of these animals is included in three idioms and the *duck* is the most interesting animal from this group because it appears only in group N and does not in group P and DOS. This means English idioms use this animal predominantly to indicate negative human traits (*a lame duck*, *a dead duck*, *a sitting duck*). Other animal words in this group were, for example, *a bull*, *a rat*, *a bat*...

The third group DOS confirms the statement in the first part of this thesis – the usage of idioms is connected to emotions. There are seven types of animal words in this group and only one appears more than once, the one is *a mouse*. Next animals in this special group are *a dog*, *a bear*, *an owl*, *a fish*, *a horse*. I am going to explain why I have created this group on several examples – *a barking dog seldom bite* – a) *positive usage* – *Eva, I do not understand your uncle! Every time he sees me entering your house, he shouts that he is going to call my girlfriend and he knows how jealous she is! Ah, do not worry, he is only a barking dog who seldom bite, do not take it seriously because he is making fun of you.*

– b) negative usage – James keeps talking about flying to Australia and starting a new life with me. That would be a dream! Well, Rhonda, I know him, and he is only a barking dog who seldom bite. He will promise you a paradise but, in the end, he will stop calling you after the first sex.

#### **4.4. The origin of selected idioms in the research sample**

Idioms in this chapter were selected on the basis that they contain an animal word that has appeared only once in the whole research sample ( the idiom *a swan song* was selected although the word *swan* occurs also in the idiom *all geese are swans* because this idiom was considered as *geese* related). There is twenty of them and that means they create only 14,08 % of the research sample. Information about the origin was found in the dictionaries that are listed in the chapter called “Bibliography”.

*A swan song* – This idiom comes from the belief that *swans* are remained silent during their life, but they sing a beautiful song just before they die. Nowadays, this idiom is most commonly used when famous singers announce their last music tour or final performance.

*Crocodile tears* – The idiom comes from a misconception that *crocodiles* shed tears during eating their prey. They do have lacrimal glands which produce tears to moisturize eyes, but it is obvious they are not crying, and this phenomenon is not based on emotions.

*The flea market* – Market is a place where people trade with different kinds of goods such as clothes, furniture, and so on. The idiom *flea market* comes from the French phrase *marche aux puces* which indicates a market somewhere outside so *fleas* can infest goods.

*A snake in the grass* – The idiom was firstly used by the Roman poet Virgil. He used it in one of his poems in which young boys were picking strawberries, meanwhile, a *snake* waited in the grass to his chance to attack them.

*As cunning as a fox* – This comparison is connected to the conceptual metaphor. People consider *fox* to be a cunning hunter and this is how this idiom was formed.

*At a snail's pace* – A *snail* is an animal that moves very slowly, and this is another case of the conceptual metaphor.

*Have butterflies in the stomach* – I was not able to find the exact origin of this idiom but, in my opinion, this is an example of conceptual metaphor because it describes how you

may feel if *butterflies* were flying in your stomach. They move with their wings very fast and also often change the direction of their flight so they would cause chaos in your stomach.

*Stubborn as a mule* – Although, I have done detailed research I was not able to find any clue why people consider a *mule* as a stubborn animal. Maybe it comes from fairy tales where a *mule* starts moving only when it sees a carrot so it decides to eat it, and nothing can stop it.

*One swallow does not make a summer* – This idiom was firstly used by Aristotle and he wanted to emphasize that one good day does not make a person happy.

*To rise like a phoenix from its ashes* – The idiom connected to the *phoenix* comes from classical mythology. *Phoenix* is a bird resembling an eagle that lived almost six centuries in the Arabian desert. After these six centuries, it burned itself and then it was reborn from its ashes as a new and younger *phoenix* to live through another part of its life.

*Watch someone like a hawk* – This idiom come out from hunting tactics of the *hawk*. Usually, the *hawk* comes to the place where his prey is located. For some time, *the hawk* does nothing, only watches his prey, meanwhile, it is getting used to the *hawk's* presence and it does not see a threat in the *hawk*. After a few moments, the *hawk* attacks and its prey is not prepared. This idiom is related to the sight of the *hawk* meanwhile it is waiting.

*Wouldn't hurt a fly* – The transferred meaning of this idiom comes from the idea that most people do not see a problem in killing so small animal such as a *fly*. Furthermore, if the person is described as someone who *wouldn't hurt a fly*, then the person is gentle, kind, harmless, ...

*A hen party* – The designation of women like *hens* comes from Middle English. *Hens* often form groups in which are only them. This habit is connected to the origin of this idiom.

*A night owl* – The *owl* is a bird which hunts its prey predominantly in the night and so the connection between a person who is active in the night and this bird was formed.

*The straw that broke camel's back* – This idiom comes from an Arab proverb about loading up camel so much that he could not move.

*Weasel words* – People believed for a long time in that *weasels* suck the yolks from birds' egg and then leave the egg, so the egg looks untouched. This empty egg creates a connection between weasel and words that do not mean anything.



*Have a whale of a time* – The idiom that is connected to a great time comes from the slang of American students. The *whale* is a big mammal and students used a word *whale* to indicate that someone is really good at something and also, they connected it to the time.

*A puppy love* – Puppy is a young dog and this idiom refers to its love to the owner. This love of the puppy is connected to the love of young people.

*A red herring* – It is a herring which has been soaked in saltwater and then dried by the smoke. After this process, herring were sometimes used to distract tracking dogs.

*Run like a deer* – The *deer* is an animal that can run very fast and this idiom was created on bases of conceptual metaphor.

## 5. Conclusion

My main purpose was to contribute to the body of knowledge on idioms and thus help students of English that are interested in idioms because idioms can cause problems with the understanding of the sentence if a student does not know what the translation of an idiom is.

Phraseological units are a very important part of the language and many people use them every day without realizing it. Even though the Czech language and the English language are very different and come from different branches of languages, I have decided to compare idioms occurring in these two languages.

I aimed to gather, define and compare English idioms containing animal words with their Czech counterparts. Idioms mentioned in this thesis come from both printed and online sources. Printed sources were mainly used to search and gather idioms, meanwhile online sources were used to find definitions of idioms. Furthermore, I have created a sentence for each idiom that explains its meaning in more detail.

English phraseological units were divided into three groups according to their Czech equivalents. In the first group (A), there are idioms that have the similar Czech equivalent, then, in the second group (B) there are idioms that are almost similar (in many cases only animal words are different) and in the last group (C) there are idioms without the Czech counterpart (it was not found).

The results of this comparison did not confirm my expectations because I thought there would be a higher degree of similarity between idioms according to similar geographical conditions and similar animals living in these two countries. Group C creates about 30 % of the examined sample and that means about 70 % of English idioms in the examined sample have an appropriate counterpart (about 39 % have the exact Czech equivalent with the similar meaning). On the other hand, we cannot extent results of this research on the whole idiomatic part of the language because only idioms related to animals were compared and that is a too small sample.

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## Appendices

### Group A

|                             |   |                            |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| A bear hug                  | the action of putting your arms around someone very tightly and quite roughly                     | medvědí objetí             |
|                             | He gave his friend a bear hug.  |                            |
| A big fish in a little pond | someone who is important only in a small community  | velká ryba v málem rybníce |
|                             | In school, he was a big fish in a little pond, but now he is just another unsuccessful artist.    |                            |
| A black sheep (PC)          | the one worthless member of family  | černá ovce                 |
|                             | She is the black sheep of our family.   |                            |
| A busy bee (PC)             | a busy, active person who moves quickly from task to task   | pilný jako včelka          |
|                             | My father is a real busy bee around my birthday.  |                            |
| A cold fish (PC)            | A cold aloof person   | leklá ryba                 |
|                             | I really like her, but her friend is a cold fish.   |                            |
| A dark horse (PC)           | a person who has greater abilities than he shows or than people are aware of                      | černý kůň                  |
|                             | James is a dark horse of this race, I think he will win.  |                            |
| A fish out of water (PC)    | someone who feels uncomfortable in unfamiliar surroundings or company                             | ryba na suchu              |
|                             | I feel like a fish out of water in my new job.  |                            |
| A snake in the grass (PC)   | an unpleasant person who cannot be trusted  | had v trávě                |
|                             | Did you hear that Eva's best friend stole money from her bank account? What a snake in the grass. |                            |

|                                 |   |                            |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| A swan song                     | a person's last piece of work, achievement, or performance  | labutí píseň               |
|                                 | This building turned out to be the swan song of renaissance architecture.                               |                            |
| A wolf in sheep's clothing (PC) | a dangerous person who plausibly poses as a friend  | vlk v rouše<br>beránka     |
|                                 | My uncle was a wolf in sheep's clothing, because he looked like a good man, but in the end he was mean. |                            |
| An early bird (PC)              | someone who gets up early in the morning  | ranní ptáče                |
|                                 | We have always been early birds, waking up at 5.30 or 6 am.   |                            |
| As blind as a bat (PC)          | having bad eyesight   | slepý jako<br>netopýr      |
|                                 | I am blind as a bat without my glasses.   |                            |
| As cunning as a fox (PC)        | exceptionally clever, cunning, or shrewd, especially in devious or underhanded ways                     | mazaný jako<br>liška       |
|                                 | I know it may look like James has not a plan but trust me—he is cunning as a fox!                       |                            |
| As greedy as a pig (PC)         | very greedy   | nenažraný<br>jako prase    |
|                                 | He wants to have everything, he is greedy as a pig.   |                            |
| As hungry as a bear (PC)        | be very hungry  | hladový jako<br>medvěd     |
|                                 | I am looking forward to lunch, because I am hungry as a bear.   |                            |
| As poor as a church mouse (PC)  | To be very poor   | chudý jako<br>kostelní myš |
|                                 | When I met her, I was poor as a church mouse.   |                            |

|                                      |   |                              |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| As quiet as a mouse (PC)             | reserved and shy by nature  | tichý jako<br>myška          |
|                                      | We remained as quiet as a mouse to avoid being detected by his parents.                     |                              |
| at a snail's pace (PC)               | extremely slow  | hlemýždí<br>tempo            |
|                                      | Time passes at a snail's pace for a tennis player who cannot play.                          |                              |
| back the wrong horse                 | support the wrong person  | vsadit na<br>špatného koně   |
|                                      | I have lost a lot of money because I have backed the wrong horse in this bet.               |                              |
| A barking dog seldom bite (PC)       | people who lost their temper and shout are often harmless and are not to be feared          | pes, který<br>štěká, nekouše |
|                                      | Mr. Smith often says he will call the police, but he is only a barking dog who seldom bite. |                              |
| be as stubborn as a mule (PC)        | to be very stubborn   | tvrdohlavý<br>jako mezek     |
|                                      | James will never change his opinion because he is stubborn as a mule.                       |                              |
| be like a bear with a sore head (PC) | to be in a bad mood that causes you to treat other people badly and complain a lot          | nabručený<br>jako medvěd     |
|                                      | What is wrong with you? You are like a bear with a sore head today.                         |                              |

|                          |   |                     |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Bullheaded (PC)          | very determined to do what you want to do, especially without considering other people's feelings             | tvrdohlavý jako býk |
|                          | Our boss is really bullheaded. Nobody can change his mind.  |                     |
| Cast pearls before swine | to offer something valuable or good to someone who does not know its value                                    | házet perly sviním  |
|                          | Giving him advice is like casting pearls before swine.  |                     |
| Cock of the walk (PC)    | a man who is too confident and thinks he is better than everyone else   | kohout na smětišti  |
|                          | James liked acting the cock of the wall and telling everyone what to do.                                      |                     |
| Crocodile tears          | insincere tears for effect only   | krokodýlí slzy      |
|                          | Anna cried crocodile tears over the dead of a man who raped her.  |                     |
| Dog tired (PC)           | extremely tired   | utahaný jako pes    |
|                          | We were dog tired after working in the garden.  |                     |
| Donkeys' years           | very long time  | oslí léta           |
|                          | He has been working in this job for donkeys' years.   |                     |
| Flea market              | a market, usually taking place outside, where old or used goods are sold cheaply                              | bleší trh           |
|                          | There is a flea market every Monday in our street.  |                     |
| Goose bumps              | a temporary condition in which small raised swellings appear on the skin because of cold, fear, or excitement | husí kůže           |
|                          | I have goose bumps when I listen to this song.  |                     |



|                                     |  |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Have a memory like an elephant (PC) | have an excellent memory   | paměť jako slon                 |
|                                     | I cannot believe you remember my wedding!<br>You have a memory like an elephant!   |                                 |
| Have butterflies in stomach         | feel physical discomfort in the stomach because of nervousness   | mít motýly v břiše              |
|                                     | I had butterflies in my stomach before my performance.   |                                 |
| A red rag to a bull                 | causing a person to be excitedly and violently angry   | červený hadr před býka          |
|                                     | Do not tell him you do not like meat, it is like a red rag to a bull.  |                                 |
| Look a gift-horse in the mouth      | show dissatisfaction or find fault with a gift   | darovanému koni do huby nehled' |
|                                     | I did not like a blanket she gave me, but I did not say anything because I did not want to look a gift-horse in the mouth. |                                 |
| One swallow does not make a summer  | one fact only does not prove a rule  | jedna vlaštovka jaro nedělá     |
|                                     | A lot of things went right for us this month, but one swallow does not make a summer-we still have a long way to go.       |                                 |
| Play cat and mouse                  | to try to defeat someone by tricking that person into making a mistake so that you have an advantage over them             | hrát si na kočku a myš          |
|                                     | The 42-year-old singer spent a big part of the week playing cat and mouse with the press.                                  |                                 |

|                          |  |                       |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| A rat (PC)               | an unpleasant person who deceives you or is not loyal  | krysa                 |
|                          | He told everything to the police! What a rat!  |                       |
| A sacred cow             | a belief, custom, etc. that people support and do not question or criticize  | posvátná kráva        |
|                          | They did not want to challenge the sacred cow of free elections.   |                       |
| Sick as dog (PC)         | extremely sick   | nemocný jako pes      |
|                          | I was sick as dog during quarantine.   |                       |
| Sing like a bird (PC)    | to divulge secrets with little coercion quotations   | zpívat jako ptáček    |
|                          | When she asked him, he began singing like a bird and told her everything.  |                       |
| Squeal like a stuck pig  | make a loud, shrill squealing sound, typically out of pain   | kvičet jako podsvinče |
|                          | When James hit him, he squealed like a stuck pig.  |                       |
| Swim like a fish (PC)    | swim fast and easily   | plavat jako rybička   |
|                          | I had only three swimming lessons, but I already swim like a fish.   |                       |
| The bird has flown.      | the person you are looking for has gone away or escaped  | ptáček uletěl         |
|                          | I am afraid you will not find him there. The bird has flown.   |                       |
| The lion's share         | the largest and best part  | lví podíl             |
|                          | I won a lottery, but the lion's share of the money goes for taxes.   |                       |
| The tail wagging the dog | a person in a subordinate or otherwise unimportant position who controls an organisation that should control him               | ocas vrtí pseem       |
|                          | They changed their entire schedule because their daughter likes to wake up in the afternoon. That is the tail wagging the dog. |                       |

|  |  |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| There are plenty more fish in the sea      | there are other people to choose from  | v moři je spousta ryb                |
|  | I know you broke up with Anna. Do not be sad there are plenty more fish in the sea.                                  |                                      |
| Throw to the wolves                        | to put one in position to be the recipient of blame, trouble or criticism  | předhodit vlkům                      |
|  | James was caught with drugs in his pockets, but he threw me to the wolves and said it was mine.                      |                                      |
| To rise like a phoenix from its ashes      | to become successful again after seeming to have failed completely   | povstat z popela jako fénix          |
|  | After WWII, Germany has risen like a phoenix from its ashes.   |                                      |
| An ugly duckling                           | someone or something that is ugly and not successful when young or new but will later become beautiful or successful | ošklivé káčátko                      |
|  | Eva the ugly duckling has turned to become a beautiful swan.   |                                      |
| Watch someone like a hawk                  | watch what someone does very carefully and critically  | sledovat jako ostříž                 |
|  | When I was at home, my parents watched me like a hawk.   |                                      |
| While the cat is away, the mouse will play | said when the person who is in charge of a place is not there, and the people there behave badly                     | když kocour není doma, myši mají pré |
|  | While parents are away, children watch TV till morning – a case of while the cat is away the mouse will play.        |                                      |
| Wouldn't hurt a fly (PC)                   | To be of very gentle nature, to harm nothing or no one   | neublížil by ani mouše               |
|  | He is a very sweet boy who wouldn't hurt a fly. How can you suspect him of committing this murder?                   |                                      |
| You can't teach an old dog new tricks.     | the idea that it is hard to learn new things to older people   | starého psa novým trikům nenaučíš    |
|  | Some of our employees need to retire. Their attitude is terrible, and you can't teach an old dog new tricks.         |                                      |

|                           |   |            |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| Little grey mouse<br>(PC) | a person who is unobtrusive and not easy to notice            | šedá myška |
|                           | I do not even know he was with us, he is a little grey mouse. |            |
| Dog ears                  | folded down corners on the pages of a book                    | psí uši    |
|                           | Your book is in bad shape, almost all pages have dog ears.    |            |

Group B

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| A bird in the hand is worth two in a bush. | it is better to be content with what one has or could easily get than to take the risk of trying to get more and in the end have nothing | lepší vrabec v hrsti než holub na střeše |
|  | You should not quit your job before you find a new one even if you do not like it. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.          |  |
| A birdbrain (PC)                           | be really stupid   | slepičí mozek                            |
|  | I am a birdbrain! I forgot my ID!  |  |
| A cat nap                                  | a short sleep taken during the day   | šlofik                                   |
|  | I am really tired. I going to take a cat nap before we go.   |  |
| A different kettle of a fish               | something entirely different, usually more difficult   | jiný šálek čaje                          |
|  | Marek Vašut is a good actor but Dwayne Johnson is a different kettle of a fish.  |  |
| A Guinea pig                               | someone who is used in an experiment   | pokusný králík                           |
|  | He volunteered to act as a guinea pig in the experiment.   |  |
| A hen party                                | a social evening for women only where men are not invited, often held before a wedding   | dámská jízda                             |
|  | Every woman needs to meet girlfriends on a hen party.  |  |
| A home bird (PC)                           | someone who prefers to spend his social and free time at home  | povaleč                                  |
|  | I have not seen her for a while, because she does not like leaving her house. She is such a home bird.                                   |  |
| A lion in the path                         | an obstacle or danger in one's way   | házet klacky po nohy                     |
|  | I admire his decisiveness, he keeps going even the life puts lions in his path.  |  |

|                          |   |                               |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| A little bird told me    | received the information from a source not to be overtly exposed  | vrabci si cvrlíkali           |
|                          | A little bird told me you have a new boyfriend.   |                               |
| A rare bird (PC)         | a person or thing that is very unusual, especially due to a combination of typically incompatible features    | bílá vrána                    |
|                          | He is a rare bird, a waiter who does not want tips.   |                               |
| A sitting duck (PC)      | a person or object in a vulnerable position that is easy to attack  | snadný terč                   |
|                          | Popular singers on the beach were sitting ducks for paparazzies.  |                               |
| As weak as a kitten (PC) | especially weak, feeble, and vulnerable; completely unable to defend oneself                                  | slabý jakou dvoutýdenní štěně |
|                          | During my illness, I was weak as a kitten, even opening the door was hard for me.                             |                               |
| Be a dead duck (PC)      | someone or something that is very unlikely to be successful, especially because of a mistake or bad judgement | nula                          |
|                          | That bartender turned out to be a dead duck. He did not even know how to make a coffee.                       |                               |
| Be no spring chicken     | be no longer young  | nebýt žádný mladík            |
|                          | I think Tom looks good, considering he is no spring chicken.  |                               |
| Beard the lion           | to visit an important person in order to tell or ask them something unpleasant                                | dráždit hada bosou nohou      |
|                          | I went straight to my mother, bearding the lion.  |                               |
| Birds of a feather       | people of the same sort   | vrána k vráně sedá            |
|                          | I think he will like Tom, because they are birds of a feather.  |                               |

|                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Bull in a china shop (PC)        | a person who breaks things or who often makes mistakes or causes damage in situations that require careful thinking or behaviour                        | slon v porcelánu                         |
|                                  | His behaviour was terrible at the meeting, he was like a bull in a china shop and destroyed our good relationships.                                     |  |
| Buy a pig in a poke              | buy a thing without examination or knowledge  | zajíc v pytli                            |
|                                  | Purchasing a house without a visit is like buying a pig in a poke.  |  |
| Curiosity killed the cat         | inquisitiveness or curiosity can lead people into dangerous or risky situations   | kdo je zvědavý bude brzo starý           |
|                                  | When James asked Eva where she was going, she replied that curiosity killed the cat.  |  |
| Donkey work                      | the most routine, unpleasant or least important jobs  | mravenční práce                          |
|                                  | Why should we do all the donkey work while Tom and Anna sit around doing nothing?   |  |
| Drink like a fish (PC)           | drink large quantities of alcohol   | pít jako duha                            |
|                                  | I used to drink like a fish and get drunk all the time.   |  |
| Drive a coach and horses through | to completely destroy a rule, an argument or a plan   | roznést na kopytech                      |
|                                  | Their new ice hockey team will drive a coach and horses through every opponent.   |  |
| Every dog has its day            | every person will have success or luck at some time   | i rozbité hodiny dvakrát denně trefí čas |
|                                  | Just to prove that every dog has its day, the beleaguered Japanese stock market appears to be staging a small comeback, as does the country's currency. |  |
| Get monkey up                    | to make one angry   | rozčertit někoho                         |
|                                  | Please calm down, I did not mean to get your monkey up.   |  |

|                               |   |                               |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Go to the dogs                | slowly decline into a very bad state or condition   | od desíti k pěti              |
|                               | After James retired, the business went to the dogs.   |                               |
| Horse of another color        | something completely separate and different   | z jiného soudku               |
|                               | I was talking about cars and not buses. Buses are a horse of another colour.                        |                               |
| Hold your horses              | be patient  | dočkej času jako husa klasu   |
|                               | I know you want to see your new brother but hold your horses till tomorrow.                         |                               |
| Horse sense                   | practical knowledge and good judgement about ordinary life  | selský rozum                  |
|                               | He is not very good at P.E., but he has a good horse sense.   |                               |
| It is brass monkeys           | very cold weather   | zima jako v psinci            |
|                               | Wear a pullover because it is brass monkeys out here.   |                               |
| Kill two birds with one stone | achieve two aims with only one action   | zabít dvě mouchy jednou ranou |
|                               | We killed two birds with one stone and refuelled the basin on the way to the school.                |                               |
| Let sleeping dogs lie         | to leave a situation alone so as to avoid worsening it  | nehas, co tě nepálí           |
|                               | Please do not mention that disagreement we had last week and let sleeping dogs lie.                 |                               |
| Let the cat out of the bag    | reveal a secret   | pustit si pusu na špacír      |
|                               | We are getting your mother a new car for her birthday but please do not let the cat out of the bag. |                               |
| Like a bat out of a hell      | very quickly  | jako namydlený blesk          |
|                               | Her tires squealed as she was leaving the school parking place like a bat out of a hell.            |                               |



|                                   |  |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Lucky dog (PC)                    | a very fortunate person  | klikař                   |
|                                   | You won the car? You are a lucky dog!  |                          |
| Night owl (PC)                    | a person who prefers to be awake and active at night   | noční pták               |
|                                   | When I was younger, I was quite a night owl – I used to stay wake up till the morning.                           |                          |
| Pigs might fly                    | there is no chance of that ever happening  | až začne v pekle mrznout |
|                                   | A: I will finish this task tomorrow.<br>B: And pigs might fly!   |                          |
| Rain cats and dogs                | rain very heavily  | lít jako z konve         |
|                                   | It rained cats and dogs the whole weekend. I am afraid of the floods.  |                          |
| Scapegoat (PC)                    | a person who is blamed for something that someone else has done  | obětní beránek           |
|                                   | Every time something happens, you blame George! Stop using him as a scapegoat.                                   |                          |
| Separate the sheep from the goats | divide good or useful people from bad or useless   | oddělit zrno od plev     |
|                                   | The last stages of the reality show are going to separate the sheep from the goats.                              |                          |
| Straight from the horse's mouth   | directly from the person or place where something began, from a reliable source                                  | z první ruky             |
|                                   | This information is reliable because it comes straight from the horse's mouth.                                   |                          |
| The straw that broke camel's back | the last in a series of bad things that happen to make someone very upset, angry, etc.                           | pohár přetekl            |
|                                   | I gave you many warnings, but you did not listen! This was the straw that broke camel's back! I want to divorce. |                          |
| Top dog (PC)                      | a person who has achieved a position of authority  | velké zvíře              |
|                                   | James is a very important businessman in a big company and journalists call him the top dog.                     |                          |

|                          |   |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Weasel words             | language employed to avoid directly stating a position or answering a question, or to enhance the appearance of something | chodit kolem horké kaše  |
|                          | Every time I ask him about his marks in school, he answers just weasel words without any direct information.              |                          |
| Until the cows come home | for a very long time  | až se budou hory zelenat |
|                          | I will not let you go out with James until the cows come home.  |                          |

Group C

|                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| A bird of passage (PC) | a person who stays for only a short period of time in one place, job, etc.:                                    | nestálý a přelétavý člověk                           |
|                        | Jerry often changes his job because he is a typical bird of passage.   |  |
| A lame duck (PC)       | an unsuccessful person or thing  | neúspěšný člověk                                     |
|                        | A lame duck tradesman cannot lead a successful business.   |  |
| A queer fish (PC)      | a person who is difficult to deal with because of his unusual character  | podivín  |
|                        | Everyone could tell she was a queer fish as soon as she arrived at the party with his weird hairstyle.         |  |
| A white elephant       | a possession that is burdensome in expense or trouble  | zbytečná přítěž (v jistém slova smyslu Danažský dar) |
|                        | At first, Anne was happy to inherit the house, but it soon proved to be a white elephant she could not afford. |  |
| A wild goose chase     | a prolonged or chaotic search for something that is difficult to find  | zbytečná námaha, plýtvání časem                      |
|                        | Those idiots sent me on a wild goose chase to watch a film that has not been released yet.                     |  |
| The shaggy dog story   | a long joke that has an intentionally silly or meaningless ending  | zdlouhavý příběh bez pointy                          |
|                        | Jerry was known for telling shaggy dog stories every time he visited us, our children were annoyed.            |  |
| All geese are swans    | someone is overexaggerating and not in touch with reality  | zveličovat, přikrášlovat realitu                     |
|                        | All geese are swans if he thinks everybody at school likes him because nobody likes him!                       |  |

|                        |  |                                      |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| As the crow flies      | the measurement of distance in a straight line   | vzdušnou čarou                       |
|                        | The school is six miles away by road but only four as the crow flies.                                    |                                      |
| be Bee's knees         | to be excellent or of an extremely high standard   | skvělý, úžasný                       |
|                        | This ice cream is Bee's knees! I have never tasted better.   |                                      |
| Beat a dead horse      | to waste effort on something when there is no chance of succeeding                                       | věnovat se zbytečným věcem           |
|                        | We have all moved on from that fight, so there is no use beating a dead horse.                           |                                      |
| Chicken (PC)           | easily scared, coward  | zbabělec                             |
|                        | We are going to watch a horror film. Do not be a chicken and join us!                                    |                                      |
| Chicken feed           | a very small amount of money or payment  | almužna                              |
|                        | I hate my job! How am I supposed to live with this chicken feed they pay me?                             |                                      |
| Cock and bull story    | a story that is obviously not true, especially one given as an excuse                                    | báchorka                             |
|                        | Every time he is late for work, he comes with a cock and bull story about how his car is broken.         |                                      |
| Cry stinking fish (PC) | disparage one's own efforts or products  | nevěřit si, být si nejistý sám sebou |
|                        | James is so good actor, but he has a little confidence and cries stinking fish every time he is nervous. |                                      |
| Cry wolf               | raise a false alarm  | vyvolávat falešný poplach            |
|                        | My girlfriend cried a wolf today. She thought she was pregnant because she vomited, but she was ill.     |                                      |

|                                |   |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Duck out of something          | to avoid doing something  | vyvléct se z něčeho                               |
|                                | Where is James? I will not let him duck out of gardening again.   |   |
| Eat like a horse (PC)          | have a healthy appetite and eat large quantities  | jíst velké množství jídla                         |
|                                | James is the biggest man in our village. I do not wonder he is eating like a horse.   |   |
| Get on your high horse         | to adopt an attitude of moral superiority   | hrát si na morální vzor                           |
|                                | My uncle is a criminal, but he always gets on his high horse and tries to give me advice about my life.                     |   |
| Get your ducks in a row        | to be well prepared or well organized for something that is going to happen   | udělat ve věcech pořádek                          |
|                                | We need to get our ducks in a row before my parents come. I have not seen them for a while, and everything must be perfect. |   |
| Have a bee in your bonnet (PC) | to keep talking about something again and again because you think it is very important                                      | být posedlý něčím a stále o tom mluvit            |
|                                | I think James has a bee in his bonnet about his new girlfriend. He still talks about her!                                   |   |
| Have a whale of a time         | enjoy oneself very much   | užívat si, skvěle se bavit                        |
|                                | Last night, I had a whale of time. It was the best night since my parent's divorce.   |   |
| Have other fish to fry         | have other things to do or more important matters to attend to  | mít důležitější věci na práci                     |
|                                | I am sorry, but I cannot talk with you about your children because I have other fish to fry.                                |   |
| Horses for courses             | people should be chosen for jobs or roles based on their experience, skills, strengths...                                   | vybírat lidi podle jejich schopností a zkušeností |
|                                | You should promote James instead of Tom because he has bigger experiences. Horses for courses.                              |   |

|                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys | if an employer pays very low wages, he cannot expect to find good staff                                  | jestliže zaměstnavatel platí málo, nebude mít kvalitní zaměstnance |
|                                     | You should raise wages if you want to have better employees because if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys. |  |
| Keep the wolf from the door         | to avoid starvation or acute poverty   | předcházet chudobě   |
|                                     | My mother has two jobs to keep the wolf from the door.   |  |
| Like water off a duck's back        | be unaffected by an unpleasant experience  | nezanechat výraznější stopu  |
|                                     | I think James is a confident person because any criticism to him is like water off duck's back.          |  |
| Make a beeline for something        | to head directly and quickly toward something or some place  | přímá cesta  |
|                                     | I will make a beeline for the exit if they join this class.  |  |
| Monkey business                     | silly or roguish behaviour   | Dělat skopičiny, chovat se nevhodně                                |
|                                     | I do not like James because every time I meet him, he does a monkey business and is rude to me.          |  |
| Play ducks and drakes               | squander one's money   | rozházet bezúčelně peníze  |
|                                     | James won the lottery, but then he played ducks and drakes, and now he has nothing left.                 |  |
| Puppy love                          | the first love of very young people  | dětská láska   |
|                                     | My 8-year-old son is in puppy love with his schoolmate Eva.  |  |
| Put head in lion's mouth            | to take a great risk   | vystavit se nebezpečí, riskovat                                    |
|                                     | I put my head in lion's mouth by driving a car in this rain.   |  |
| Red herring                         | a fact, idea, or subject that takes people's attention away from the central point                       | falešná stopa  |
|                                     | A murderer used red herrings to distract the police.   |  |
| Run like a deer (PC)                | run very quickly   | běžet velice rychle  |
|                                     | He won the race because he ran fast like a deer.   |  |

|                            |   |                                    |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Shooting fish in a barrel  | ridiculously easy   | směšně lehké                       |
|                            | George is very good at Math. This test is like shooting fish in a barrel for him.                         |                                    |
| Smell a rat                | to suspect an instance of betrayal, deception or corruption   | vytušit zradu                      |
|                            | Nobody is here except us and the police is coming! I smell a rat!   |                                    |
| Smell fishy                | to seem suspicious of being improper, untoward  | být podezřelý                      |
|                            | I am sure I had 20 dollars in my pocket yesterday, but now I have 0. That smells fishy.                   |                                    |
| Stalking horse             | something that conceals person's true intentions  | zástěrka                           |
|                            | I think criminals kidnapped your wife only as a stalking horse. They think it will cover their real plan. |                                    |
| Stool pigeon               | An informant, especially a criminal working as a spy for law enforcement officers                         | informátor, donašeč                |
|                            | I have a stool pigeon in this gang. He will tell us everything we need to know.                           |                                    |
| Take the bull by the horns | decide to face a problem or difficulty instead of avoiding it   | postavit se čelem problému         |
|                            | I took the bull by the horns and talked to my boss about raising my salary.                               |                                    |
| The cat among the pigeons  | do or say something that causes trouble and make a lot of people angry and worried                        | vyvolat rozruch                    |
|                            | Nobody likes me in this town, so if I win this race, it will put the cat among the pigeons.               |                                    |
| To bell the cat            | to undertake for the common good a dangerous task that will make an enemy harmless                        | obětovat se a převzít zodpovědnost |
|                            | Who is going to bell the cat and tell our teacher nobody is coming to school tomorrow?                    |                                    |
| To fish in troubled waters | to try to benefit from other people's problems  | těžit z cizích problémů            |
|                            | My TV broke yesterday, and James tried to fish in troubled waters by selling me his old TV.               |                                    |

|               |   |                           |
|---------------|---|---------------------------|
| Underdog (PC) | someone who is almost certain to fail/lose a competition                            | předpokládaný<br>poražený |
|               | Players from Toronto are underdogs, but I hope they will surprise everyone and win. |                           |



## **Resumé**

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na problematiku a porovnání anglických a českých idiomů vztahující se ke zvířatům. V první části této práce je porovnáván anglický a český jazyk z historického hlediska, dále je zde vysvětleno co to idiom je a také zde bylo provedeno základní rozdělení idiomů podle jejich původu a struktury. Dále je v této části práce vysvětleno také využití idiomů v praxi. V neposlední řadě jsou zde zmíněny rozdíly ve využívání idiomů mezi různými anglicky mluvícími národy. Druhá část bakalářské práce obsahuje vzorek anglických idiomů se slovy, která slouží k pojmenování zvířat. Tento vzorek byl shromážděn na základě informací z odborných publikací. Každý anglický idiom byl definován a byla u něj vytvořena věta obsahující daný idiom, aby bylo přiblíženo využití idiomů v mluveném a psaném jazyce. K anglickým idiomům byl přiřazen český protějšek, pakliže byl nalezen.

## Anotace

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Jméno a příjmení: | Jakub Lakomý              |
| Katedra:          | Ústav cizích jazyků       |
| Vedoucí práce:    | Dr hab. Konrad Szcześniak |
| Rok obhajoby:     | 2020                      |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Název práce:          | Srovnávací studie anglických a českých idiomů vztahující se ke zvířatům   |
| Název v angličtině:   | A comparative study of English and Czech idioms related to animals  |
| Anotace práce:        | Cílem bakalářské práce je porovnat anglické a české idiomy, ve kterých se nacházejí slova pojmenovávající zvířata. První část bakalářské práce se snaží objasnit, co to idiomy jsou a provést základní rozdělení na základě několika různých faktorů. Druhá část práce obsahuje vzorek idiomů, který byl shromážděn po prostudování uvedené literatury. Každý jeden idiom byl definován a byla k němu vytvořena věta vysvětlující jeho využití v praxi. Jako poslední krok byl k anglickému idiomu přiřazen jeho český protějšek, ale pouze v případě, že byl nalezen.                  |
| Klíčová slova:        | Idiom, zvířata, srovnávací studie, ekvivalent   |
| Anotace v angličtině: | This bachelor thesis aims to compare English and Czech idioms that contain words indicating animals. The first part of the bachelor thesis tries to clarify what idioms are and divides them into several groups according to several factors. The second part of the thesis contains a sample of idioms that were collected from the printed books listed at the of this thesis. Each idiom was defined and a sentence that explains its use in practice was created. As the last step, corresponding Czech counterparts were assigned to English idioms, but only if they were found. |

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Klíčování slova v angličtině: | Idiom, animals, a comparative study, equivalent |
| Přílohy vázané k práci        | CD  |
| Rozsah práce:                 | 59 s.   |
| Jazyk práce:                  | Angličtina                                      |