TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA V LIBERCI
**Fakulta přírodovědně-humanitní
a pedagogická**

Porovnání českých a anglických přísloví o lidských vlastnostech

Diplomová práce

Autor práce: **Bc. Tereza Nováková**
Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Renata Šimůnková, Ph.D.

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LIBEREC
**Faculty of Science, Humanities
and Education**

Comparison of Czech and English Proverbs Referring to Human Qualities

Master thesis

Study programme: N7503 – Teacher training for primary and lower-secondary schools
Study branches: 7503T009 – Teacher Training for Lower Secondary Schools - English
7503T023 – Teacher training for lower-secondary school. Subject - History

Author: **Bc. Tereza Nováková**
Supervisor: Mgr. Renata Šimůnková, Ph.D.

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení:	**Bc. Tereza Nováková**
Osobní číslo:	**P14000648**
Studijní program:	**N7503 Učitelství pro základní školy**
Studijní obory:	**Učitelství anglického jazyka pro 2. stupeň základní školy**
	Učitelství dějepisu pro 2. stupeň základní školy
Název tématu:	**Porovnání českých a anglických přísloví o lidských vlastnostech**
Zadávající katedra:	**Katedra anglického jazyka**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Cílem práce je sestavit vzorek anglických přísloví dle zvoleného tématu a najít k nim české ekvivalenty, popsat jejich rozdíly a podobnosti podle vymezených kritérií a následně provést komparativní analýzu.

Metody: Studium odborné literatury, kompilace vybraných přísloví týkajících se lidského charakteru, komparativní analýza a diskuze.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování diplomové práce: tištěná/elektronická

Jazyk zpracování diplomové práce: Angličtina

Seznam odborné literatury:

1) Bočánková, Milena. 2007. Anglicko-český Frazeologický Slovník; Ustálené Fráze, Expresivní Výrazy a Idiomy, Anglicko-česká Přísloví. Praha: Ekopress.

2) Čermák, František. 2010. Frazeologie a idiomatika česká a obecná / Czech and General Phraseology. Praha: Karolinum.

3) Tomin, Alexius.2006 Anglická a česká přísloví = English and Czech proverbs. Sokolov: Fronica.

4) Lacmanová, Eva. 1996. English Proverbs. Anglická přísloví. Havlíčkův Brod: Fragment.

5) Tomin, Alexius. 2010. Česká přísloví. Sokolov: Fornica.

Vedoucí diplomové práce: Mgr. Renata Šimůnková, Ph.D.
                                Katedra anglického jazyka

Datum zadání diplomové práce: 30. dubna 2015
Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: 29. dubna 2016

doc. RNDr. Miroslav Brzezina, CSc.   L.S.   PhDr. Marcela Malá, M.A., Ph.D.
            děkan   vedoucí katedry

V Liberci dne 30. dubna 2015

Prohlášení

Byla jsem seznámena s tím, že na mou diplomovou práci se plně vztahuje zákon č. 121/2000 Sb., o právu autorském, zejména § 60 – školní dílo.

Beru na vědomí, že Technická univerzita v Liberci (TUL) nezasahuje do mých autorských práv užitím mé diplomové práce pro vnitřní potřebu TUL.

Užiji-li diplomovou práci nebo poskytnu-li licenci k jejímu využití, jsem si vědoma povinnosti informovat o této skutečnosti TUL; v tomto případě má TUL právo ode mne požadovat úhradu nákladů, které vynaložila na vytvoření díla, až do jejich skutečné výše.

Diplomovou práci jsem vypracovala samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a na základě konzultací s vedoucím mé diplomové práce a konzultantem.

Současně čestně prohlašuji, že tištěná verze práce se shoduje s elektronickou verzí, vloženou do IS STAG.

Datum:

Podpis:

ANOTACE

Cílem této práce je zjištění míry podobnosti či rozdílnosti 50 českých přísloví a jejich anglických ekvivalentů na základě komparativní analýzy. Analýza se zaměřuje na porovnání přísloví na lexikální i syntaktické rovině a zjišťuji, zda-li stejná přísloví mají i stejný původ. Z výsledků vyplývá, že 13 přísloví můžeme považovat za stejná či podobná, kdežto 37 z nich za odlišná. Odlišnosti se objevují především na syntaktické rovině a bylo ověřeno, že většina z podobných přísloví má stejný původ.

Klíčová slova: přísloví, frazeologie, paremiologie, slovní druh, pořádek slov ve větě, zápor, časová reference, čas.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to find the degree of similarity or difference of 50 English proverbs and their Czech equivalents based on a comparative analysis. The analysis focuses on comparison on both a lexical and syntactic level and it also tries to find whether the similar proverbs also have the same origin. According to the results of the analysis, 13 of the chosen proverbs could be considered identical or similar, while 37 of them are considered to be different. The differences appear mostly on a syntactic level and most of the similar proverbs have the same origin.

Key words: proverbs, phraseology, paremiology, word class, word order, negation, time reference, tense.

CONTENT

LIST OF USED ABBREVIATIONS

O – object

S – subject

V – verb

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen this topic for my diploma thesis because proverbs are a very interesting means of communication and are noticeable in films and books. I was interested as to whether the same proverbs exist in English and Czech, and I enjoy analysing the syntax or morphology of short texts. Another reason for choosing this topic was that I was interested in how much the common differences between the English and Czech language appear in fixed phrases like proverbs.

The aim of this theses is to compare and contrast 50 English proverbs referring to human qualities and their Czech corresponding equivalents, and to describe the degree of their similarities and differences. The proverbs shall be compared on a lexical and syntactic level.

The first section of the thesis deals with the theoretical background needed for the purpose of this work. Its aim is to define what is understood by a *proverb* in this context and to distinguish the term from similar ones, such as a *saying* and an *idiom*. The theoretical background also briefly touches upon the history of proverbs, which could serve to explain why some proverbs are similar across languages or why they differ. The rest of the first part of the paper focusses on the two compared languages, English and Czech, and their differences. The analysis of the differences between these languages is divided into two classes; the differences that are caused by the fact that English is an analytic language, while Czech is a synthetic one, and other differences which are unrelated to their different language types. The differences which are caused by the type of language and which are discussed in this paper are

the differences in word order and the way it is influenced by the functional sentence perspective in each language. It then focusses on other differences, such as the form of negation, differences and similarities in usage of tenses and time reference, and nominal tendencies in English.

The second part of the paper is an analysis of 50 proverbs chosen by an online questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 70 Czech proverbs taken from the book *Nejužívanější anglická přísloví* by Eva Lacinová. The author of this paper chose 70 proverbs which she considered to be well-known and the respondents to the questionnaire narrowed the number to 50 by answering whether they knew the proverbs or not.

The aim of the analysis is to divide the proverbs into certain types, from the most similar to the most different, and then to describe their differences and similarities on either a lexical or syntactic level. The analysis focuses only on those lexical and syntactic categories which are included in the theoretical section. The analysis should also prove or disprove the thesis statement, which is that although many proverbs have the same origin, they differ and their differences appear on a syntactic level rather than a lexical level. This is due to the fact that English is an analytic language while Czech is synthetic.

1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section shall define the terms needed for the purposes of this paper. It defines the term *proverb* and distinguishes it in meaning from other similar terms, such as *saying* and *idiom*. This section also briefly touches on the history of proverbs, as this may affect the degree of similarity or difference between the two equivalents of a proverb. This paper is based on the assumption that proverbs are similar due to the fact that they have the same origin. An important part of the theoretical background is to describe the differences that are expected to appear in the proverbs, as these are common differences between the English and Czech language.

1.1 The definition of a proverb

Proverbs are a part of everyday discourse (Simon 2015, 35) and one can come across proverbs while reading a book, studying, traveling by the Prague underground[1], or watching a series or film. For example, the main female character, queen Elizabeth, in the new British series *The White Princess* tells her husband, King Henry VII, "You reap what you sow, Henry" in the episode *Hearts and Minds*. Proverbs also occur often in songs, for instance in *Everyday People* by *Sly and The Family Stone* (Mieder 2011, 4). They may also reflect a person's political opinion or the current political situation in the form of a caricature[2]. According to the essay *What Goes Around Comes Around* written by K. J. Lau, P. Tokofsky, and S. D.

---

1   Appendix 1
2   Appendix 2

Winick, proverbs are both linguistic items and behaviours. Due to this, the studying of proverbs is also useful in many academic fields, such as philology or psychology, as well as being important for interpreting the meaning of texts in literary studies.

Many respected academics agree that it is hard to say exactly what a proverb is. The essay mentioned above suggests, by citing a passage from *Archer Taylor's* book *The Proverb* from 1985, that "the definition of the proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking and should we, fortunately, combine within a single definition all the essential elements and give each its proper emphasis, even then we should not have a touchstone. An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to positively identify a sentence as proverbial. Let us be content with saying that a proverb is a current among the folk. At least so much of a definition is indisputable…" (Lau, Tokofsky and Winick 2004, 3). Another linguist, Zhao Wen, agrees and adds that: "Although many hopes of giving a satisfactory definition of the proverb have been given up, a proverb can be still distinguished by pointing out some of its crucial features." The following passage attempts to find these features and find an appropriate definition of a proverb.

One can find several definitions of the word *proverb* even within one dictionary. As an example, *Collins English Dictionary* defines a proverb in three different ways: At first, as "a short, memorable, and often highly condensed saying embodying, especially with bold imagery, some commonplace, fact or experience." Then also as "a person or thing used as an example in respect of a certain characteristic." The third definition states "a proverb is a wise saying or admonition

providing guidance" (Collins English Dictionary, 2017). Several other definitions were also formulated by scholars. According to František Čermák, proverbs are idioms with a didactic function, and they appear in the form of a sentence. Zhao (2013) offers a simple definition of a proverb formulated by Wolfgang Mieder, which follows that a proverb is simply a short sentence of wisdom (392).

Although the definitions above differ, similarities can still be found amongst them. Firstly, considering the definitions above, each of them agrees that a proverb must provide some wisdom or guidance, or teach a lesson. This statement is supported by Zhao (2013), who claims that Wolfgang Mieder was able to find concepts which appear in definitions of proverbs most frequently. Those concepts were a phrase, saying, truths, morals, experience, lessons, and advice concerning life which has been handed down from generation to generation (392). Another similarity between the definitions is that a proverb should be short. Additionally, Mieder and Čermák agree that proverbs should appear in the form of a sentence. Although the definitions in *Collins Dictionary* do not say whether a proverb should have a full sentence structure or not, they do not exclude that.

To describe what a *proverb* is, one must look at its place within linguistics. According to Čermák (2007), a *proverb* is considered a phraseme. Other phrasemes, which appear on a sentential level, are for example *sayings*. Each phraseme contains some phraseological combinations as its components, mostly morphemes (roots or affixes), lexemes, or collocations. Phrasemes occur in a certain form, which is one of their characteristics (85). Mrhačová (2010) adds that they are also binding and figurative (5). The discipline dealing with these phrasemes is called phraseology

(Čermák 2007, 85). It is a relatively young linguistic discipline and it has connections (especially in the study of proverbs) with other non-linguistic disciplines, such as cultural anthropology or ethnology (Čermák 1997, 74).

The definitions found in dictionaries often explain the word *proverb* by the term *saying,* but this does not usually appear in the definitions given by respected linguists. However, this shows that there is another problematic area in defining proverbs and that is distinguishing the term *proverb* from other similar terms such as *comparison* (simile), *saying* and *idiom*. Furthermore, proverbs may even share similar characteristics with poems (Kerrigan and Favilla 2016, 47).

A *comparison* can be easily recognised as it typically contains a comparative element, often *as* or *like*, for instance in *as poor as a church mouse*. To distinguish between a   and a *proverb* is more difficult. *The Oxford Dictionaries* say that a *saying* is "a short, well-known expression, which, generally speaking, contains a wisdom or advice" and when this is compared with their definition of a *proverb*, it is almost identical. Eva Mrhačová (2010), in *Západoslovanské paremiologické dědictví*, explains the similarity between the terms by the fact that some proverbs actually evolved from *sayings*. She gives an example – *to cry over spilled milk*. This was initially a saying, but it transformed to it is no use crying over a spilled milk, which is now considered a proverb (6). The noticeable difference is that while the second phrase is a sentence, the first is not.

The last term to explain is an *idiom*. The linguist David Crystal (2008) states that an *idiom* is "a term used in grammar and lexicology to refer to a sequence of words that is semantically and often syntactically restricted, so that they function as

15

a single unit." (236) Čermák (2007) similarly lists stability and multi-word character as typical formal features of *idioms* (158). After analysing the two definitions, we can say that *idioms* certainly share some similar characteristics with proverbs but remain different. *Idiom's* stability and ability to function as a single unit make them similar to proverbs, but their multi-word character means that an *idiom* can only function as a noun phrase which is a big difference compared to proverbs. Based on that, unlike proverbs, *idioms* do not have to appear in the form of a sentence. Furthermore, neither Čermák's nor Crystal's definition states that *idioms* contain some wisdom or guidance, which is probably the biggest factor in assisting to distinguish an *idiom* from a *proverb*.

To find an appropriate definition of a proverb for the aim of this paper, we must also define a *sentence*. Čermák (2007) says that a *sentence* is not easy to define and he supports this claim by referencing *J. Ries* who published 140 definitions of the word *sentence* (167). Vachek (1997) adds that "since then the number has further increased" (5). Vladimír Skalička and Vilém Mathesius have also authored frequently cited definitions of a *sentence*. Skalička defines it simply as "an elementary semiological reaction" (Vachek 1997, 6) while Mathesius's definition has a less broad meaning. It states, "the sentence is an elementary speech utterance, through which the speaker/writer reacts to some reality, concrete or abstract, and which in its formal character appears to realize grammatical possibilities of the respective language and to be subjectively, that is, from the point of view of the speaker/writer, complete" (Vachek 1997, 6). Both these definitions agree that a sentence is a reaction, but Mathesius also speaks about its subjectivity and states that a sentence is not

something which breaks the language norm. Vachek compared these two definitions and created a new one, which is also suitable for this paper. It states that a sentence is "an elementary reaction by means of language to any extralinguistic reality, concrete or abstract, existing both objectively and subjectively" (Vachek 1997, 7).

However, this definition does not speak about the form of a sentence. According to Vachek (1997), a *sentence* could have just one element. If so, the element included is a *predicate* and it is thus a *subjectless sentence* (11). On the other hand, when the sentence has more than one element, a *predicate* could be missing, and here we encounter verbless clauses (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 285). Another type of sentence, which does not contain a verb, is a *nominal verbless sentence* (Čermák, 1997, 169). Greenbaum and Quirk (2013) even use the proverb *a friend in need a friend indeed* as an example of this type (313).

To conclude, the term *sentence,* for the aims of this paper, shall be defined as an elementary reaction by means of language to any extralinguistic reality, concrete or abstract, existing both objectively and subjectively. Concerning the form, *a sentence* must include at least one of the main sentence elements, either a subject or a vern. Each of the chosen proverbs from the Czech language must correspond with this definition of a sentence.

There is also a pair of terms that must be distinguished from one another for clarity. These terms are *clause* and *sentence*. After searching in a dictionary (Řešetka 2001, 659), the English term s*entence* is translated as *věta*, but there is a note that when it appears within a complex or compound sentence, it is called a *clause*. The term *clause* is, in the same dictionary, translated as *hlavní věta* or *vedlejší věta*

which means main or subordinate clause (1090, 95)[3]. Greenbaum and Quirk (2013) claim that a *clause* is a unit with internal structure and that a "*sentence* comprises one[4] or more *clauses*[5]" (15).

Čermák*'s* definition of a proverb was chosen for the aim of this paper. That means that all the analysed proverbs have a didactic function. The function is fulfilled by some wisdom, lesson or advice more or less hidden in the proverb. All the chosen proverbs must have the form of a sentence in the Czech language as it is the language of the questionnaire needed for this paper. The terms *saying* and *proverb* are very similar, and therefore they will not be properly distinguished in this paper. This means that this paper may include phrases which could be considered *sayings* by other authors. However, this should not affect the goal of the paper, which is to contrast two equivalents of the same phraseme, either a *saying* or a *proverb*, and describe their similarities and differences. *Idioms* are not included in this paper as significant differences were found between *idioms* and proverbs.

1.2 A brief history of proverbs

According to the article *Contrastive Studies on Proverbs* and its citation of *Meider,* proverbs "did not fall out of the sky and neither are they products of a mythical soul of the folk. They are coined by an individual either intentionally or unintentionally, and sayings with a proverbial currency existed on earth as far back as ancient ages" (Syzdykov 2014, 318). It is impossible to say when the first proverb appeared, but Wilson (1970) says that "their use is centuries old, dating probably

---

3   Taken from Anglicko-český, česko-anglický slovník, published by Fin Publishing in 2001.
4   A simple sentence.
5   A compound or complex sentence.

from the time when wisdom and precept were transmitted by story" (7).

Many proverbs, particularly in Europe, exist in more than one language (Wilson 1970, 7). For example, the proverb *never look a gift horse in the mouth*, in Czech *darovanému koni na zuby nehleď,* also exists in Polish as *darowanemu koniowi w zęby się nie zagląda (*Mrhačová 2010, 41) and in German as *einem geschenkten Gaul schaut man nicht ins Maul* (Austria Forum 2017).

The reason for the similarity in European proverbs is that they come from the Bible and old Latin texts (Müllerová 2010, 5). Flajšhans (2013) agrees and narrows the languages to Slavic, Germanic and Roman, which follow from the original Latin proverbs (15). The author (2013) adds that proverbs in Latin spread more successfully in Czech territory than those in Greek and this could be caused by the fact that the Bible was also used in its Latin translation, not the Greek one (5). Flajšhans also says that the Czech proverbs differ for example from the Turkish or Semitic proverbs (Flajšhans, 2013, 6).

One of the oldest sources of proverbs had religious character. The oldest Latin proverbs could be found in religious manuscripts from the first half of the eighth century and they were used to facilitate teaching Latin to novices (Wilson 1970, 8). A highly important source in the Middle Ages was also the *Vulgata*, a Latin translation of the *Bible* by St. Jerome (Flajšhans 2013, 5).

As the number of proverbs increased, people started to collect them in a written form. At first, the collections were mostly Latin. An important written record of proverbs was *Agadia* (written in Latin), a collection of Latin and Greek proverbs written by *Erasmus* and published in Paris in 1500 (Wilson 1970). The book was

frequently reprinted because it became popular among men searching for knowledge, and later it was extended to include 4,000 proverbs. To give an example, two of the proverbs included in the collection are *what can't be cured must be endured* and *trust no man until you have eaten a peck of salt with him* (9). Flajšhans (2013) established Erasmus as a father of modern paremiology and he says that with Erasmus ended the time of Latin proverbs. After this the proverbs started to be translated into national languages and therefore they naturally started to differ (15).

To summarise, many of the English and Czech proverbs have the same Latin or biblical origin, but at the end of Middle Ages they probably began to differ as they started to be translated into national languages.

1.3 The differences between the English and the Czech language

Since the main aim of this paper is a comparative analysis of proverbs existing in both the English and Czech languages, it is important to explore the predicted differences which may appear between the two equivalents of one proverb. This section of the paper is devoted to that. The differences are divided into two parts. The first part explores differences which are caused by the fact that English and Czech are fundamentally different types of languages, for instance regarding the word order, or dealing with functional sentence perspective. The second part of this section focusses on other differences, for example the differences between tense and time reference in each language, the form of negation and the possible effects of nominal tendencies in English.

1.3.1 Differences caused by their language type

There are some significant differences between the Czech and English languages which are caused by their different development. Both languages come from the same language family of Indo-European languages (Balter 2004), but while the Czech language is a West Slavic language, English is a West Germanic language (1324). All languages can be divided into types (Čermák 2007). This division does not mean that one type of language cannot have features typical for another type. It is, rather, divided according to dominating features. Čermák presents three basic types of languages, which are *functional*, *analytic* and *synthetic,* and while English is an *analytic language*, Czech is a *synthetic language* (231). Therefore, the fundamental differences appear within word order and inflection (Čermák 1997, 88). The English word order is fixed, while the Czech word order is the so-called free word order[6] (Štícha 2007, 127). According to Čermák (2010), languages with fixed word order, such as English, can only have unmarked[7] word order. The Czech word order is either marked[8] or unmarked, and the unmarked word order has the same pattern, S-V-O, for both languages (182). Therefore, the word order will only differ if the Czech sentence has marked work order.

Generally speaking (Čermák 2007), analytic languages have fixed word order, because they do not usually inflect. One of their dominant characteristics is *isolation,* which is the process of a language expressing its grammatical functions with auxiliary words. To compare, the word order in *synthetic languages* is not fixed, and they express their grammatical functions through inflection (231). For example,

---

6   Some linguists disagree with the term free word order, because it has some rules as well.
7   Bezkpříznakový.
8   Příznakový.

the inflection in Czech helps to recognise a subject from an object in the sentence, regardless of its position (Vachek 1997, 33). In English, the subject and the object can only be distinguished from one another by their position, and if it is changed the meaning of the whole sentence differs. The sentence *Peter saw Paul*, in which *Peter* is the subject, can have two equivalents in Czech, either *Petr viděl Pavla* or *Pavla viděl Petr* and it is still clear what the subject is (Vachek 1997, 33) because it is the noun in the *nominative case*. In English, the subject is usually placed before the verb, so it can be distinguished from the object, which follows the verb (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 207). Another important fact is that in English, unlike in Czech, there must always be a subject and the only exceptions to this are imperative sentences in the second person (Dušková 2006, 390).

Word order is also closely connected with *functional sentence perspective* and it affects the Czech word order differently than in English. According to Vachek (1997), a sentence has three parts – *the theme*, *the rheme* and *the transition* (8). From the informational point of view, *the theme* is the already known or *given information*, while *the rheme* is the *new information* (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 396). Czech has a tendency to order sentence elements according to their informational value from the least important to new most (Dušková 2006, 528), and therefore *the theme* is the initial part of a sentence, while *the rheme* is at the end. The transition is the part of the sentence which joins *the theme* and *the rheme* together. To contrast, in English the tendency is the same but, due to the fixed word order, the position of words within a sentence does not always correspond with their prominence, as grammatical principles play a more essential role in ordering the words (Vachek 1997, 34).

However, there are other means to reach the balance between the word order and the dynamics of informational value (Dušková 2006, 57). According to Čermák (2007), one of the means is *topicalization*[9], which is the moving of *the rheme* to its unusual front position (182). Other means could be *intonation*, language or situational context, and the semantics of sentence elements or word classes (Dušková 2006, 528). Greenbaum and Quirk (2013) list other ways to emphasise a part of a sentence, for example *fronting*, *subject-verb inversion*, *subject-operator inversion*, *cleft* and *pseudo-cleft sentences*, or *extraposition* (407 – 417). Usage of the aforementioned grammatical tools to emphasise or move the rheme of the sentence could result in differences between Czech and English word order in comparative sentences. For example, c*left sentences* divide a sentence into two clauses and, as a result, an English proverb could be longer and contain more sentence elements while its Czech equivalent could remain a simple sentence. *Extraposition* could cause an English proverb to have two subjects while its Czech equivalent could have just one.

To conclude, based on the phenomena discussed above, some differences in word order are likely to appear mainly in cases where elements which are not normally found at the end of an English sentence are rhemes (such as subjects or verbs). The functional sentence perspective is the basic cause of differences between Czech and English word order as each language deals with it in a different way. Both languages tend to move the rheme to the final position, but in English this tendency is complicated by its fixed word order. In English, the ordering or positioning of

---

9   topikalizace

sentence elements does not always correspond with their importance within

the sentence. In Czech, the word order is less strict due to inflection, and therefore

the emphasised sentence elements are easier to move to the end of the sentence.

However, an English sentence uses other grammatical means to change the word

order and emphasise the rheme. As explained, these means could affect the type of

a sentence, the total number of sentences within a proverb or the number of subjects

contained. The subject in a Czech proverb could also be placed at a different position

than an English equivalent or it could even be omitted. An English proverb, which is

not in the imperative form, must contain a subject and it must stand in a particular

position, usually the initial position.

1.3.2 Other differences between English and Czech

1.3.2.1 Tenses and time reference

The languages agree on three possible *time references*, which are the *present,*

the *past*, and the *future*. Greenbaum and Quirk (2013) state that "on the semantic

level of interpretation something is defined as present if it exists at the present

moment and may also exist in the past and in the future." (47) They (2013) add that

the present moment (*now*) is an important moving point of the line of time, which

helps to understand what is *past time* and *future time*. They describe *the past* as

events preceding *now* and *the future* as events following *now* (47). The authors

(2013) also state that the same time reference is "in abstraction from any given

language" (47). Dušková (2006) agrees that the time reference is the same, and

compares the two languages. She says that each time reference in Czech could only

be expressed by one tense, though there is also aspect modification. To compare,

English always has two forms for each time reference, progressive and simple, and in addition the language utilises perfect tenses (217).

The present reference in English is most frequently expressed by the simple present or the present progressive (Foley and Hall 2003, 46). The present simple tense expresses *the state present*, *habitual present* and *instantaneous present* time (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 49). The present progressive tense expresses *topicality* as it refers to something true at the moment of speaking (Čermák 1997, 187).

To compare, the present tense in the Czech language expresses similar time references. Generally speaking, the Czech present tense expresses an action that is true at the time of speaking or writing (Cvrček 2010, 240). The difference is that the present tense occurs in two forms in English, the simple and progressive, while the Czech language recognises only the simple present (Dušková et. all. 2006, 217). The forms of these tense expressions are not important for the aim of this paper.

The English language uses two tenses to express the past, while in Czech, there is currently only one past tense. As mentioned above, the *past simple* and the *past progressive* tenses refer to the time before the present (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 48), so the time reference to which the past tenses in English refer is the same as in Czech. However, there is a difference in the past reference between the languages. English can show a sequence by using the *past simpl*e tense and the *past perfect* tense. The Czech language, on the other hand, expresses the sequence by using other word classes, for example, adverbs (Čermák 1997, 188). Both languages, however, share a similarity in time reference as the Czech language also recognises

the historic present in a narration (Cvrček 2010, 240) as English does too.

The English language does not have an inflectional tense for the future, and therefore it is expressed by several means (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 57). According to Dušková (2006), English distinguishes the future which is embodied in a present plan for the neutral future. The first kind of future expression is most frequently expressed by *be going to* or *present tenses*, which are used with some verbs of motion, verbs expressing the beginning or ending phase of an action, coming or leaving and often repeated actions (220). The neutral future is expressed by *shall* or *will*. The future can also be expressed by modal verbs (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 59). Another means to express the future is the present tense through *conditional* or *time subordinate clauses.* For example, in the sentence *if she rings again, don't say that I am here*, the present simple tense is used but it has a future reference (Dušková 2006, 231). *Hypothetical conditional clauses* use present forms for either *future* or *present* references (Greenbam and Quirk 2013, 292).

Unlike English, the Czech language has an inflectional tense for the future, though not with every verb (Cvrček 2010, 240). Sometimes, the present verb in Czech can also have the future reference and the future is indicated by specifying the time as in the sentence *poslední vlak odjíždí o půlnoci* (Dušková 2006, 220). Czech also uses conditional or time subordinate clauses to express future references and both clauses usually use future tense forms in Czech. According to Cvrček (2010), in Czech, the future form can also express uncertainty (241).

There are big differences in the use of the perfect tenses. Perfect tenses can

have a future, present or past reference and their characteristic feature is resultativity, which means that they have a permanent result (Čermák 1997, 187). The *present perfect tense* is used to speak about recent news, for example the sentence *John has had a motor accident* means that the consequences of the accident are still visible (Dušková 2006, 221). In Czech, this tense does not exist and therefore it is usually translated by either the past or present tense. It is also possible to use a special form called *rezultativ,* which expresses a result (Čechová et al. 2000, 166). The *past perfect tense* refers to a past event that occurred before another past event and nowadays it rarely still appears in the Czech language (Čechová et al. 2000, 165). The future perfect tense does not exist in Czech. However, in English, it is used to refer to future events before later future events (Dušková 2006, 231).

The proverbs to be discussed may contain more or fewer differences depending on the time reference. If both proverbs contain a present reference there should not be much difference as the present reference is very similar in both languages and can be expressed either by the present or the future tense. If a proverb expresses a sequence in the past there will be differences, as English has a specific tense for such a purpose whereas Czech does not, and therefore it is substituted by another word class, which could result in a difference in the number of sentence elements or even in the word order between comparative proverbs. The most significant differences are likely to appear while expressing the future reference. It could be expressed by the present tense in both languages, but there is a difference in expressing the future by conditional and time clauses in each language. Sometimes, English uses the present tense while Czech uses the future tense and though

the tenses differ both clauses still refer to the future.

1.3.2.2 Negation in affirmative sentences

Negation in English and Czech has a similar function and comes in similar types. In both languages, negation can be divided into *global* and *local*. *Global negation* means that a clause is regarded negative as a whole (Bache 2000, 89). The clause is usually negated by adding the negative element *ne* in Czech and *no* or *not* in English (Dušková 2006, 337). In English, negating of just one sentence element could be an example of *global negation* while in the Czech language it would be considered as local negation. *Local negation* means that only a part of a clause, not the whole, is regarded as negative (Bache 2000, 90).

The difference between the English and Czech negation is in the number of possible negative elements within one sentence. Local negation can occur more than once in a sentence in both languages (Bache 2000, 90). Also, in both the Czech and English language the *local* and *global negation* may co-occur within one sentence and then the negatives cancel each other out (Dušková 2006, 345). However, Greenbaum and Quirk (2013) say that in English this happens occasionally (226). The major difference between the English and Czech language lies in the *global negation*. According to Dušková (2006) Czech sentences denying the whole content (*global negation*) use *negation agreement[10]*, which means that not only the verb but also some other sentence elements are negated (337). In English, the negation appears only once in a sentence. She supports her statement with the example *I have never thought about it –* n*ikdy jsem o tom nepřemýšlel* (Dušková 2006, 337).

---

10 Záporová shoda.

The English sentence contains only one negative, while the Czech one contains two of them. The negative element in either English or Czech can also be moved to the initial position of a sentence which could also affect the word order in both languages (Greenbaum and Quirk 2013, 224).

In conclusion, the function of the negation is the same in both languages, but it could influence the sentence structure in a different way. Each language distinguishes two negations – *global* and *local*. While in an English sentence the whole meaning could be negated by one negative element or by negating the predication, a Czech sentence obligatorily negates more sentence elements. If a sentence (either English or Czech) uses *global* and *local* negation together it has a positive meaning in both languages. Both languages can also use *local* negation more than once in a sentence, though it should appear less within English sentences. In both languages one can move a negative element (e.g. a word negative in its meaning but not form) to the initial position and thus change the word order.

1.3.2.3 Nominal tendencies in English

Another difference between Czech and English are the nominal tendencies which can be noticed in English sentences. According to Vachek (1990) the English language dispenses with using a finite verb form in a predication expressing an action. Originally, the finite verb was used to express qualities of a person or a thing which are changeable or changing. On the other hand, adjectives were used to express qualities which are relatively stable. Nowadays, the English adjectives are not able to function in predications because they do not present such a stable quality but a quality which is valid only in the certain situation to which the sentence refers

(99). Vachek (1997) states that "the most important feature of English predications is of course the frequent shift of the semantic centre of gravity from the finite verb form to some nominal element" (99). It follows that not only adjectives, but also nouns express some action. To compare, the Czech language would make use of a finite verb form and Czech adjectives and nouns constitute a more static category than the English ones (Vachek 1990, 99) as in *have breakfast*, *take a shower* or *make the bed*, which could each be translated by one Czech verb *snídat*, *sprchovat se* and *ustlat*.

To summarise, in English sentences the semantic centre of gravity can be moved from a finite verb to a nominal element. Therefore, a noun or adjective included in an English sentence could be missing in a Czech equivalent. These nouns often function as objects and so there will be a difference in the sentence structure and the number of sentence elements as a result of this difference between the languages.

2 ANALYSIS OF PROVERBS

This part of the paper contains the thesis statement, set goal of the paper and research questions. It also explains the way in which the 50 proverbs were chosen as well as the most important part, which is the actual analysis. The aim of the analysis is to prove or disprove the thesis statement and answer the research questions.

2.1 Thesis statement and research questions

As it follows from the chapter *a brief history of proverbs,* many English and Czech proverbs have the same origin, but when people started to translate them from Latin they most likely began to differ. These differences which are likely to appear are expected to be common differences between the English and Czech language. This could be caused by the fact that English is an analytic language while Czech is a synthetic one, or by other reasons unrelated to language type. The predicted differences could appear on both a syntactic and lexical level, but the syntactic differences should appear more often as there are more of them.

Therefore, the thesis statement of the paper is that although many proverbs have the same origin, they differ and the differences appear on a syntactic rather than a lexical level due to the fact that English is an analytic language while Czech is a synthetic language. The following analysis is going to prove or disprove the statement by analysing the chosen proverbs on their lexical and syntactic levels.

The analysis is also going to answer the question as to whether or not the common structural differences between the English and Czech language also appear in the proverbs. Another research question focuses on lexical differences

between the two equivalents and the way it influences the similarity of the proverbs. The last research question concerns the origin of the proverb and is going to answer the question as to whether the similar proverbs have the same origin or not.

The main goal of this paper is to find the degree of similarity or difference between the chosen proverbs and then to order them into certain categories based on these similarities and differences. Finally, another goal is to find wherein the differences or similarities lie.

2.2 The choice of proverbs for the analysis

To analyse the proverbs some criteria needed to be distinguished to reduce the amount of proverbs to a reasonable number. Firstly, only the proverbs referring to human qualities were chosen. The reason for this was very simple as there are many such proverbs and it was presumed that they are well-known.

There are usually not only more versions of one proverb within a language, but also it is possible that more proverbs providing the same guidance or teaching the same lesson could exist. For instance, the proverb *as you make your bed, so you sleep on it* (jak si kdo ustele, tak si také lehne) has a similar meaning as two other proverbs – *as you sow, as you reap* (jak si kdo zaseje, tak také sklidí) or *every man is the architect of his own fortune* (každý svého štěstí strůjce). In addition, even if there is just one proverb, its form or structure would have changed during centuries of its use to make them easier to remember, more understandable, or to modernise the vocabulary used. For example, the proverb p*ride goes before a fall* (pýcha předchází pád) first appeared in the *King James Bible* from the17[th] century as "p*ride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*" (Smith 1970, 647).

These changes are natural and they happen in all languages.

Therefore, there is a need to choose only one version of the two proverbs and the proverbs in this analysis were taken in their forms found in the book *Nejužívanější anglická přísloví* by Eva Lacinová. This book was chosen because it already contains English proverbs with their Czech equivalents and therefore the author of this paper did not have to search for them herself as it would be quite hard. Another reason is that this book is clearly organised and the book itself consist of only the most often used proverbs, which are the subject of this paper.

The author of this paper chose 70 well-known Czech proverbs referring to human qualities from the book mentioned above. The Czech language was chosen as it is the mother tongue of the author and also because the respondents for the questionnaire were supposed to be Czech native speakers. The choice of the 70 proverbs was based directly on the author's knowledge of them. This choice is subjective, but the number of proverbs had to be reduced and this was a very simple way to do so.

2.3 Questionnaire and its results

After reducing the number of proverbs, an online questionnaire was created in order to choose the 50 most popular proverbs. The questionnaire was conducted by asking the respondents whether they know a particular proverb or not. Therefore, a simple form of closed question was chosen. A closed question is a question that offers alternative answers and the respondent chooses only from the given options (Gavora 2000, 52). Each question contained a proverb in the Czech language and the respondent was asked to say whether they know the proverb (by answering yes) or

not (by answering no). The proverbs were in the Czech language because the respondents were assumed to be Czech native speakers, otherwise it would have been more complicated to gather the minimum amount of required responses, which was 100.

The questionnaire also contained demographic questions concerning the gender and education of the respondents. The final question was about the age of the respondents, who were intended to be between 20 and 30 years of age. The age of the respondents was limited due to an effort to incorporate people with approximately the same life experience as that of the author, who had previously reduced the proverbs to 70. Unfortunately, some respondents (five of them) did not read the instructions carefully and they were older than required. Those answers were not taken into consideration. The total number of valid questionnaire responses was 170.

When the questionnaire was created it was published online and shared via social media, for example Facebook. It took approximately three weeks for the total amount of answers to be collected.

The results of the questionnaire showed some interesting information about the respondents whose answers were considered as valid. Firstly, most of the respondents were women. The ratio of female and male respondents was 3,25:1, which means that 130 respondents were women and only 40 of them were men. Most of the respondents, 16,9 %, were 26 years old and 56 % of them had a university education. However, the respondents were not obliged to fill in their education and seven of them decided not to answer this question. These results are not important for

the aim of the paper and they do not influence its results. They were added just in order to provide some background information about the respondents.

The questionnaire results also showed with which proverbs the respondents were most familiar. Together 98,8 % of respondents, 168 people, said that they knew the proverbs d*vakrát měr, jednou řež* (s*core twice, before you cut once*) and n*eříkej hop, dokud nepřeskočíš* (*don't cross the bridge till you get to it*). For comparison, the proverb with which people were least familiar was p*ýcha kryje podlost* (*Bastard brood is always proud*). Only 7,6 %, which means 13 respondents, knew the proverb.

2.4 The analysis

The proverbs were analysed to see whether they contain the predicted differences described in the theoretical background.

The analysis began with a comparison of the sentence structure and the word order in the two proverbs. The word order was analysed to describe if or how it was influenced by the functional sentence perspective. Therefore, sentence elements (and their position within a sentence) were compared with the rules of the fixed word order in English and if any sentence element stood in an unusual position the cause of this was described. The nouns were also checked to see if they are present in both the English and Czech proverbs and whether they are the same element in the sentence, for example a subject.

Other areas of comparison were the tenses and time references of the proverbs. As it follows from the theory, sometimes the tense which is used does not agree with the time reference of a proverb. Therefore, the tenses and time references were compared twice; once in a particular Czech or English proverb, and then with its

equivalent in the other language. Then, if there were any differences, the author described why the particular tense is used for the particular time reference within one proverb and alternatively why it differs from the time reference or tense in its equivalent. The analysis focused on expressing the future reference, as it is likely to differ in the Czech and English language. It was not important which type of tense, either simple or progressive, was used. The important issue to analyse was the differences between time references and tenses.

The form of negation was another subject of the analysis as this differs and affects the word order in a different way. This analysis also needed to be done twice. At first, only the Czech proverbs were analysed and they were divided into those which contain only a local negation and to those which contain a global negation. If its English equivalent consisted of either negative, the negation was compared. An important part of the comparison was to find if the two proverbs use the same type of negation, either a local or a global negation. Then, if both contained a global negation, they were compared to see how or if the negation agreement in the Czech proverbs affected the word order and the number of negated elements. After this, the global negation was analysed in order to find whether there is some tendency in either Czech or English to prefer negating the whole phrase by inserting a negative element (a negative word in meaning and/or form) or by negating the predicate of a sentence. Finally, the proverbs where only one of the equivalents was negative were compared to see if there is any indicated tendency of either the Czech or English language to negate less or more.

Then, the nouns in each pair of proverbs were analysed. To do this, it was

identified as to whether they present the semantic centre of gravity in a particular proverb and therefore prove or disprove that there are nominal tendencies in English.

The proverbs were also analysed on their lexical level. This means that the words with similar or the same meaning within the proverbs were compared in order to find out whether they are expressed by the same or different word class, or alternatively to see whether they contain any other case of similarity. The comparison was focused mainly on verbs, nouns, and adjectives.

Besides the syntactic and lexical level, the origin of the proverbs was analysed. This means that the origin of certain proverbs was searched in order to prove a part of the thesis statement, that many proverbs have the same origin and also to see if the same origin influences the degree of similarity. The books used to research the origin of the proverbs were mainly *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* by Smith, *Velká kniha přísloví* by Müllerová, and *Slovník latinských citátů* by Čermák and Čermáková.

2.5 Categories of proverbs

It is useful to sort the chosen proverbs into categories from those which are the most similar to those which are the most different. This classification of proverbs is going to help to reach the goal of this paper, which is to find the degree of similarity or difference between English and Czech proverbs. Thanks to the classification, it will be clear as to how many proverbs can be considered similar or different. The chosen criteria, either lexical or syntactic, will probably be applicable to each category only to a certain extent. However, all the proverbs will be verified as to whether they contain a feature typical for only one of the languages. Kvetko's

division of idioms was used as the basis for the sorting of the proverbs, since idioms are phrasemes as well as proverbs, and the author also tried to find the degree of similarity and difference. He divided idioms into a*bsolute equivalents*, *relative equivalents*, *deceptive equivalents* and *non-corresponding equivalents* (Kvetko 2009, 53).

The first group, *absolute equivalents,* could be divided into two subcategories which are *absolute proper equivalents* and *similar equivalents*. The *absolute proper equivalents* have the same lexical and grammatical structure and the *similar equivalents* contain some lexical or grammatical differences which are often caused by a difference in language type. These differences could involve different word order or different use of the plural and the singular number (Kvetko 2009, 53).

The second group, *relative equivalents*, was divided into *relative proper equivalents* and *partially different equivalents*. Those *partially different equivalents* contain "at least one common (literally corresponding) lexical component." This component could be, for example, an adjective as in *the last straw – poslední kapka*. The *relative proper equivalents* are totally lexically different (Kvetko 2009, 54).

The last two groups distinguished by Kvetko (2009) are *deceptive* and *non-idiomatic equivalents*. According to him, the *deceptive equivalents* seem to have "literally equal lexical components but in fact different meaning of the whole" (54). The *non-idiomatic equivalents* are those which do not have a corresponding pair in the other language.

Kvetko's division of idioms had to be adapted to the aim of the paper. At first, the groups named by Kvetko as deceptive and non-idiomatic equivalents are not

included in the paper. The reason is that, in order to be comparable, all of the chosen proverbs must contain the same moral and a corresponding equivalent. The rest of Kvetko's divisions were useful and the analysed proverbs were divided into four types of proverbs corresponding with the other groups of Kvetko's division for idioms. The first group of proverbs (type A) corresponds with Kvetko's explanation of *absolute proper equivalents*. The second group of proverbs (type B) is the same as Kvetko's *similar equivalents*, the third (type C) is *Kvetko's partially different equivalents* and the last type (type D) is Kvetko's category of *relative proper equivalents*.

To be more specific, the proverbs of type A contain only proverbs which are identical on a lexical and syntactic level. This means that the proverbs have the same sentence structure, tense and time reference, and include the same words. An example of such a proverb is *rats desert a sinking boat – k*rysy opuštějí potápějící se loď*. The two proverbs both follow the pattern S-V-O and therefore have the same structure, both of them are in the same tense, have the same time reference and contain words which are the same in their meaning.

Proverbs of type A were analysed as described above and the results of the analysis should prove that they are the same on both a syntactic and lexical level.

The proverbs of type B are very similar, however they contain grammatical or lexical differences. These differences are not significant and therefore the proverbs are considered to be similar. An example is the proverb o*ne hand washes the other – ruka ruku myje*. Literally, this is the same proverb, but there is a difference in the word order due to the functional sentence perspective. Another example, this time

with a difference on lexical level, is the proverb s*core twice before you cut once –*

dvakrát měř, jednou řež. The difference lies in the first verb *score – měř,* as they

have a slightly different meaning. The word order differs as well due to the

difference between the English and the Czech language.

The proverbs of type B were analysed as described above, on both a lexical and

syntactic level. The origin of the proverbs was compared as well.

The proverbs of type C contain at least one significant similarity described by

Kvetko as *one common lexical component* (Kvetko 2009, 53). Otherwise, they are

quite different. A very good example is the proverb t*he last straw breaks the camel's*

back – poslední kapkou pohár přeteče, where the lexical component is the adjective

last. To make it clear for the readers which word is the lexical component, and

therefore why a particular proverb belongs to this group, the component will be

highlighted.

The proverbs of type C were also analysed on both a lexical and syntactic

level. However, since the proverbs contain only lexical similarities, and therefore

were not comparable on a syntactic level, the results of the structural analysis were

used only for the purpose of general conclusion in order to find general information

as to whether the differences between English and Czech are reflected in the

proverbs, and to what extent.

The proverbs of type D are considered different as they differ on both a lexical

and syntactic level. Naturally, they still provide the same wisdom or contain the same

moral, otherwise they would be useless for the aim of this paper. Examples of type D

proverbs are n*ever say die – neházej flintu do žita* or *that fish will soon be caught*

that nibbles at every bait – kdo je zvědavý, bude brzo starý.

The analysis of the last group of proverbs was specific, as the proverbs do not contain any similarity except for the same moral. Despite this fact, the proverbs were analysed on a syntactic and lexical level, but only in order to find whether the common differences between English and Czech are generally reflected in the proverbs and to what extent. The origin of the proverbs was also a subject of the analysis to see whether the origin influences the degree of similarity. To include these proverbs in the analysis is also important for another reason. Their total number provides information about the number of proverbs which are considered different.

2.5.1 Type A

1. Live and let live. (Žij a nech žít.)

2. Rats desert a sinking boat. (Krysy opouštějí potápějící se loď.)

3. The world is full of fools. (Svět je plný bláznů.)

Concerning the sentence structure, it is the same in all three English proverbs and their Czech equivalents. The word order is not influenced by the functional sentence perspective in any way and each proverb contains the same sentence elements in the same position within the sentence. For example, the second pair of proverbs follows the basic pattern S-V-O.

The time reference in all English proverbs is the same as the time reference in their Czech equivalents. The second and third pair of proverbs has the present reference. They use the present tense, so there is no difference between the time reference and the used tense. The first proverb is an imperative in both languages and therefore the tense is not determined.

None of the proverbs in either Czech or English is negated and therefore no analysis of differences in negation is possible.

The centre of semantic gravity in all three proverbs lies on the predicate and therefore there is no sign of nominal tendency in English. All equivalents of proverbs contain nouns in the same number, either singular or plural, and the English and Czech nouns are in the same position within a sentence and are also the same sentence elements.

The lexical level of the proverbs is also identical. They contain words which are the same word classes and have the same meaning.

Concerning the origin of the proverbs, *live and let live – žij a nech žit* is originally a Latin proverb (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 354) as well as the second proverb *rats desert a sinking boat – krysy opuštějí potápějící se loď* (Kuťáková et al. 1994, 331). The last proverb, *the world is full of fools – svět je plný bláznů,* is originally a Latin quotation by Cicero (Smith 1970, 918).

To conclude, the proverbs of type A are identical on their lexical and syntactic level. The proverbs do not reflect the predicted differences between the English and Czech language and therefore, the thesis statement is proved only partially. There is no sign of nominal tendency, the word order is the same as it is not influenced by the functional sentence perspective, and the time reference and used tense are the same. However, these proverbs support the statement that many English and Czech proverbs originate in Latin and as a result, they are similar.

2.5.2 Type B

1. Pride goes before a fall. (Pýcha předchází pád.)

2. As you sow, as you reap. (Jak si kdo zaseje, tak si také sklidí.)

3. As you make your bed, so you sleep on it. (Jak si kdo ustele, tak si také lehne.)

4. Every man is the architect of his own fortune. (Každý strůjcem svého štěstí.)

5. A man's praise in his own mouth stinks. (Vlastní chvála z hrdla smrdí.)

6. Score twice before you cut once. (Dvakrát měř, jednou řež.)

7. Forbidden fruit is sweet. (Zakázané ovoce nejvíc chutná.)

8. Never look a gift horse in the mouth. (Darovanému koni na zuby nehleď.)

9. Do not cut the bough you are standing on. (Neřež větev, na které sedíš.)

10. One hand washes the other. (Ruka ruku myje.)

Comparing the proverbs, one can find an example of nominal tendency within the third proverb. The verb *make* has quite a broad meaning and has many associations, so the centre of semantic gravity was moved to the noun *bed*. To compare, the Czech verb *ustlat* has a clear association with the noun *bed*, and therefore it would be useless in the sentence. This example confirms that English has a higher tendency to move the semantic centre of gravity from a verb to a nominal element, though there is only one example. This is not the only difference in the number of nouns within the two equivalents. The fourth proverb in English

contains the nouns man, architect and fortune while the Czech proverb contains only two nouns, strůjcem and štěstí. However, this is not a sign of nominal tendency. This difference could be explained in two ways. Firstly, it is a way of expressing a masculine gender. The Czech proverb expresses it by the word *strůjce* and the English proverb by the word *man*. The Czech noun *strůjce* is the masculine gender and the feminine form is *strůjkyně* (Pravidla.cz 2017). As English does not have inflection for the gender, it also includes the possessive adjective *his* to specify it. Another and more likely way to explain the difference in nouns is that it is not caused by gender, as *man* can also be used as a general subject and since the quantifier *every* cannot stand on its own it must be followed by a noun. The last disagreement in the number of used nouns is in the tenth proverb. There it is not caused by the nominal tendency either, as the centre of semantic gravity in both proverbs is in the finite verb *washes*. The English proverb uses a pro-form *the other* for the noun *ruka*, while the Czech repeats the noun.

Concerning the sentence structure, the pro-form in the tenth pair of proverbs is used in order to focus the attention on new information, the rheme. Therefore, the difference in the word order is caused by functional sentence perspective, which influences each language in a different way. The rheme of the proverbs is the verb, but a verb cannot usually stand at the end of an English sentence. In Czech, the object can precede the verb, so the sentence elements in the Czech proverb are ordered according to their informational value. The word order in the English proverb follows the patter S-V-O, while the Czech one is S-O-V. There are some other differences in the word order. As mentioned above, the centre of semantic

gravity in the third proverb was moved from the verb to a noun, and as a result the English proverb contains one noun which is not included in its Czech equivalent. Therefore, there is one extra sentence element (object) in comparison with the equivalent proverb. The fourth proverb is a simple clause in English and a verbless clause in Czech. The fifth proverb is very similar, but *z hrdla* is an object in the Czech proverb and its equivalent *in his own mouth* is a post-modification of the subject. This difference is caused by the fixed word order in English as an object cannot precede the verb. The eighth proverb also contains a different word order due to the functional sentence perspective. The Czech proverb contains two objects which both precede the verb because the verb is the rheme and therefore it stands at the end of the proverb. In English, as an object cannot precede the verb, the two objects stand behind it.

Another significant difference within the proverbs of type B are the tenses and time reference. The English proverbs are all in the present tense, while in Czech two proverbs are in the future tense. After a detailed analysis, one can see, that though the tenses in the two equivalents differ, they have the same time reference. The second proverb in English uses the present tense but it refers to the future. The present tense could be used here because it is a repeated action and the verbs express a beginning (sow) and ending (reap) of an action. The third proverb is also in the present tense while it has the future time reference. The reason is very similar to that in the second proverb, it is a repeated action.

There are only two pairs of proverbs, the eighth and the ninth, which are negated. Both pairs of proverbs contain a global negation, but the form differs.

The eighth proverb in English uses an adverb of frequency negatively in its meaning *never,* while its Czech equivalent negates the verb *nehleď.* As a result, the word *never* gains higher prominence within the sentence than the verb *nehleď* in the Czech equivalent. The other, ninth, pair of proverbs is also an example of global negation and both proverbs negate the verb *do not cut – neřež.* The negation agreement in Czech does not affect the number of negated elements in these proverbs as there is no other word which could be negated within the main clause.

Concerning the lexical level, there are some differences. The first proverb contains two nouns (pride – pýcha, fall – pád) in English which appear in the Czech equivalent as well, and they have the same meaning. However, while there is the verb *předcházet* in Czech, in English the same meaning is expressed by the verb *goes* and the preposition *before.* This is only a difference in formulation, as *goes before* could be substituted by *precede.* Another lexical difference could be found in the ninth proverb, as the English one speaks about a *bough* one is *standing* on and the Czech one speaks about a *bough* one is *sitting* on. The two words are the same word class, but they slightly differ in their meaning.

Most of the proverbs come from either Latin or the Bible. The first proverb *pride goes before a fall* has its origin in the Bible (Smith 1970, 647) as well as the second *as you sow, as you reap* (Smith 1970, 757) and the seventh *forbidden fruit is sweet – zakázané ovoce nejlíp chutná* (Smith 1970, 279). Other proverbs, the third *as you make your bed, so you sleep on it – jak si kdo ustele, tak si také lehne* (Smith 1970, 507), the fourth *every man is the architect of his own fortune – každý svého štěstí strůjce* (Smith 1970,), the fifth *a man's praise in his own mouth stinks – vlastní*

chvála z hrdla smrdí (Smith 1970, 507), the eighth *never look a gift horse in the mouth – darovanému koni na zuby nehleď* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 257), and the tenth *one hand washes the other – ruka ruku myje* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 228), have Latin origins. The origin of the sixth proverb *score twice before you cut once – dvakrát měř, jednou řež* is hard to find, but Müllerová (2010) marks this proverb as a Czech one (176) and according to Smith (1970) the English version of the proverb was first used[11] by shoemakers of Chester who put a note very similar to the proverb on their paring knife (704). However, the real origin of the proverb was not found in any source. Even less is known about the origin of the ninth proverb *do not cut the bough you are standing on – neřež větev, na které sedíš,* as the author could not find where the proverb comes from.

To summarise, the proverbs of type B are considered similar. The analysis of this type of proverb supports the thesis statement, as eight of them have the same origin and the differences between them appear mainly on the syntactic level. It also gives an answer to one of the research questions, as to whether the predicted differences between English and Czech are reflected in the proverbs. After the analysis, we can say that the differences are reflected in the proverbs. These differences are differences in the word order, time reference and tense, and the nominal tendencies in English. Firstly, as a result of different ways of dealing with the functional sentence perspective, the Czech and English word order sometimes differs. Secondly, the future reference seems more likely to be expressed by the present tense in English than in Czech. It also shows that the present reference

---

11 According to the author this is the oldest documentated use of the proverb.

is expressed by the present tense in both languages. Finally, though only in one proverb, moving of the semantic centre of gravity to a nominal element is reflected in English proverbs as well. Concerning negation, the negation agreement typical for Czech did not change the number of negated elements, as was predicted in the theoretical part.

2.5.3 Type C

1. No bees, no honey, **no work**, no money. **Bez práce** nejsou koláče.

2. The path of **glory** leads to the grave. Všecka **sláva**, polní tráva.

3. **The last** straw breaks the camel's back. **Poslední** kapkou pohár přeteče.

4. **Much** would have **more**. Kdo má **hodně**, chce ještě **víc**.

5. Many **hands** make light work. Každá **ruka** dobrá.

6. **Patient** men win the day. **Trpělivost** přináší růže.

7. **Good words** are cheap. **Dobré slovo** nic nestojí.

8. **Have at it** and have it. **S chutí do toho** a půl je hotovo.

9. Better are **small fish** than an empty dish. **Malé ryby** taky ryby.

10. Between **two stools** one falls to the ground. Nelze seďět na **dvou židlích**.

11. It is **action** that makes the hero. Za člověka mluví jeho **činy**.

12. Prevention is better than **cure**. Lépe nemoci předcházet než ji **léčit**.

13. The good intention **excuses** the bad action. Účel **světí** prostředky.

14. Two **heads** are better than one. Víc **hlav**, víc rozumu.

15. Four **eyes see** more than one. Víc **očí** víc **vidí**.

16. Praise a fair **day** at **night**. Nechval **dne** před **večerem**.

17. A crust is **better** than **no** bread. (**Lepší** něco nežli **nic**.)

18. The rough net is not the best **catcher** of **birds**. (Když **ptáčka lapají**, pěkně mu zpívají.)

19. The **half** is better than the **whole**. (**Méně** je někdy **více**.)

20. Better **safe** than sorry. (**Opatrnosti** nikdy nezbývá.)

21. Nothing **ventured**, nothing gained. (**Odvážnému** štěstí přeje.)

22. **Leave off** with an appetite. (V nejlepším je radno **přestat**.)

There is no sign of nominal tendency within the proverbs of type C. However, there are differences in the use of nouns and also other word classes. After comparing the usage of nouns, one can find that some of the proverbs use words with similar meaning, but they are a different word class in each equivalent. For example, the sixth proverb uses an adjective *patient* in English, but the Czech one uses a noun *patience* (trpělivost). The twelfth proverb uses a noun *prevention* in English instead of the verb *předcházet* (prevent) in Czech. The eighteenth proverb in English uses a noun *catcher*, while its Czech corresponding proverb uses a verb *lapají* (catch). The twenty-first proverb uses an adjective *safe* in English and a noun *opatrnosti* (safe) in Czech. The last example is the twenty-second proverb using a verb *ventured* in English and a noun (or rather an adjective functioning as a noun) *odvážnému* (courageous man) in the Czech proverb. As one can see, no tendency to prefer a certain word class, for example a noun in English to a verb in Czech or vice versa, is noticeable in either the English or Czech equivalent of these proverbs. Another difference in the usage of nouns is that in two proverb, the fifth and the seventh, the English proverb uses the plural while the Czech uses the singular number of a noun with the same meaning. Another difference in expressing a certain quantity could be

found within the fourteenth and the fifteenth proverbs. The two English proverbs use a specific numeral while their Czech equivalents use just a word with a general meaning *víc* (more). Similar tendency appears in the nineteenth proverb as there is the word *half* in English which is more specific in comparison to the Czech word *něco*.

Comparing the tenses and time references, there are some differences. The third proverb has the future time reference in both languages, but the English proverb contains a verb in the present tense, while the Czech one uses the future form of the verb. The reason for using the present tense in this proverb is to refer to the so called future of unusual certainty. The Czech and English equivalents of the fourth proverb are also different. While the Czech proverb uses the present tense for the present reference, the English proverb uses the modal verb *would*. According to Greenbaum and Quirk the verb would is often used, beyond conditional clauses, to express "timeless statements of predictability" or "it occurs in description of personal habits or characteristic behaviour (64)" In this case, *would* is used to express a characteristic behaviour and it has the future reference.

There are also differences in using the negation. The first proverb in English uses a negative element *no* inserted in front of each noun while the Czech proverb negates the verb and adds a preposition negative in its meaning *bez* in front of its first noun. Both proverbs are examples of global negation, but as the English proverb does not contain a verb, it does not negate the predicate. The twenty-third proverb uses negation in only one, the Czech, equivalent. Though both proverbs are very similar in meaning, while the Czech proverb uses global negation by negating

the verb, the English proverb does not contain any negation. A similar difference could be seen in the sixteenth and twentieth proverb. The Czech equivalent of the sixteenth proverb uses a global negation and negates the predicate while its corresponding English proverb is a positive sentence. There are also two examples of negation agreement typical for the Czech language. The twentieth Czech proverb negates the verb and also contain an adverb of frequency with a negative meaning *never* and the seventh proverb negates the verb and contains a word negative in meaning *nic* (nothing). Contrary to these three proverbs, the eighteenth proverb uses global negation in English, while it is a positive sentence in Czech. The twenty-first proverb is also only negative in English. To compare the seventeenth proverb, each equivalent uses local negation, but they use a different negative element. The English one uses *no* in front of a noun and the Czech one use a negative pronoun *nic* (nothing).

Concerning the word order, despite the proverbs of type C differing a lot and therefore being more difficult to compare, there are still some noticeable differences or even similarities. Some proverbs, either in Czech or English, follow the basic word order patter S-V-O, which is possible in both languages. The sixth and the thirteenth proverbs could be used as examples. However, the English proverbs follow the pattern S-V-O more often than their Czech equivalents due to the fixed word order in English, which sometimes goes against the functional sentence perspective. For instance, the third proverb in English follows the pattern S-V-O, but the Czech one begins with an object and moves the verb, which is the rheme, to the final position. It should also be noticed that the subject in English *the last straw* is actually

the equivalent of the Czech object *poslední kapkou*. This is caused again by the differences in Czech and English word order as an object cannot preceede the verb. The ninth proverb has an unusual sentence structure in English as it does not begin with its subject. The subject-verb inversion is a result of fronting used to emphasise the rheme of the sentence. The eleventh proverb contains a significant difference as in English it is a cleft sentence in order to emphasise the rheme, which is the word *action*. In Czech, the word *činy* is also emphasised, but it is at the end of sentence. In English, using a cleft sentence was the only option as the emphasised element (the rheme) is the subject of the proverb. Another difference in sentence structure is the number of imperatives since the English equivalents contain three of them, the eighth, the sixteenth, and the twenty-second proverb, but the Czech ones contain only two, the tenth and the sixteenth proverb.

The more different the proverbs are, the more difficult it is to find their origin. However, 10 of these proverbs provably come from Latin. These are the proverbs *much would have more – kdo má hodně, chce ještě víc* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 314), *many hands make light work – každá ruka dobrá* (Smith 1970, 508), *patient men win the day – trpělivost přináší růže* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 283), *have at it and have it – s chutí do toho a půl je hotovo* (Smith 1970, 358), *between two stools one falls to the ground – nelze seďět na dvou židlích* (Smith 1970, 57), *prevention is better than cure – lépe nemoci předcházet než ji léčit* (Smith 1970, 294), *the good intention excuses the bad action – účel světí prostředky* (Smith 1970, 88), *four eyes see more than one – víc očí, víc vidí* (Smith 1970, 222), *the rough net is not the best catcher of birds – když ptáčka lapají, pěkně mu zpívají* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005,

52

126) and *nothing ventured, nothing gained – odvážnému štěstí přeje* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 45). According to Müllerová (2010) the proverb *praise a fair day at night – nechval dne před večerem* has Persian origin (50). The proverb *the half is better than the whole – méně je někdy více* is originally Greek, but it was also used in Latin (Smith 1970, 345). Unfortunately, the origin of the other proverbs was either not found in any reliable source or the authors mention only their oldest documented use in English.

To summarise, the proverbs of type C are comparable mainly on the lexical level since their only similarity is one or more lexical components included in both equivalents. Therefore, the proverbs could be analysed on a syntactic level, but only in a general analysis. The syntactic analysis proves that the common differences between the English and Czech language also appear within the proverbs. One of the common differences which appear in the proverbs of type C is a different form of negation. The negation agreement, typical for Czech, influenced the number of negative elements in the particular proverbs. Furthermore, Czech proverbs seem to have negation more often than the English proverbs as only three English proverbs were negative in comparison to the five negative proverbs in Czech[12]. The Czech proverbs also tend to use verb negation for the global negation, while the English proverbs twice inserted different negative elements, as the proverbs did not contain any verb. Other structural differences found within the proverbs are the expression of the future reference by the present tense, and differences in the word order caused by the functional sentence perspective.

---

12 The author is speaking only about the global negation. The local negation was used once in either English or Czech proverbs of type C.

Concerning the lexical level, no sign of nominal tendency was found in these proverbs. Despite that, there are significant differences in the usage of word classes. The analysis shows that many proverbs contain a word with similar meaning, but it is a different word class. No tendency to prefer a certain word class in either English or Czech was found.

These proverbs are generally considered different, though their origin helps to find an answer for one of the research questions concerning the relation of similarity and the origin of certain proverbs. Though the proverbs differ quite significantly, almost half of them come from Latin which means that a proverb could be different on a lexical and syntactic level, even if it has the same origin.

2.5.4 Type D

1. Never say die. (Neházej flintu do žita.)

2. That fish will soon be caught that nibbles at every bait. (Kdo je zvědavý, bude brzo starý.)

3. He who handles a nettle tenderly is soonest stung. (Na hrubý pytel hrubá záplata.)

4. Don't cross the bridge till you get to it. (Neříkej hop, dokud nepřeskočíš.)

5. Take no more on than you are able to bear. (Všeho moc škodí.)

6. He that never climbed, never fell. (Kdo nic nedělá, nic nezkazí.)

7. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. (Když se kácí les, létají třísky.)

8. A watched pot never boils. (Kdo čeká, ten se dočká.)

9. Need makes greed. (S jídlem roste chuť.)

10. In for a penny, in for a pound. (Kdo se dá na vojnu, musí bojovat.)

11. One pair of heels is often worth two pairs of hands. (Kdo uteče, vyhraje.)

12. Give a clown your finger and he will take your hand. (Čiň čertu dobře
    a peklem se ti odmění.)

13. He that will not stoop for a spin, shall never be worth a pound. (Dobrá
    hospodyně pro pírko i přes plot skočí.)

14. The fly that plays too long in the candle, singes his wings at last. (Tak dlouho
    se chodí se džbánkem pro vodu, až se ucho utrhne.)

15. They that dance must pay the fiddler. (Bez peněz do hospody nelez.)

Comparing the usage of nouns there is no proverb in which the centre of
semantic gravity was moved from a verb to a nominal element, which means that
there is no sign of nominal tendency.

Concerning the tenses and time reference, the most different proverbs show
a wider variety of used tenses. The previous types of proverbs use mostly the present
tense, but the proverbs of type D also use the past and the future tense. It follows that
there are more differences in tenses and time reference between two corresponding
proverbs than in the previous categories. The first five and the seventh, ninth, twelfth
and thirteenth proverbs have the same time reference and use the same tense. Then,
the eighth, eleventh, and fourteenth proverbs have the same time reference, but it is
expressed by a different tense. The difference in all of these proverbs is that
the future reference in English is expressed by the present tense. The reason for using

the present tense is that the proverbs contain time-position adverbials and they have a general meaning. Finally, the sixth proverb has a different time reference and corresponding tense. The tense and time reference in the tenth proverb are incomparable, as the English equivalent does not contain a verb. The fifteenth proverb in English contains a modal verb in the present tense and the Czech one is a present imperative.

There are also two types of differences in expressing the negation. The first type of differences are differences caused by the difference between the form of negation in English and Czech. The fourth proverb consists of two clauses in both languages, but only the first one is negative in English. In Czech, both clauses negate the verb in order to negate the whole statement. Both clauses are global negations, but in Czech the second negation is necessary to maintain the negation agreement. The other type of differences is caused by other reasons. The seventh, eighth and thirteenth proverb all only use negation in English and it is a global negation in each proverb. To compare, the fifteenth proverb uses negation only in the Czech equivalent and it is again a global negation.

Concerning the word order, as these proverbs are very different, the word order and the sentence structure were analysed only on a general level. There are some differences which are considered to appear often between English and Czech. The word order is sometimes changed due to the placement of emphasis on a certain sentence element. This difference appears in the second proverb where the position of a post-modification of the English subject *fish* is unusual. It follows the predicate rather than the head noun *fish*. This could be caused by the intention to emphasise

the phrase *that nibbles at every bait* by moving it to the end. The ninth proverb in Czech has a subject in an unusual, final position as a result of emphasising the rheme, which is the subject. Other differences are in the number of imperatives and verbless clauses. The number of imperative clauses is very similar in English and Czech, so there is not any tendency to use the imperative more or less. Furthermore, one can see that usually both equivalents are imperatives as in the first, fourth, and twelfth proverb. Finally, as can be seen in the fifth and the fifteenth proverb, each language once uses an imperative when the equivalent does not.

The proverbs are very different on their lexical level, but there is one similarity. As an equivalent to *čert* (devil) in the Czech proverb, the word *clown* is used in the English equivalent. The two nouns are similar in their meaning as they both present an imaginary character related to negative emotions. Another similarity could be found within the fifteenth proverb. In both languages there is included a word related to a payment or money. In English, the word is the verb *pay* and in the Czech proverb it is the noun *peněz* (money). These words are included as both proverbs also contain an activity (going to a pub or dancing) one usually has to pay for.

The origins of these proverbs seem almost impossible to find. Only four proverbs have a provable (Latin) origin, and they are *take no more on than you are able to bear – všeho moc škodí* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 271), *you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs – když se kácí les, létají třísky* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 216), *need makes greed – s jídlem roste chuť* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 84) and *one pair of heels is often worth two pairs of hands – kdo uteče, vyhraje* (Čermák, Čermáková 2005, 248).

To summarise, the proverbs of type D are very different and they sometimes have only one similarity, which is that they contain the same moral. This suggest that the proverbs have a quantification function, which makes them difficult to compare and therefore unable to prove the thesis statement or answer the research questions.

The general analysis on a lexical level showed that the proverbs contain grammatical features typical for both English and Czech. For example, the English proverbs used present simple for the future reference more often than Czech proverbs, and a negation agreement appeared only within the Czech proverbs.

As the origin of most proverbs was not found, we cannot say that the difference of these proverbs is caused by a difference in origin.

2.6 General conclusion of the analysis

As this analysis consists of only 50 English proverbs and their Czech equivalents, its results cannot be applied generally to every proverb, but just to those which were chosen. The results may differ if one chooses different proverbs and then analyses them. The term proverbs in the following text does not mean proverbs generally, but only those mentioned in the analysis.

The first research question concerned the common differences that appear between English and Czech and whether these differences are reflected in the proverbs or not. The results of the analysis prove that the predicted differences described in the theoretical background do appear in the proverbs. For example, nominal tendency is reflected only in the English equivalents, though only once. Another difference which appeared in the proverbs was found in the way each language expresses global negation. The English proverbs were negated by inserting

a negative element seven times, while it negated the verb only five times.

The analysis of the Czech proverbs proved that most of the negative proverbs (12) negated not only the verb, but also other sentence elements in order to maintain negation agreement. Altogether, the Czech proverbs used negation 13 times, but one of them was an example of local negation. The proverbs also differ in the tense they use to express a certain time reference. According to the analysis results, the English proverbs are much more likely to use the present tense for the future reference. As an example, the proverb a*s you sow, as you reap. - jak si kdo zaseje, tak si také sklidí* could be used. The English proverb is in the present tense, but it has the future reference as well as the Czech one which expresses it by using the future tense. The present tense could be used here because it is a repeated action and the verbs express a beginning (sow) and an ending (reap) of an action. The English proverbs also use the past tense (for the past reference) in four cases, but none of the Czech verbs are in the past. Concerning the sentence structure and the word order, it was proved that functional sentence perspective is the most important reason why the English and Czech word order differs. Sometimes, the fixed word order in English also causes a word or a phrase with very close meaning to be a different sentence element in each equivalent. An example of this is the proverb t*he last straw breaks the camel's back* and p*oslední kapkou pohár přeteče*. While *the last straw* is a subject of the sentence, its corresponding equivalent *poslední kapkou* is an object. Another difference in the sentence structure is that a verb is more likely to be missing within the Czech equivalents of the chosen proverbs. There are six proverbs without a verb in Czech, while there are only two of them in English.

The second research question concerned the lexical level of the proverbs or, to be more specific, the word classes used. It was found that English and Czech proverbs often use a word with a similar meaning which is a different word class in each language. After analysing it, no tendency to prefer a certain word class either in the Czech language or English was found. An example of using different word classes with similar meaning could be the following pair of proverbs: *Prevention is better than cure – Lépe nemoci předcházet než ji léčit*. The two words similar in their meaning are *prevention* (noun) and *předcházet* (verb). Other interesting, but less important differences on a lexical level were found within the proverbs. Firstly, the Czech proverbs do not use any personal pronouns, unlike the English proverbs which use 11 of them. Secondly, the English proverbs are more likely to use a concrete definite numeral, for example *one* or *twice*. The numerals are used in the ratio 11:4. Finally, the English proverbs do not contain any interjections, while there is one included in the Czech proverbs.

The third and final research question was related to the origin of the proverbs and whether or not the similar proverbs have the same origin or not. After analysing the proverbs, we can say that the most similar proverbs (type A and B) have the same origin and they come from Latin or the Bible. However, it is impossible to say if the other proverbs differ more due to their origin as most of them have an unknown origin.

The results of the analysis and the research on origin show that the thesis statement is correct. It was proved that many proverbs have the same origin and also that despite this observation, they still differ. The differences found during

the analysis appear on both a lexical and syntactic level, but the syntactic differences are more frequent and more significant.

As regards the degree of similarity and difference between the English and Czech proverbs. The results of the analysis show that three[13] of the proverbs exist in both language and they are identical on the lexical and syntactic level. There are 10[14] proverbs which are very similar and contain only some differences either in the words they use or their sentence structure. On the other hand, there are 22[15] proverbs which are considered to be different, often only having a similarity of one or two words. The total number of 15[16] proverbs are completely different without any similarity except for the fact that they teach the same lesson or provide the same guidance. In other words, 26 % or 13 proverbs are considered similar or the same, while 74 % or 37 proverbs are considered more or less different. This means that most of the English and Czech proverbs differ in a significant way.

The analysis also shows that sometimes there are more proverbs which contain a similar moral. Examples of such proverbs are the proverbs *as you sow, as you reap* (jak si kdo zaseje, tak také sklidí) and *as you make your bed, so you sleep on it* (jak si kdo ustele, tak si také lehne) and their meaning according to the website *The Free Dictionary* and *McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs*, which cite this proverb, is that good or bad things will happen to you, according to how you behave (The Free Dictionary, 2017). Another two proverbs which are similar in the moral they provide are *praise a fair day at night* (nechval dne před

---

13 6 %
14 20 %
15 44 %
16 30 %

večerem) and *don't cross the bridge till you get to it* (neříkej hop, dokud nepřeskočíš). They advise not to celebrate a victory unless you are 100 % sure that you have won, and also to properly consider your evaluation even if it looks promising (Čermák 2013, 72). The concept of patience is a human characteristic that was related to the highest number of proverbs, being present in four. These are *a watched pot never boils* (kdo čeká, ten se dočká), *patient men win the day* (trpělivost přináší růže), *that fish will soon be caught that nibbles at every bait* (kdo je zvědavý bude brzo starý), and *the last straw breaks the camel's back* (poslední kapkou pohár přeteče).

The results of the questionnaire and the analysis also show that the proverbs which were identical are less known than the completely different proverbs. The proverb *rats desert a sinking boat* (krysy opouštějí potápějící se loď) was known by only 59,4 % of respondents, the proverb *the world is full of fools* (svět je plný bláznů) was known by only 58,3 % of respondents and 86,3 % of respondents were familiar with the proverb *live or let live* (žij a nech žít). To compare, 10 out of 15 proverbs of type D were known by more than 90 % of respondents. The proverb *in for a penny, in for a pound* (kdo se dá na vojnu, musí bojovat) was the least known proverb of type D as only 68,6 % of respondents answered that they knew the proverb.

CONCLUSION

For the aim of the paper, the author used a slightly supplemented definition of the term *proverb* established by František Čermák. According to the definition, all the analysed proverbs must have a didactic function which could be fulfilled by some wisdom, lesson or advice more or less hidden in the proverb. Also, all the chosen proverbs had to have the form of a sentence in the Czech language as it is the language of the questionnaire needed for this paper. As it was found that the term *saying* is very similar to the term proverb, they were not be properly distinguished in this paper.

As English is an analytic language while Czech is a synthetic one, some differences within the proverbs were predicted and described in *the theoretical background*. Those were differences in word order caused by a different way in dealing with the functional sentence perspective, differences in tenses and time references, the form of negation, and nominal tendencies.

An important part of the analysis was also the chapter *a brief history of proverbs* which says that many English and Czech proverbs have the same origin, most frequently Latin or biblical.

This thesis dealt with the most familiar English proverbs and their Czech equivalents. The online questionnaire showed that the most common proverbs were *score twice before you cut once* (dvakrát měř, jednou řež) and *don't cross the bridge till you get to it*, which 98,8 % of respondents knew. To compare, the least known

proverb was *bastard's brood is always proud* (pýcha kryje podlost), which was known by only 7,6 % of respondents.

By choosing and analysing the most common proverbs, the main goal of this paper was to find the degree of similarity or difference between the English and Czech equivalents. For this purpose, the proverbs were divided into four types A, B, C and D from those that were the most similar to those that were the most different. The proverbs of type A, which is 6 % of the chosen proverbs, are the same on both a lexical and syntactic level. Next, the proverbs of type B, which include 20 % of the proverbs, are considered to be similar. The proverbs of type C, 44 % of the proverbs, are considered to be rather different as they usually contain only one lexical similarity. There are also 30 % of proverbs which are different and their only similarity is that they contain the same moral. In other words, the English proverbs and their Czech corresponding equivalents are rather different on their lexical and syntactic levels.

The thesis statement, which follows that although many proverbs have the same origin, they differ and these differences appear on a syntactic rather than a lexical level due to the fact that English is an analytic language while Czech is a synthetic language, could be considered proved. Though the origin of many proverbs was not found, linguists dealing with proverbs, such as Flajšhans and Smith, agree that the Slavic and German proverbs have the same origin. Despite this fact, many differences appear within the proverbs and these differences are caused by the differences between English and Czech; either by the differences caused by the different language type or by other common differences between the two languages.

The most frequent differences were those of different word order due to a different way of dealing with the functional sentence perspective and also the expression of the future reference by the present tense.

Apart from the predicted syntactic and lexical differences, some unexpected differences between English and Czech also appear within the proverbs. For example, the analysis of the proverbs of type B shows that there are often words with a similar meaning, but they are a different word class in each language.

Regarding the origin, most of the proverbs of which an origin was found were said to originate in Latin or in the Bible. One of the research questions asked whether the similar proverbs have the same origin, and the conclusion is that they do. The three identical proverbs have the same origin, either Latin or biblical and 10 out of the 12 similar proverbs have the same origin as well. Unfortunately, in the case of proverbs of type C and D, to find the origin was quite difficult and therefore we cannot say that their differences are related to their origin.

Investigating the origin of the proverbs of which an origin was not found in this paper could be a possible direction for future research. Other possibilities are to increase the number of analysed proverbs in order to gain more general results or to complete the questionnaire again except with English native speakers, and compare the most familiar proverbs.

The main importance of this paper lies in its topic, as many authors deal with proverbs but they usually restrict analysis to their meaning rather than their form. However, this paper is also important for the author as it provides interesting information, such as which proverbs are well-known and how many of them are

different despite probably having a similar origin. The paper also helped the author to find out how complicated it is to do a comparative analysis and that the common differences between the English and Czech language are reflected in fixed phrases such as proverbs more than the author thought.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Books

1. Bland, Robert. 1814. *Proverbs, chiefly také from the Adagia of Erasmus, with explanations; and further illustrated by corresponding examples from the Spanish, Italian, French & English languages*. London: T. Egerton. https://archive.org/details/proverbschieflyt00blaniala.

2. Crystal, David. 2008. *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. London: Blackwell Publishers .

3. Cvrček, Václav. 2010. *Mluvnice současné češtiny.* Praha: Karolinum.

4. Dušková, Libuše et all. 2006. *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny.* Praha: Academia.

5. Čermák, František. 2007. *Frazeologie a idiomatika česká a obecná. Czech and General Phraseology.* Praha: Karolinum.

6. Čermák, František. 2011. *Jazyk a jazykověda*. Praha: Karolinum Press.

7. Čermák, Josef, Čermáková Kristina. 2005. *Slovník latinských citátů.* Praha: Universum.

8. Flajšhans, Václav. 2013. *Česká přísloví*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci.

9. Greenbaum, Sidney, and Quirk Randolph. 2013. *A Student's Grammar of the English language*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

10. Kvetko, Pavol. 2009. *An Outline of English Phraseology*. Trnava: Univerzita Sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave.

11. Lacinová, Eva. 2015. *Nejužívanější anglická přísloví*. Praha: Fragment.

12. Lau, Kimberly J, Tokofsky, Peter, and Winick, Stephen. D., edit. 2004. *What Goes Around Comes Around: The circulation of Proverbs in Contemporary Life*. Logan: Utah State University Press.

13. Mathesius, Vilém. 2016. *Obsahový rozbor současné angličtiny*. Praha: Karolinum.

14. Mrhačová, Eva et all. 2010. *Západoslovanské paremiologické dědictví*. Ostrava: Filozofická fakulta.

15. Müllerová, Adéla.2010. *Velká kniha přísloví*. Praha: Plot.

16. Řešetka, Miroslav. 2001. *Anglicko-český, česko-anglický slovník*. Olomouc: Fin publishing.

17. Smith, William George. 1970. *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*. London: Oxford University Press.

18. Štícha, František. 2015. *Česko-německá srovnávací gramatika*. Praha: Academia.

19. Vachek, Josef. 1997. *A funtional syntax of modern English*. Brno: Masarykova Univerzita v Brně.

20. Vachek, Josef. 1974. *Selected chapters from English syntax*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

21. Vachek, Josef. 1990. *A linguistic characterology of modern English*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

22. Wilson, Joanna. 1970. Introduction to *The Oxford Dictionary of English*

Proverbs, by William George Smith, 7-10. London: Oxford University Press.

Articles

1. Austria Forum. „Darovanému koni na zuby nehleď.“ Accessed, June 11, 2017. https://austria-forum.org/af/Wissenssammlungen/Sprichw %C3%B6rter/Darovan%C3%A9mu%20koni%20na%20zuby%20nehle %C4%8F.

2. Kerrigan, William, Favila, Marina. 2016. "On Poems and Proverbs." *Texas Studies in Literature & Language.* Vol 58 Issue 1. Accessed June 1, 2017. doi:10.7560/TSLL58103.

3. Mieder, Wolfgang. 2011. „It Takes a Village to Change the World: Proverbial Politics and the Ethics of Place.“ *Journal of American Folklore*. Volume 124. Accessed March, 29, 2017. doi:10.1353/jaf.2011.0028.

4. Simon, John S. 2015. „Proverbs, Caste and Gender: Studying the Interface between Proveerbs and Human Relations. *Oriental Anthropologist*. Volume 15 Issue 1. Accessed June, 2, 2017. http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ipac.kvkli.cz:8080/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer? vid=10&sid=c2fdf45b-31d6-4b66-b9d6-dfd0df1dda02%40sessionmgr120&hid=129.

5. Syzdykov, Kanat. 2014. „Contrastive Studies on Proverbs.“ *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Volume 136. Accessed March, 29, 2017. doi: 10.1016/j.sbrpro.2014.05.336.

6. Rasul, Sarwet. 2015. „Gender and Power Relationships in the Language of

Proverbs." *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*. Volume 9 Issue 2. Accessed

March 30, 2017.

http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ipac.kvkli.cz:8080/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?

vid=3&sid=40224dcf-48b5-4894-aa5f-34bae599377c

%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4207.

7. Zhao, Wen. 2013. „A Comparative Study of the Deep Structure of Culture

Reflected in English and Chinese Social Proverbs." *Journal of Language*

Teaching and Research. Volume 2. Accessed June, 11, 2017. 392 – 400. doi:

10.4304/jltr.4.2.392-400.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Political caricatures – Rats desert a sinking boat.

Appendix 2: A photo – Better safe than sorry.

Appendix 3: Questionaire sample.

Appendix 1 – Political caricature „Rats desert a sinking boat.“

Taken from *Chasin's Jesus blog*, http://chasinjesus.blogspot.cz/, seen 20 August 2017.

Appendix 2 – A photo „Better safe than sorry.“

Taken from http://www.mediashow.ro/show/430644-
3/Beware+of+PICKPOCKETS+-+Better+safe+than+sorry+-+Prague.JPG, seen 20
June 2017.

Appendix 3 – Questionaire sample

Nejznámější česká přísloví

Vážení přátelé,

ráda bych Vás požádala o vyplnění následujícího dotazníku, který bude bude základem mé diplomové práce týkající se českých přísloví a jejich anglických ekvivalentů.

Přečtěte si následující přísloví a pokud je znáte, zaškrtněte "Ano". V opačném případě zaškrtněte "Ne".

Děkuji za Váš čas a ochotu.

*Povinné pole

Jste muž či žena? *
- Muž
- Žena

Kolik je Vám let? (mezi 20 až 30) *
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30

Jaké je Vaše nejvyšší dosažené vzdělání? (nepovinné)
- vyučen/a
- střední škola s maturitou
- vysokoškolské

1) Pýcha předchází pád. *
- Ano
- Ne

2) Pýcha peklem dýchá. *
- Ano
- Ne

3) Zakázané ovoce nejvíce chutná. *
- Ano
- Ne

4) Neházej flintu do žita. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

5) Ani osel neunese víc, než může. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

6) S chutí do toho a půl je hotovo. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

7) Kdo se dá na vojnu, musí bojovat. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

8)Kdo nespěchá, vyhraje. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

9) Kdo je zvědavý, bude brzo starý. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

10) Opatrnosti nikdy nezbývá. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

11) Nevylej vaničku i s dítětem. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

12) Neřež si větev, na které sedíš. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

13) Špatný dělník viní své nástroje. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

14) Na hrubý pytel hrubá záplata. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

15) Lépe nemoci předcházet, než ji léčit. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

16) Tak dlouho se chodí se džbánkem pro vodu, až se ucho utrhne. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

17) Statečný muž z boje neprchá. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

18) Odvážnému štěstí přeje. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

19) Líp zbabělý než mrtvý. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

20) Kdo uteče, vyhraje. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

21) Krysy opouštějí potápějící se loď. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

22) V nejlepším je radno přestat. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

23) Nelze sedět na dvou židlích. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

24) Neříkej hop, dokud nepřeskočíš. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

25) Žít a nechat žít. / Žij a nech žít. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

26) Nejlepší ryby plavou u dna. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

27) Dvakrát měř, jednou řež. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

28) Méně je někdy více. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

29) Všeho moc škodí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

30) Kdo nic nedělá, nic nezkazí. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

31) Když se kácí les, létají třísky. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

32) Pýcha kryje podlost. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

33) Vlastní chvála z hrdla smrdí. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

35) Za člověka mluví jeho činy. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

36) Jestli tě chválí nepřítel, měj se na pozoru. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

37) Chvála nikoho nezasytí. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

38) Čím větší naděje, tím větší zklamání. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

39) Čiň čertu dobře a peklem se ti odmění. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

40) Nejvznešenější pomstou je odpuštění. *
- o Ano.
- o Ne.

41) Oklamat toho, kdo klame, není klam.
- o Ano
- o Ne

42) Jak si kdo zaseje, tak také sklidí. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

43) Jak si kdo ustele, tak si lehne. *
- o Ano
- o Ne

44) Každý strůjcem svého štěstí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

45) Zlo, které si sami způsobíme, se nejhůř snáší. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

46) Bez peněz do hospody nelez. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

47) Člověk dokáže víc, než může. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

48) Slova bez skutků je jako mlátit prázdnou slámu. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

49) Pilnému přeje štěstí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

50) Kdo nepracuje, ať nejí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

51) Bez práce nejsou koláče. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

52) Dobrá hospodyně pro pírko i přes plot skočí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

53) Kdo čeká, ten se dočká. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

54) Trpělivost přináší růže. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

55) Poslední kapkou pohár přeteče. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

56) Prázdný sud nejvíc zvučí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

57) Nechval dne před večerem. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

58) Všecka sláva, polní tráva. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

59) Kdo všecko chce, o všecko přijde. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

60) Kdo má hodně, chce ještě víc. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

61) S jídlem roste chuť. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

62) Lepší něco nežli nic. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

63) Malé ryby taky ryby. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

64) Darovanému koni na zuby nehleď. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

65) Víc očí víc vidí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

66) Každá ruka dobrá. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

67) Víc hlav, víc rozumu. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

68) Dobré slovo nic nestojí. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

69) Laskavostí nejspíš zvítězíš. *
- ○ Ano
- ○ Ne

70) Když ptáčka lapají, pěkně mu zpívají. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

71) Ruka ruku myje. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

72) Co nejde silou, půjde lstí. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

73) Účel světí prostředky. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

74) Lépe zemřít se ctí než žít s hanbou. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

75) Svět je plný bláznů. *
   o   Ano
   o   Ne

The results of the questionaire are available only online on Portál is/stag.