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English and Czech Colour Idioms. A Comparative Study.

Anglické a české idiomy obsahující barvy. Komparativní studie.

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Abstract

This thesis deals with English and Czech colour idioms. The theoretical part focuses on a detailed description of idioms, their meaning, structure, and functions. Furthermore, various classifications of idioms are discussed. The practical part analysis a corpus of English colour idioms and compares them in terms of the degree of equivalence with suitable Czech counterparts. Finally, a group of English colour idioms is researched in order to determine whether the particular idioms are recognized and used by English and Czech speakers.

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá anglickými a českými idiomy obsahující barvy. Teoretická část se zaměřuje na podrobný popis idiomů, jejich významu, struktury a funkce.

Dále jsou diskutovány různé klasifikace idiomů. Praktická část analyzuje korpus anglických idiomů spojených s barvou a porovnává je z hlediska stupně ekvivalence s vhodnými českými protějšky. Poté je skupina anglických idiomů spojených s barvou zkoumána za účelem zjistit, zdali jsou konkrétní anglické idiomy používány a známy anglickými a českými mluvčími.

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

First of all, it must be pointed out that idioms belong to an interesting and concurrently to an extensive subject of phraseology and idiomatics included in the branch of lexicology. As the title of this thesis states it will focus on English colour idioms in comparison to their Czech equivalents.

Firstly, the introductory chapter depicts and defines the substance of the term *idiom* according to a number of linguists and dictionaries. Then, as part of the theoretical consideration, not only the meaning, but also the function of idiomatic expressions is discussed. The next part of the thesis is focused on the various classifications of idioms, particularly on Makkai's classification, structural classification, syntactic classification, and classification on the basis of semantic opaqueness.

The aim of the practical part of the thesis is to create a corpus of English colour idioms and simultaneously to find Czech counterparts which are similar in meaning and form. Further, the English colour idioms are compared on the basis of their correspondence to their Czech equivalents. As inspiration for this comparison of English colour idioms and their Czech equivalents I use the division system established by Vokáčová (2008) which sorts correspondence into the following three categories: total correspondence, partial correspondence, and non correspondence. Some of the mentioned categories also have subcategories, which are further described here.

After the formation of a corpus of English colour idioms the aim was to quantify the topicality of usage regarding English colour idioms in common communication. Hence, a questionnaire was compiled and given to 14 English native speakers (9 Brits, 2 Americans, and 3 New Zealanders) and to 33 Czech learners of English.

2.0. WHAT IS AN IDIOM?

This part of my diploma thesis deals with the question of how to define an idiom as an independent unit. The initial problem presented here is how to express precisely the substance of the idioms. Furthermore, among linguists there is no universally accepted definition of the idiom as a linguistic phenomenon. As a consequence of this latter fact I have chosen several definitions of the term.

Čermák (2007:142) defined the idiom as “a unique and fixed combination of at least two elements some of which do not function in the same way in any other combination (of the kind) or occur only in a highly restricted number.”

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol.7 (1989:624), the term idiom is characterized in several senses:

- The form of speech peculiar or proper to a people or country; own language or tongue.
- In a narrower sense: That variety of a language which is peculiar to a limited district or class of people; dialect.
- The specific character, property, or genius of any language; the manner of expression which is natural or peculiar to it.
- A form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase, etc., peculiar to a language; a peculiarity of phraseology approved by the usage of a language, and often having a signification other than its grammatical or logical one.
- A characteristic mode of expression in music, art, or writing; an instance of this.
- Specific form or property; peculiar nature; peculiarity.

According to the *Dictionary of Idioms* the idiom “is a special kind of phrase. It is a group of words which have a different meaning when used together from the one it would have if the meaning of each word were taken individually Sinclair (1995:iv).”

Similarly, Crystal (2003) characterizes idioms by emphasizing two features which are, in his view, significant in expressing a suitable meaning of the term idiom.

Crystal (2003: 163) claims that “two central features identify an idiom. The meaning of the idiomatic expression cannot be deduced by examining the meanings of the constituent lexemes. And the expression is fixed, both grammatically and lexically.” As an example supporting this thesis he presents the idiom *put a sock in it* which means “to be quiet”. If one of the lexemes constituting the idiom, is replaced with a different word, the original idiom loses its idiomatic connotation.

Another very similar definition of the term idiom is to be found in the introduction to Seidl’s (1988:12-13) dictionary *Dictionary of Idioms*. Here it is stated that an idiom can be defined as a number of words which, when taken together, have a different meaning from the individual meanings of each word.

However, Fernando and Flavell (1981:17) characterize the term idiom according to the following properties: using four criteria for identifying idioms:

- “the meaning of an idiom is *not* the result of the compositional function of its constituents;
- an idiom is a unit that either has a homonymous literal counterpart or at least individual constituents that are literal, though the expression as a whole would not be interpreted literally;
- idioms are transformationally deficient in one way or another
- idioms constitute set expressions in a given language;
- idioms are institutionalized.”

Strässler (1982), however, defines the term idiom more specifically than other linguists. He depicts the idiom as:

A concatenation of more than one lexeme whose meaning is not derived from the meanings of its constituents and which does not consist of a verb plus an adverbial particle or preposition. The concatenation as such then constitutes a lexeme in its own right and should be entered as such in the lexicon Strassler (1982:79).

On the base of Strassler’s definition, it seems to be evident that this author does not consider phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs to be defining constituents of the idiom. His explanation of the term idiom is different from the other definitions in its exclusion of morphological structures.

This wide variety of definitions made the choice of the most suitable definition for the purposes of this paper quite difficult. There is clearly no universally accepted definition, and neither do I consider myself sufficiently qualified in the field of linguistics to claim which of the presented definitions is the best. Nonetheless, it should be stressed that all definitions primarily deal with the problem of depicting the substance of the idiom. In my opinion all of the above mentioned definitions of the term idiom attempt to define the idiom as a universal lexicological unit. If I were to choose one of the mentioned definitions I would probably opt for Čermák's definition for its universality and comprehensiveness.

3.0. THE MEANING OF IDIOMS

To be able to concentrate on the meaning of idioms, then, I would like to focus on Makkai's classification of idioms as it is connected closely with the topic of this chapter. First and foremost, Makkai (1972) specifies two major types of idioms which he termed encoding and decoding idioms. It should be noted that the problem of classification is dealt with in the corresponding chapter *Various classifications of idioms*. Nevertheless, as it is helpful in demonstrating the substance of idioms, through the example of the decoding idiom, I would also like to look at it here.

As an illustration of the decoding idiom, Makkai (1972) presents the semantic substance of the idiom *hot potato*. First and foremost, he states, it is not possible to deduce the meaning of the whole idiom from its component parts. Makkai (1972) supports this thesis with a demonstration of the idiom *hot potato*, which means "embarrassing issue". However, a non-native speaker of English without the knowledge that the phrase *hot potato* is an idiom, and must be understood from an idiomatic point of view, may deduce wrongly that the expression *hot potato* refers to "a food item at a high temperature" (ibid.: 25). As a consequence, the components of the idiomatic expression lose their original and independent meaning. As we have said, the item *hot* does not mean "having a high temperature"¹, and similarly the word *potato* loses the meaning "a round white vegetable with a brown or red skin that grows underground as the root of a plant also called a potato"². Therefore, there is no point in literally translating all the items of a particular idiom. In addition, Makkai points out the potential ambiguity of decoding idioms, which he terms *disinformation potential*.

¹ <http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/dictionary/hot>

² <http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/dictionary/potato>

4.0. THE FUNCTION OF IDIOMS

Čermák (2007), primarily, determines two functions of idioms and phrasemes, namely the formal and semantic functions, both containing a syntactic aspect represented by collocability and valency.

Furthermore, Čermák (2007) emphasizes two other functions, the denominative and structural functions. The first of the two mentioned functions, the **denominative function** of the idiom “follows especially from its semantic nature has two main components, designative and pragmatic (Čermák 2007:118).” The designative function focuses on “the relation of the phraseme as a sign to its referent and to the notional (conceptual) element of its meaning (Čermák 2007:118).” In contrast, the pragmatic function which is based on “the speaker’s various subjective aspects stressed by him in communication (especially emotional and attitudinal) the PI [phraseology and idiomatics] inventory being its most important source of means of expression (Čermák 2007:118).”

The second function mentioned in the introduction to the chapter, **the structural function**, works on the assumption that “a closed structure which cannot be decomposed either semantically or in a syntactic-formal way, just as it is impossible to generate an arbitrary or new phraseme (Čermák 2007:116).”

Admittedly, the enumeration of functions cannot be restricted only by the denominative and structural functions. In addition to these two mentioned functions Čermák (2007:116) specifies the following:

- **the aesthetic function** because “many phrasemes express, particularly good or witty metaphor, image”
- **the economic function** due to “a standard phraseme is usually a highly economic means of expression and its “short” or literal paraphrase, if there is any, is always longer”
- **the evaluative function** which works on the presumption that “most phrasemes are distinct means of expressing assessment, actually they are the richest source of it in the system”

- **the metalinguistic function** described as “the purpose of which is to follow and comment on or correct the actual line of the message”

Thus, significant importance is given to the situation where an idiom can be used as a convenience, and to the contrary, where it is not appropriate to integrate idioms or phrasemes into the utterance. In addition, Čermák emphasizes that

the central domain in which the use of PI is characteristically focused is informal spoken language, or fiction and journalistic style reflecting the informal spoken language. In technical language, on the other hand, PI does not occur with the exception of several quasiphrasemes (Čermák 2007:115).”

Consequently, the choice of use of idioms and phrasemes is dependant on many factors. According to Čermák (2007) not only the subject-matter but also the style and the particular situation and, last but not least, the speaker’s personality create the conditions for the application of appropriate idiomatic expressions.

Supporting what has been said Strässler (1982) also deals with the question of the function of idioms and their use as a part of language “[...] every idiom has a non-idiomatic synonym on the semantic level. The question now remains as to why idioms exist and why they can only be used under certain circumstances (Strässler 1982: 85).”

5.0. VARIOUS CLASSIFICATIONS OF IDIOMS

In the following chapter I will focus on the division of idiomatic expressions according to several criteria. Firstly, I will concentrate on *Makkai's classification* of lexemic idioms, which constitutes a well arranged and coherent system of division of English idioms. After that the next criterion represents *the structure* of the idiom focusing on the regular or irregular forms of idioms with consequences for complex meaning. In addition, *syntactic characteristics* of idiomatic expression will be a further standpoint for classification. Finally, the criterion *semantic transparency* will be dealt with concentrating on the possibility or impossibility of deriving the whole meaning of an idiom from its constituents, and also comparing the literal and idiomatic meaning of idioms.

5.1 MAKKAI'S CLASSIFICATION

As has already been said in the chapter *The meaning of idioms*, Makkai (1972) specifies two major types of idioms called encoding and decoding idioms. As a typical example of the encoding idiom Makkai presents the phrase *he drove AT 70 MPH*. He demonstrates the use of the preposition *at* in this particular utterance. Commonly, in the English language, it is semantically and grammatically correct to use the preposition *at* although in other European languages, such as French or German, it is grammatically correct to use the preposition *with* instead of *at*.

Nevertheless, this sort of encoding idiom is not the primary focus of the author's attention. Makkai (1972:25) further emphasizes the difference between encoding and decoding idioms: "Misunderstanding, unintelligibility, the ability to mislead, and ambiguity, however, are not involved in this type of 'idiom' (*encoding idiom*) and this fact makes a natural line of division between 'phraseological peculiarities' and genuine, or semantic idioms. It seems appropriate to consider these 'phraseological peculiarities' as IDIOMS OF ENCODING, and lexical clusters (*hot dog, hot potato, red herring*) and tournures (*to fly off the handle, to seize the bull by the horns, etc.*) as IDIOMS OF DECODING."

Further, Makkai (1972) divides decoding idioms into two categories – *lexemic* and *sememic idioms*. In *Idiom Structure in English* (1972) focuses his attention primarily on the first mentioned category of lexemic idioms. Therefore, I have decided to deal with lexemic idioms.

A further reason for choosing not to focus on the category of sememic idioms lies in the substance of this category. This type of idiom contains idiomatic expressions which are for example *familiar quotations* or *idioms of institutionalized greeting*. I did not originally intend to give any attention to this sort of idiomatic expression, sememic idioms were not, therefore, meant to constitute an important part this thesis, and in fact, I finally decided to leave out the category of sememic idioms entirely.

5.1.1 Types of Lexemic Idioms

In his work *Idiom Structure in English* (1972) Makkai classifies lexemic idioms into six categories:

- Phrasal Verb Idioms
- Tournure Idioms
- Irreversible Binomial Idioms
- Phrasal Compound Idioms
- Incorporating Verb Idioms
- Pseudo-Idioms

First of all, each of the mentioned subcategories of lexemic idioms will be characterized in the following chapters. Then, the characteristic of these types of lexemic idioms will be dealt with. Further, their typical structure will be described. Finally an appropriate division into subcategories will be mentioned.

5.1.1.1 Phrasal Verb Idioms

The first subcategory of lexemic idioms represents phrasal verb idioms. The structure of phrasal verb idioms

is always verb + adverb, with the understanding that certain adverbs also occurring as ‘prepositions’ are merely transitive adverbs (i.e., construed

with an object), in contrast to the ordinary adverbs which are intransitive (i.e., not construed with an object) (Makkai 1972:135).

Moreover, it must be pointed out that many phrasal verb idioms are composed of three lexons instead of two. Makkai presents this through the example of the expression *to come down with* (pneumonia). From the semantic point of view it is invalid to omit the third component of the whole expression “(**he came down pneumonia*) (Makkai 1972:145).”

However, Makkai emphasizes that in relative clauses which do not contain the relative pronoun it is possible to partially disturb the structure of the phrasal verb idiom. As an example of this statement, Makkai (1972:145) introduces the sentence “*it’s pneumonia he came down with*”.

Not only Makkai (1972) but also Greenbaum & Quirk (1990), in *A Student’s grammar of the English language*, deal with the problem of phrasal verbs. First of all, Greenbaum & Quirk (1990:336) claim that “the two main categories of multi-word verbs consist of a lexical verb plus a PARTICLE, a neutral designation for the overlapping categories of adverb and preposition that are used in such combinations.”

Furthermore, Greenbaum & Quirk (1990:336) divide phrasal verbs into three categories:

- **Phrasal verbs** – the participle is an adverb (*e.g. drink up, find out*)
- **Prepositional verbs** – the participle is a preposition (*e.g. dispose of, cope with*)
- **Phrasal-prepositional verbs** – with two particles, an adverb followed by a preposition (*e.g. put up with*)

5.1.1.2 Tournure Idioms

5.1.1.2.1 The characteristic of tournure idioms

Tournure idioms are regarded as another type of lexemic idiom. Makkai (1972:148) compares a tournure idiom with a phrasal verb “A tournure idiom is a polylexonic lexeme of larger size-level than a phrasal verb insofar as it consists of at least three lexons that are lexemes elsewhere, as in *have it out (with)* and *have it in for*.” Makkai emphasizes that a further difference between tournure idioms and phrasal verbs is the presence of the pronoun *it* as a constituent of the structure of tournure idioms.

Compared to sememic idioms the structure of tournure idioms cannot be changed because the composition of this type of idiom is fixed and unchangeable.

5.1.1.2.2 Subclassification of Tournure Idioms

1a) The form contains the compulsory IT.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to break IT up	to stop fighting
to have IT out with (somebody)	to tell honest opinion in anger
to cut IT out	to stop acting nonsensically or in some other undesirable fashion

1b) The compulsory IT stands last.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to ask for IT	to court danger
to come off IT	to stop acting nonsensically
to step on IT	to speed up

2a) The form contains the compulsory definite article.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to bury THE hatchet	to make a peace
to let THE cat out of THE bag	to give away a secret
to be caught between THE devil and THE deep blue sea	to be caught between two equally unpleasant alternatives

2b) The form contains the compulsory indefinite article.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to pull A fast one	to perpetrate dishonest or illicit act
to do A guy	to disappear surreptitiously
to be up A creek	to be in a precarious position

3a) The form contains an irreversible binomial.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to rain <i>cats and dogs</i>	to rain profusely
to be at <i>sixes and sevens</i>	to be in a state of confusion, at odds
come <i>hell or high water</i>	under any circumstances

3b) The form contains an irreversible binomial introduced by a preposition rather than a verb.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
without <i>rhyme or reason</i>	unmotivatedly
by <i>fits and starts</i>	irregularly
over <i>hill and dale</i>	up and down the countryside, all over the place

4a) The leading verb is followed by a direct object and further optional modifiers.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to build castles in the air	to make unrealistic plans
to cast pearls before swine	to offer something valuable to someone who cannot appreciate it
to have a beef against somebody	to bear somebody a grudge

4b) The leading verb is not followed by a direct object but by preposition + noun, or nothing (i.e., the verb is complex).

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to dance on air	to get hanged
to baby sit	to take care of a child for a few hours while its parents are away
to beat around the bush	to avoid coming to the point

5) The leading verb is BE.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to BE completely at sea	to be confused, in the dark, bewildered
to BE up a creek	to be in a precarious position
to BE born with a silver spoon in one's mouth	to be born rich

6) The form functions as an adverb composed of several words.

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
in the long run	eventually
as a matter of fact	really, in reality, actually
to come down to brass tacks	seriously, in earnest

5.1.1.3 Irreversible Binomial Idioms

5.1.1.3.1 The characteristic of Irreversible Binomial idioms

In order to characterize binomial idioms, Makkai (1972:155) uses Yakov Malkiel's (1959) explanation which "defines a binomial as a formula consisting of parts A and B joined by a finite set of links *l* the order of which (in the overwhelming majority of cases) cannot be reversed."

In addition, Makkai (1972) divides binomials, on the basis of their irreversibility or reversibility, into three categories: *irreversible idiomatic binomials*, *reversible idiomatic binomials* and *non-idiomatic binomials*.

Concerning the first category of irreversible idiomatic binomials Makkai (1972) demonstrates that it is impossible to arbitrarily change the order of the constituents in this type of idiom ("*spick-and-span* ≠ **span-and-spick* Makkai 1972:158").

The second category, reversible idiomatic binomials, are described as a category "whose constituents have the freedom to occur in the reverse order, but when they do occur in this reverse order they no longer refer to the particular institution designated by the binomial form, except as allusions Makkai (1972:159)." As a demonstrative example Makkai (1972) mentions the expression *salt and pepper* ("the institution of

common table spices Makkai 1972:159”) which is compared with *pepper and salt* (“hair colour Makkai 1972:159”).

The last category is represented by non-idiomatic binomials. Compared to reversible idiomatic binomials the main difference is in the formal structure of *nonidiomatic binomials* because “the link *and* can be replaced by the link *with* as in *coffee with cream* and *coffee with sugar* indicating that one can, and often does, have coffee with either cream or sugar Makkai (1972:159).”

5.1.1.3.2 Subclassification of Irreversible Binomial Idioms

1) Morphotactically irreversible idiomatic binomials

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
hem and haw	search for words
might and main	strength
the quick and the dead	everybody

2) Morphotactically reversible idiomatic binomials which become literal constitutes after the reversal

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
checks and balances	institutionalized aspect of the American system of government based on the Constitution
up and down	to go up and down potentially <i>n</i> times
whiskey and soda	institutionalized Anglo-American drink

3) Nonidiomatic binomials which are morphotactically reversible with resulting loss of institutionality

<i>The expression</i>
coffee and cream
man and wife
fish and chips

5.1.1.4 Phrasal Compound Idioms

Because of the various subclasses of this category, I decided to choose only some of the categories presented by Makkai in *Idiom Structure in English* (1972). The purpose of the selection was to demonstrate only the structure of the idioms which are sorted into the category of phrasal compound idioms.

5.1.1.4.1 Subclassification of Phrasal Compound Idioms

1) Compounds with adjective plus noun

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
big shot	an important or influential person
darkroom	a room in which film is made, handled, or developed and from which the actinic rays of light are excluded
hot seat	the electric chair; a highly uncomfortable or embarrassing situation

2) Compounds with noun plus noun

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
ducktail	a style of haircut
jughead	a stupid person
pen name	a pseudonym

3) Compounds with preposition/adjective plus noun

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
backfield	certain members of a football team or their positions
forehand	a stroke, as in tennis, made from the same side of the body as the hand holding the racket
outhouse	a privy

5.1.1.5 Incorporating Verb Idioms

5.1.1.5.1 The characteristic of Incorporating Verb Idioms

First of all, Makkai (1972:168) restricts the structure of incorporating verb idioms with the following characteristics:

“The first lexon of these complex lexemes is a noun or an adjective in other environments, and a literal re-encoding of many of them reveals a related structure where the verb leads the construction which is either followed by a direct object and/or an appropriate choice of prepositional phrase.”

On the base of this definition Makkai demonstrates that the term *to sight-see* is an idiom with the meaning “to visit famous places as a tourist in organized groups or by oneself (Makkai 1972:168)” In contrast to this, the author emphasizes that “a person looking out through his window also sees sights, but he doesn’t *sight-see* (Makkai 1972:168).”

Makkai (1972) classifies incorporating verb idioms according to their morphological structure:

5.1.1.5.2 Subclassification of Incorporating Verb Idioms

1) Noun-verb

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to eave-drop (-er, -ing)	to surreptitiously overhear
to baby-sit (-er, -ing)	to take care of child(ren) while parents are absent
to brow-beat (-er, -ing)	to badger

2) Adjective-noun

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to brown-nose	to flatter teacher
to blackmail	to extort

3) Noun-noun

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to bootleg	to sell or make liquor illegally
to mastermind	to be the brains behind a scheme

4) Adjective-verb

<i>The idiom</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
to boot-lick (-er, -ing)	to act excessively subservient
to manhandle (-er, -ing)	to rough up, bully
to straphang (-er, -ing)	to ride a crowded streetcar

5.1.1.6 Pseudo-Idioms

5.1.1.6.1 The characteristic of Pseudo-Idioms

Finally, the last category of lexemic idioms is represented by pseudo-idioms. According to Makkai (1972:123) “polylexonic lexemes one or more of whose constituent lexons, in spite of being morphotactically permissible words, are not simultaneously realizations of independent lexemes in other environments as well, unless they are BANNED LEXONS, are PSEUDO-IDIOMS.”

On the base of this definition, the following expressions can be considered to be members of this category:

<i>The expression</i>	<i>The meaning</i>
chit-chat	small talk
mish-mash	jumble
tic-tac-toe	special game

5.2 STRUCTURAL CLASSIFICATION

According to Seidl (1988), one aspect which can be considered as a criterion for the classification of idioms is their structure itself. On the basis of structure Seidl (1988:13) divides idioms into the three categories delimiting idioms which have

- **Irregular form** with a clear meaning (*e.g. give someone to understand, do someone proud, do the dirty on someone*)
- **Regular form** with an unclear meaning (*e.g. have a bee in one's bonnet, cut no ice, bring the house down*)
- **Irregular form** with an unclear meaning (*e.g. be at large, go great guns, be at daggers drawn*).

5.3 SYNTACTIC CLASSIFICATION

Another aspect via which idiomatic expression can be divided is on the base of their syntactic properties. According to Fernando and Flavell (1981: 37) “an idiom is a syntactic unit which manifests lexical integrity”.

From the syntactic point of view Cowie (1985: xi) distinguishes two types of idioms, *phrase idioms* and *clause idioms*. Further, phrase idioms are subdivided into four types:

- **Noun Phrase** (*e.g. a crashing bore*)
- **Adjective Phrase** (*e.g. free with one's money etc*)
- **Prepositional Phrase** (*e.g. in the nick of time*)
- **Adverbial Phrase** (*e.g. as often as not*)

The second type of idiom, clause idioms, is divided into the following categories:

- **Verb + Complement** (*e.g. go berserk*)
- **Verb + Direct Object** (*e.g. ease sb's conscience/mind*)
- **Verb + Direct Object + Complement** (*e.g. paint the town red*)
- **Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object** (*e.g. do sb credit*)
- **Verb + Direct Object + Adjunct** (*e.g. take sth amiss*)

5.4 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF SEMANTIC OPAQUENESS

From the semantic viewpoint, the classification which is based on this criterion is not united. It must be pointed out that linguists are not united in their definition of the category of semantic transparency. As an example of one means by which he restricts this category I decided to mention Cowie's (1985) division focused on the semantic aspect of idiomatic expressions.

As I was using the *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English* as one of the main sources for this thesis I decided to choose the following classification mentioned in the introductory chapter.

Cowie (1985:xii-xiii) distinguishes the following sort of idioms:

- **pure idioms** (e.g. *blow the gaff, kick the bucket*)
- **figurative idioms** (e.g. *beat one's breast, burn one's breast*)
- **restricted collocations** (e.g. *jog one's/sb's memory*)
- **open collocations** (e.g. *fill the sink*)

For purposes of comparison I decided to include the summary of further semantic classification which Grant and Bauer (2004) present in their article *Criteria for Re-defining Idioms: Are we Barking up the Wrong Tree?* as an appendix to the thesis.

6.0. IDIOM ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Firstly I would like to describe the process of my search for English colour idioms. From the English Idiomatic dictionaries mentioned in the Bibliography of the thesis I found a large body of idioms containing one of the following colours in their structure: black, blue, brown, green, grey, golden, pink, purple, red, silver, white, or yellow. This large body of expressions contained a portion of idioms repeated through variation. I, therefore, chose only one definition of a particular idiom which, in my opinion, characterized the meaning of the idiom clearly. The next aim of the analysis was to find the most suitable Czech counterpart to each English colour idiom. Further, English colour idioms were compared on the basis of their level of correspondence to the Czech equivalents.

In this thesis I have used the methodology which Vokáčová applied in her dissertation because I consider it to be useful, well-arranged and elaborated. Vokáčová (2008) compares English, Czech, French, and German idioms on the base of their level of correspondence. She classifies human body idioms, animal idioms, and colour idioms into three main categories: **total correspondence**, **partial correspondence** and **non correspondence**. In addition, all the above mentioned types of correspondence are further divided into sub-categories. All in all, I have been inspired by Vokáčová's classification of equivalence, and have used some of her subcategories in this thesis. The reason for choosing only some of her subcategories was the impossibility of sorting the Czech counterparts to English idioms into the same subcategories, which were specifically restricted.

The classification of English idioms into one of the three categories of correspondence was affected by finding the Czech equivalent. I sorted English idioms into the subcategory of total correspondence, partial correspondence, or non correspondence on the base of correspondence with the Czech idiom.

Vokáčová was inspired by the classification of correspondence which Helgunde Henschel presented in *Die Phraseologie der tschechischen Sprache* (1993). In this work Henschel compared Czech and German idioms on the basis of their correspondence. Unfortunately, I was not able to find this primary source and so decided to use Vokáčová's classification.

6.1. TOTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Vokáčová (2008:59) characterizes idioms included in the category of **total correspondence** “as expressions which have an identical semantic, structural, lexical and figurative form.” Further, Vokáčová (2008: 62) specifies

an idiom in one language is expressed in the language with which it is compared by an idiom which agrees on several levels – stylistic (or functional as it is also called), semantic and formal. (...) First, the stylistic or functional level expresses the notion that the idiom and its equivalent should be used in both languages in the same style. (...) Second, semantic level suggests that the meaning of the idiom is identical in both languages compared. Finally, formal level indicates that the individual components which form the idiom agree in both languages compared.

Compared to Vokáčová (2008) I dealt only with the semantic level. The stylistic level of idioms is not included because this aspect is not a part of this thesis.

Moreover, Vokáčová (2008) divides the total correspondence category in two branches **100% correspondence** and **overall correspondence**, which in turn is further subdivided.

6.1.1. 100% correspondence

Idioms belonging to this category must have identical meaning in both languages. The typical example of a colour idiom, which can be included in the category of 100% correspondence is *a grey eminence – šedá eminence*.

6.1.2. Overall correspondence

According to Vokáčová (2008:63) “a certain degree of varieties are classified among this subcategory.” This point of view can be considered as a common feature of idioms belonging to this category.

In this category differences between the idioms in the two languages can be seen in morphological deviation. A typical example of this phenomenon is the expression *a golden age*, which is translated into the Czech language as *zlaté časy*. In the English idiom the noun *age* appears in singular form, in contrast, the Czech equivalent *časy* is in the plural form.

Another example of overall correspondence, which can be demonstrated via a particular idiom, is the use of a different preposition in one language, for example *in black and white*, which can be translated into Czech as *černé na bílém*. The Czech equivalent, therefore, contains a different preposition *on (na)*.

6.2. PARTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Idioms which are included in the category of partial correspondence must contain “a certain degree of correspondence but are not similar enough to be called totally corresponding. The idioms compared which are sorted into this category fully

agree on the semantic level but the lexical means used for their formation differs (Vokáčová 2008: 64)”.

On the base of this definition Vokáčová (2008) mentions the idiom *to be black and blue* – *být samá modřina*, to be a member of the category of partial correspondence. The Czech translation contains a different lexical means for expressing the same meaning as the English expression.

In addition, Vokáčová (2008) sorts partial correspondence into nine sections:

Expressiveness versus neutrality

Using lexically different words but keeping the semantic meaning

Using a different lexical means for one element of the idiom

Using hypernyms or hyponyms

Idioms possessing different number of lexical expressions

Grammatically different idioms

The whole idiom is expressed with different lexical means

Idiomatic expression using a different colour

Identical colour but a different structure and lexical elements in the idiom

Nonetheless, I did not use these subcategories of partial correspondence. Actually, I utilized only the category of partial correspondence, which I did not divide further. The reason I decided for this reduction in categorization was the impossibility of sorting the Czech counterparts to English idioms exactly into these specific sections. I have presented Vokáčová’s detailed classification of partial correspondence for purposes of illustration only. For the purposes of this thesis I have used only the category of partial correspondence without the further divisions.

6.3. NON CORRESPONDENCE

The last type of correspondence is non correspondence, which is a wide category in terms of the large amount of idioms appertaining to this type. This is due to the fact that in the Czech lexicon there are many idioms which do not have the same structure as their English counterparts.

Non correspondence is characterized as a category which “contains, on one hand, idioms which do not have any equivalent and, on the other hand, it also encompasses all idioms which are expressed non-idiomatically (Vokáčová 2008:67).“

A typical example of non correspondence is an idiom *a white elephant*, which is translated into the Czech as *zbytečná věc* (a useless thing), even though the literal translation would be *bílý slon*.

The previously mentioned category is sorted into three subdivisions: **periphrasis**, **one-word expression**, and **free combination of language elements**.

I have omitted the last subcategory, the free combination of language elements because I was not able to identify the Czech equivalents which might be suitable for the category. Therefore, I have decided to use only two subcategories, namely **periphrasis**, and **one-word expression**.

6.3.1. *Periphrasis*

An idiom which has no idiomatic counterpart in the other language in question is considered to be a periphrasis (Vokáčová 2008). The idiom *white elephant* is an example of non correspondence and more precisely of periphrasis.

6.3.2. *One-word expression*

The idioms which are sorted into the following category use one word non-idiomatic expression to express the meaning of the whole idiom. For example, the idiom *a white-collar worker* belongs to this category because the translation to the Czech language consists of one word, in this case *úředník* (*clerk*), which has no idiomatic connotation. All such English idioms possessing one-word Czech equivalents are sorted into this category.

In this chapter I have dealt with three types of correspondence, namely with total correspondence, partial correspondence, and non correspondence. I have characterized each of these categories and mentioned their subcategories. In the following chapter I will focus on the analysis of idioms which are connected with particular colours.

7.0. ANALYSIS OF IDIOMS

7.1. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH BLACK

In this chapter I will concentrate on the analysis of all idioms which have the word *black* in their appellations. I will classify these English idioms according to the level of correspondence with their Czech counterparts.

7.1.1 Total correspondence

7.1.1.1 100% correspondence

- **A BLACK BOX – ČERNÁ SKŘÍŇKA**

“You can refer to a process or system as **a black box** when you know that it produces a particular result but you do not understand how it works. *Only a decade ago cancer was a black box about which we knew nothing at the molecular level.* / *'When we were faced with this question we were also faced with how very little is known about the nature of the resistance to the pest in American vine species,' says Walker. He describes the phenomenon as 'a black box'.* Sinclair (1995:45).”

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, whose focus is not primarily idiomatic language, the meaning of the phrase **a black box** can also be: “a small machine in a plane that records all the details of each flight and is useful for finding out the cause of an accident.” Therefore, this definition is very close to the meaning of the Czech phrase *černá skříňka*, which is: “**1.** record of an airplane’s flight (*e.g. President Yeltsin is to hand over to his Korean counterpart the black box, a recording of the flight information of the Korean Airlines Boeing shot down in 1983*), **2.** security anti-theft device in a car (*e.g. when a police patrol receives the coded signal sent out by the black box, the police contact the firm Secar...*) Schmiedtová V. and Schmiedtová B. (2002). ”

Pokud dojde k leteckému neštěstí, tak důležitou roli pro zjištění příčiny havárie podají informace z černé skříňky.

- **THE BLACK SHEEP (OF THE FAMILY) – ČERNÁ OVCE RODINY**

The meaning of the phrase **the black sheep (of the family)** is “a person who is considered to have done sth bad, or to be a failure, by their family or the group to which they belong: *Debbie is the black sheep of the family, having left home at seventeen to live with her boyfriend* Warren (1994:19).”

The term **the black sheep of the family** also exists in the field of Czech lexicology, and with the same meaning as it has in English – *černá ovce rodiny*. *David nikdy nebyl oblíbený mezi svými příbuznými. Ti se na něj často dívali skrz prsty a mluvili o něm jako o černé ovci rodiny.*

- **A BLACK DAY – ČERNÝ DEN**

The idiom **a black day (for sb)** is characterized as “a day when sth sad, unpleasant or disastrous happens (to sb): *It was a black day for this area when the local steel factory closed down.* Warren (1994:19).”

This expression also exists in Czech as *černý den* or *špatný den*. *Celý den byl pro něj jako noční můra. Vyhodili ho z práce a k tomu ztratil klíče od auta – prostě černý den, na který by nejráději zapomněl.*

- **AS BLACK AS INK – ČERNÝ JAKO INKOUST**

The expression **as black as ink** describes something which is “very dark, so that one cannot see clearly **S**: sky, tunnel, room. **V**: be, become; grow. **n**: ink, night, pitch, the Pit □ *The sky had grown black as ink – we would have to find shelter before the storm broke.* □ *He rushed out of the shelter into the open. It was pitch black, unrelieved even by starlight.* TBC³ □ *They moved cautiously from the entrance to the tunnel, already having to feel their way with their hands. Ahead it was as black as the Pit* Cowie (1985:17).”

The literal translation into Czech is *černý jako inkoust*, and, indeed, this phrase is used in this way in the Czech lexicon. On the other hand, there is also the contingency of replacing the noun *inkoust* with other nouns for example *dehet/ noc/bota/d'ábel*. *Zastavili se u výlohy obchodu s nábytkem a vážně uvažovali o koupi stolu, který byl černý jako inkoust a ideálně by pasoval do jejich nové kuchyně.*

3 TBC = Hoyle, F. (Penguin 1960, William Heinemann 1957) *The Black Cloud*

- **AS BLACK AS COAL/SOOT – ČERNÝ JAKO UHEL/SAZE**

The simile **as black as coal/soot** is usually used to describe something which is “dirty, e.g. a child's hands, face or clothes Seidl (1988:237).”

We also find the expression *být černý jako uhel/saze* in the Czech lexicon. *Po celodenní práci ve špinavé strojovně byl černý jako uhel.*

- **AS BLACK AS PITCH – ČERNÝ JAKO DEHET**

The comparison **as black as pitch** means “very dark, e.g. a room, cellar, street without lights Seidl (1988:237).”

If we wanted to find the most suitable Czech counterpart, we would choose the same expression – *černý jako dehet*, which absolutely corresponds to the English idiom **as black as pitch**. *Důkazem toho, že místnost v levém křídle zámku se používala jako černá kuchyně svědčí ten fakt, že stěny jsou dodnes černé jako dehet.*

- **A BLACK MARK – ČERNÝ PUNTÍK**

The idiom **a black mark has the meaning of** “a mental or written record of someone's misconduct, failure, etc. that counts against him. *Jackson failed to finalize an important contract in Chicago. He wasn't asked to resign but it was certainly a black mark against him* Seidl (1988:204).”

The total correspondence here is in the translation of the idiom *black mark* into Czech into the same form and meaning as in English – *černý puntík*. *Laxní přístup právního subjektu k dané kauze rozhodně není profesionální a minimálně by si zasloužil černý puntík.*

7.1.1.2 Overall correspondence

- **IN BLACK AND WHITE – ČERNOBÍLÝ**

Without the context, in some situations, the interpretation of this expression can be unclear and ambiguous. According to Cowie (1985:68), there are two definitions of this idiom. The phrase **in black and white** means “not coloured; having no other colours than black and white □ *Professor Calvin Hall, who has collected records of many thousands of dreams, tell us that about two-thirds of all dreams are in black and white.*

HAH⁴ □ *The older ones (magazines) still use **black-and-white** drawings in an unsophisticated style.* UL⁵ □ *Most of the councillors were there, and practically all the Town Hall staff, unfamiliar **in the black-and-white** of evening suits.* RATT⁶.”

The second meaning of the mentioned idiom is “absolute wrong or right, without recognizing any more subtle variations **V**: see, view, think. **O**: everything, things, events; people □ MONTY: *But she has one fault. For her the world is **black and white**. If you're not white, you must be black. She can't see shades in a character. She can't see people in the round.* CSWB⁷ □ *As children we were taught always to tell the truth and never to tell lies. But now we do not see these things **in quite such black and white terms*** Cowie (1985:68).”

According to the English definitions the most appropriate translation into Czech would be **černobílý**. *Celý dokument bych potřebovala do odpoledne vytisknout nikoliv barevně, jak jsme se původně domluvili, ale bude stačit pouze černobíle.*

7.1.2 Partial correspondence

- **BLACK AND BLUE – BÝT SAMÁ MODŘINA**

The idiom **black and blue** means “having bruises on the body after an accident, fight etc. *Poor Liz took a few falls on her skiing holiday – she's **black and blue*** Seidl (1988:203)!”

This idiom can be translated into Czech as **být samá modřina**. *Malý Vašík, zapálený fotbalista, je po zápase vždy samá modřina.*

- **A BLACK LOOK – NEVRAŽIVÝ POHLED**

The idiom **a black look** is considered to be “an angry or disapproving expression on sb's face: *She gave me a **black look** when I suggested she should do the washing-up* Warren, H. (1994:145).”

In English, there are two variants of this idiom namely **a dirty look** or **a filthy look**. The meaning of all the above mentioned idioms is identical.

This expression also exists in Czech as **nevraživý pohled**. As an alternative **špatný pohled** is also used to express the same meaning as that of **a black look**.

4 HAH = Huxley, A. (Penguin 1960) *Heaven and Hell*

5 UL = Hoggart, R. (Pelican 1959, Chatto & Windus 1957) *The Uses of Literacy*

6 RATT = Braine, J. (Penguin 1960, Eyre & Spottiswoode 1957) *Room at the Top*

7 CSWB = Wesker, A. (Penguin 1959) *Chicken Soup with Barley*

Nevraživý pohled, který mu právě on věnoval, ostatní okamžitě přesvědčil o tom, že sympatie není rozhodně opěťovaná z druhé strany.

- **IN SOMEONE'S BLACK BOOKS – BÝT NA ČERNÉ LISTINĚ**

The meaning of the idiom **in someone's black books** is to be “out of favour with someone. *I think I'll keep out of the boss's way today. I'm in her black books for upsetting a client* Seidl (1988:204).”

Nevertheless, we might also use the adjective *bad* instead of the word *black*. All in all, **in someone's bad books** is also correct and meaningful.

The idiom **a black list** is very similar to the expression **be in someone's black books**. In fact, we would translate both idioms as *být na černé listině* or *černá listina*. *Bylo evidentní, že Petr byl na černé listině u své tchýně, která k němu nechovala přílišné sympatie.*

7.1.3 Non correspondence

7.1.3.1 Periphrasis

- **IN THE BLACK – BÝT V PLUSU**

The colloquial expression **in the black** is characterized as “having some money in the bank; not in debt: *He was left with £28,000. For the first time in months he was in the black at the bank. (The Sun 9 Nov 74) // I had a letter from my bank today telling me I owed them £60. I was surprised because I thought I was in the black* [Adj 1⁸, after *be*] Long (1979:26).”

In many cases it is possible to use the variant of this idiom which is **into the black** [Adv 3⁹, after *get* or *go*]. The meaning of both idioms is of course the same.

Probably, *být v plusu* (*finančně*) is the Czech equivalent for this English idiom. *Při poradě finanční analytik konstatoval, že díky získané zakázce bude společnost nadále finančně v plusu. Předpokládám tedy, že propouštění zaměstnanců nebude nutné.*

8 In the *Longman dictionary of English idioms*, the abbreviation *Adj 1* means in general an adjective phrase that follows the verbs *be, seem, feel, grow, become, etc.*, like *black in the cat is black*. Example: **up a gum tree**

9 *Adv 3* = an adverb phrase that is usually used at the end of a sentence or clause, often following an object or complement. Examples: **from A to Z; from rags to riches**

• **NOT AS/SO BLACK AS ONE/IT IS PAINTED** – NIC SE NEJÍ TAK HORKÉ,
JAK SE UVAŘÍ.

The meaning of the phrase **not as/so black as one/it is painted** is “not as bad as people generally say or believe. *Most of the laboratory staff say that Professor Murray is very difficult to work with, but I don't think he's half as black as he's painted* Seidl (1988:204).”

I consider the proverb *Nic se nejí tak horké, jak se uvaří* to be the most appropriate Czech equivalent. In contrast to the English idiom the Czech proverb does not contain any words which denote colour. *Neboj se, situace nebude tak zlá jak se ti na první pohled zdá. Nic se nejí tak horké, jak se uvaří.*

• **THE POT CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK** – KÁŽE VODU A PIJE
VÍNO

The idiom **the pot calling the kettle black** is a colloquial expression for “a person who is criticizing another for having the same faults as he has himself: *when he blames her for wasting money he conveniently forgets that he regularly loses half his own wages by betting on the wrong horses—it's the pot calling the kettle black, I'd say* [N 3¹⁰, sometimes 2¹¹] Long (1979:261).” The components of this idiom “refer to the fact that both kettles and pots would be burnt black after long use over a fire Long (1979:261).”

In my opinion the appropriate Czech proverb is *Káže vodu a pije víno. Zásady, podle kterých se údajně řídí, nikdy podle mého názoru nedodrží. Nemůžu si pomoci, ale prostě káže vodu a pije víno.*

• **TO SWEAR BLACK IS WHITE** – TRVAT NA SVÉM ZA KAŽDOU CENU

The meaning of the idiom **to swear black is white** is to “say emphatically or stubbornly that sth is the true, is the case, when it is not true, not so. *Don't believe a word that child tells you. He'd swear black was white if he thought it was to his advantage* Cowie (1985:528).”

Trvat na svém za každou cenu is an expression, which is similar to the mentioned idiom. However, the morphological structure of the Czech expression is absolutely

10 N 3 = a noun phrase that is usually used as the complement of a verb. Example: **a nasty piece**

11 N 2 = a noun phrase that is usually used as the object of a verb or preposition. Example: **the gift of the gab**

different in comparison to the English idiom. *Nikdy nebyl schopný kompromisu. Vždy trval na svém za každou cenu, a proto spolupráce s ním byla spíše za trest.*

• A BLACK SPOT – MÍSTO ČASTÝCH NEHOD

The sense of a **black spot** is “a place on a road where accidents often happen; a problem area, e.g. with high unemployment, crime, violence etc. *There was a good documentary on television last night about the black spots of the industrial North Seidl (1988:204).*”

In comparison the suitable Czech term differs absolutely from the structure of the English model because the phrase *místo častých nehod* does not contain the word *black* (*černý*) in the composition. *Nově zrekonstruovaný obchvat města svádí řidiče k rychlé jízdě, ale bohužel se tak stává místem častých nehod.*

• (AS) BLACK AS THE ACE OF SPADES – BÝT ŠPINAVÝ

The simile (as) **black as the ace of spades** is a colloquial expression which means “very black or very dirty: *the children had been playing in the mud, and they were black as the ace of spades when they came in for tea* Long (1979:25).”

The appropriate Czech equivalent would probably be *být špinavý*, *být černý*, or *vypadat jako mouřenín*. *Konečně se odhodlal vyčistit komín. Po úmorné práci byl špinavý od hlavy až k patě.*

• TWO BLACKS/WRONGS DO NOT MAKE A WHITE/RIGHT – TISÍCKRÁT OPAKOVANÁ LEŽ SE NESTÁVÁ PRAVDOU

The meaning of the saying **two blacks/wrongs do not make a white/right** can be defined as “one cannot justify a wrong action by saying that another has done something similar or by pleading revenge for a wrong done to oneself □ *'And I suppose you're going to say that I am no great shakes as a wife? Is that it?' 'I know that two blacks don't make a white, but you cannot really complain about your husband, whatever he is or does. At least, I don't think you can.'* TT¹² □ *He said mantraps were illegal. 'So's poaching, ' I reminded him. And then he started some dunderheaded argument about two blacks not making a white or two whites not making a black.* RM¹³ □ *Well, professor, two wrongs do not make a right, so should not our wonderful*

¹² TT = Target, G. W. (Penguin 1962) *The Teachers*

¹³ RM = Mackenzie, C. (Penguin 1959) *The Rival Monster*

modern technology have done something about quietening down our factories before producing this super-plane? RT¹⁴ Cowie (1985:570).”

In my opinion, finding a suitable Czech counterpart in this case is quite complicated. I finally decided to translate the idiom as ***tisíckrát opakovaná lež se nestává pravdou***. *Od počátku na nás svým vystupováním působil velice důvěryhodně. Nikdy jsme o jeho slovech nepochybovali, ale musím s odstupem času konstatovat, že nás celou dobu všechny klamal. Naštěstí se ale tisíckrát opakovaná lež se nestává pravdou a my jsme pozdě, ale přece prožřeli.*

7.1.3.2 One- word expression

- **A BLACK EYE – MONOKL**

The idiom **a black eye** means “dark, bruised skin around the eye caused by an accident, sb hitting you, etc: *How did you get that black eye* Warren (1994:19)?”

If we were to translate this expression we could probably choose ***monokl*** as a suitable Czech term. Unfortunately, the word ***monokl*** is not considered to be an idiom but rather as belonging to the sphere of slang. *Z rvačky, kterou vyprovokoval, vyvážnul jen s monoklem okolo pravého oka.*

All the idioms which I have presented in the chapter *4.1 Idioms connected with black* were found in the mentioned English dictionaries. In *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)* I also found the following Czech expressions: **být (černý/opálený) jako ašant** (*be as brown as a berry*), **být černý/snědý jako cikán/-ka** (*look like a dago*), **být jako černoš** (*be as brown as a berry; be as black as the ace of spades*), **být černý jako ďábel** (*be as black as sin*), **být černý jako eben** (*be ebony-black; be as black as ebony*), **být černý jako noc** (*be as black as night*), **mít vlasy černé jako smůla** (*have jet-black/raven -black hair*), **mít černé vlasy jako havran** (*be black as a raven's wing; be raven-black*), **být černý/špinavý jako bota** (*be as black as soot/tar/coal; be as black as a hog/pig; be filthy dirty*), **být (černý/špinavý/umazaný) jako kominík** (*be as black as a chimney-*

¹⁴ RT = Mackenzie, C. (Scottish edition 29 December 1960, 1971-78) *Radio Times* (periodical)

sweep), **být (černý/špinavý)/vypadat jako mouřenín** (*be as black as the ace of spades*).

Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize that none of the above mentioned Czech expressions are regarded as idioms.

7.2. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH BLUE

7.2.1. Total correspondence

7.2.1.1. 100% correspondence

- **TO HAVE BLUE BLOOD – MÍT MODROU KREV**

The idiom **to have blue blood** means “to be royal or aristocratic in origin. *Scott is trying to trace his ancestry. His mother told him that generations ago there was blue blood in the family* Seidl (1988:204).”

This idiom has a direct equivalent in Czech – **mít modrou krev**. *Byl přesvědčen o tom, že právě on má modrou krev; že jedině on může patřit ke starodávnému šlechtickému rodu.*

There is total a correspondence between this English idiom and its Czech equivalent because the morphological structure and the meaning are the same.

- **A BLUE STOCKING – MODRÁ PUNČOCHA**

A blue stocking denotes “a woman who is very intellectual or academic: *My brother’s fiancée is definitely a blue stocking – quite honestly I’m surprised she wants to marry him. Sam left school at fourteen and has never read a book in his life!* Applebee (1992:6).”

The idiom *modrá punčocha* also exists in Czech. The meaning of the English counterpart is the same. Furthermore, the Czech expression has a similar negative and mocking connotation. The expression *modrá punčocha* can however be seen as old-fashioned and it is not used commonly in either contemporary Czech or English.

Obávám se, že právě ona by byla v minulosti označovaná poněkud hanlivě jako **modrá punčocha**.

7.2.2. *Partial correspondence*

- **A BOLT FROM THE BLUE – JAKO BLESK Z ČISTÉHO NEBE**

The meaning of the idiom **a bolt from the blue** is “something completely unexpected Long (1979:31).” This expression is considered to be colloquial, and it usually used in “the phrase **as/like a bolt from the blue**: *I had only recently seen my friend in a restaurant. The news of his death came as a bolt from the blue* [Adv 3¹⁵] Long (1979:31).”

The Czech phrase *jako blesk z čistého nebe* closely resembles the English idiom a bolt from the blue. *Nikdo z nás tak radikální změnu nečekal. Všechno se odehrálo jako blesk z čistého nebe.*

- **UNTIL YOU ARE BLUE IN THE FACE – DOKUD NENÍ MODRÝ**

VZTEKY

“If you say that someone can do something **until they are blue in the face**, you mean that however long they do it or however hard they try, they will still fail. *You can speculate till you're blue in the face, but you can't prove a thing* Sinclair (1995:134).”

The Czech expression *Dokud není modrý vzteky (hněvem)* uses the idea *blue with anger* rather than *blue in the face*, it does, however, have exactly the same meaning as the English idiom. *Zadanou práci je odhodlaný udělat za každou cenu, dokud nebude modrý vzteky* vydrží u ní.

7.2.3. *Non correspondence*

7.2.3.1 Periphrasis

- **TO SCREAM BLUE MURDER – KŘIČET JAKO KDYŽ HO NA NOŽE**

BEROU

¹⁵ *Adv 3* = an adverb phrase that is usually used at the end of a sentence or clause, often following an object or complement. Examples: **from A to Z**; **from rags to riches**

To scream/cry blue murder is an informal idiomatic expression for “shout loudly and emotionally in disagreement; *If the management doesn't agree to the union's proposals this time, the workers will start to scream blue murder* Seidl (1988:205)!”

I have chosen the following Czech phrase as an appropriate equivalent to the English idiom: *Křičet jako když ho na nože berou*. The Czech expression does not, however, include the use of the colour blue. *Nebyla absolutně žádná šance ho uklidnit. Na celou ulici křičel jako když ho na nože berou*.

- **BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA – Z BLÁTA DO LOUŽE**

Between the devil and the deep blue sea is an informal expression for “a situation where you have to choose between two things that are equally bad: *In this situation, the government finds itself caught between the devil and the deep blue sea* Warren (1994:55).”

The closest translation into Czech would be *z bláta do louže*. *Návrh prezentovaný na poradě už tak komplikovanou situaci nevyřeší. Přistoupit na tuhle nabídku je jak dostat se z bláta do louže*. This expression is in itself closer to the English idiom *out of the frying pan, into the fire*, and its useage differs to that of the original English colour idiom, nonetheless in its general meaning we can see it as an equivalent. Unfortunately though, the colour seen in the original English idiom **between the devil and the deep blue sea** is eliminated in the Czech, and also the meaning of the other Czech components is absolutely different.

- **ONCE IN A BLUE MOON – JEDNOU ZA UHERSKÝ ROK**

The idiom **once in a blue moon** means “very rarely: *Sue's daughter only visits her once in a blue moon* Warren (1994:189).”

The Czech equivalent for this idiom is the phrase *jednou za uherský rok*, which is completely different from the English model, using the word year *rok* rather than *moon* as well as not containing the colour blue. *Snad jednou za uherský rok se nechala přemluvit a konečně navštívila přátele, které neviděla celé týdny*.

- **TO DISAPPEAR/VANISH/GO OFF INTO THE BLUE – ZMIZET JAKO PÁRA NAD HRNCEM**

The idiom **to disappear/vanish/go off into the blue** means to “go away suddenly, unexpectedly and without trace. *Do you remember Walter Smith, the fellow who vanished into the blue with half a million of the firm’s money* Seidl (1988: 204)?”

Again, the appropriate Czech term, *zmizet jako pára nad hrncem* uses differing imagery, eliminating the colour *blue* found in the English idiom. *Jeho chování nikdo do dneška nechápe. Z oslavy bez rozloučení odešel – prostě zmizel jako pára nad hrncem.*

- **TO TALK A BLUE STREAK – MLÍT PANTEM**

“If you say that someone **talks a blue streak**, you mean that they are talking a lot and very fast. Verbs such as 'scream' and 'spout' can be used instead of 'talk'. This expression is used in American English. *I was mostly shy, although they say I talked a blue streak from the time I opened my mouth. / I remember Malcolm screaming a blue streak that I was fired* Sinclair (1995:373).”

On the base of the definition from the dictionary, the appropriate Czech phrase would be *mlít pantem*. *Nebyla sebemenší šance její monolog zastavit. Mlela pantem skoro půl hodiny.*

- **LIKE A BLUE-ARSED FLY – LÍTAT JAKO HADR NA HOLI**

“If you do something **like a blue-arsed fly**, you do it very quickly and without having much control. This is a very informal expression, which is used in British English. Some people find it offensive. *I ran around like a blue-arsed fly, packed two suitcases and a trunk, and left everything else* Sinclair (1995:151).”

I consider the phrase *lítat jako hadr na holi* to be the most appropriate Czech equivalent. *Celý den se nový dobrovolník nezastavil. Lítal jako hadr na holi do pozdních večerních hodin.*

7.2.3.2. One-word expression

- **A BLUE-COLLAR WORKER – DĚLNICKÝ**

The meaning of the idiom **a blue-collar worker/job** is “a manual or factory worker, that is not an office worker. *It isn’t only the blue-collar workers who have been hit by unemployment. There are no office jobs either* Seidl (1988:204).”

I suppose that this idiom has no equivalent in the field of Czech idiomatic language. We can translate the idiomatic element *blue collar* as *dělnický*, but the Czech equivalent has no idiomatic origin. *Řemeslné a dělnické profese jsou pracovní pozice, které jsou v dnešní době přehlíženy.*

•A BLUE-EYED BOY – OBLÍBENEC

“A **blue-eyed boy** is a boy or man who is particularly liked and is treated well by someone, usually in authority Procter (1995:-139).”

“Blue-eyed boy is used mainly in British English and 'fair-haired boy' is used mainly in American English Sinclair (1995:46).” If we wanted to find the appropriate Czech term we would certainly choose the expression *oblíbenec*. *Není pochyb o tom, že právě on se stal jejich oblíbencem. Výhody, které se mu dostávaly, byly do očí bijící.* Unfortunately the colour found in the original English idiom is eliminated in this Czech translation too.

•BLUE FILM / MOVIE – PORNO

The **blue film/movie** is “an obscene or pornographic film/movie et cetera. *There has been a considerable rise in the production of blue movies since video recorders came on the market* Seidl (1988:204).”

The idiom *blue film* does not exist as idiom in the Czech lexicon. We would simply translate this phrase as *porno*. *Nabízí se otázka, zda-li cenzura internetu zamezí šíření dětského porna.*

• OUT OF THE BLUE – ZČISTAJASNA

The meaning of the idiom **out of the blue** is “suddenly and unexpectedly: *She had no idea that anything was wrong until he announced out of the blue that he wanted a divorce* Warren (1994:22).”

As well as *out of the blue*, there is also the alternative English idiom *out of a clear blue sky*, which merely represents a variation of the explained idiom. The appropriate Czech phrase would be *zčistajasna*. *Svoji rezignaci podal bez předchozí konzultace. Všichni přítomní byli překvapeni, protože celé situace přišla zčistajasna.*

• A TRUE BLUE – LOAJÁLNÍ

The idiomatic expression **a true blue** is considered to be informal. The first sense is “strongly opposed to any political or social changes that one considers unnecessary (especially used to describe a supporter of the British CONSERVATIVE PARTY) Long (1979:29).” The second sense is “very loyal or worthy of trust: *Don't worry. I'll lend you some money – Oh, will you? Thanks. You're really true blue* Long (1979:29).” The term **a true blue** denotes “a person opposed to change, especially political change: *True blues like my grandfather won't tolerate any sort of state control* Long (1979:29).” The idiom **a true blue** means also “a loyal trustworthy person: *you can depend on him for help whenever you're in trouble. He's a true blue.* (Perhaps originally referring to the unchanging colour of the sky) Long (1979:29).”

If we were to translate this English idiom into Czech in both usages we would have to radically change it into the Czech word **loajální**. *V zájmu snad každá politické strany je, aby její členové byli loajální a tím pádem i oddaní společné věci.*

• A BLUE FUNK – STRAŠPYTEL

A blue funk is a colloquial formulation for “a state of great fear; afraid or very worried: *I was in a blue funk when my employer called me into his office. But I needn't have worried. He only wanted to ask my advice* [Adj 1¹⁶] < *Funk* (fear) was perhaps originally a slang word used by students at Oxford university. *Blue* is used to emphasize the state of fear Long (1979:124).”

This English idiom can be replaced with the Czech phrase **strašpytel**. *Nikdy bych si nemyslela, že mu nažene strach malý pavouček. Takového strašpytla jsem v životě neviděla.*

• THE BOYS IN BLUE – POLICISTÉ

The boys in blue is a sometimes facetious term denoting “the civil police force Cowie (1985:75)” □ The other meaning of this idiom is “legal advice centers: *How do you manage, as a human being, between clients who call the police 'pigs' and your*

16 *Adj 1* = an adjective phrase that follows the verbs *be, seem, feel, grow, become, etc.*, like *black in the cat is black*. Example: **up a gum tree**

*professional peers who regard them as upright **boys in blue**? ST¹⁷ □ And she does not hide her admiration for the professors and for the level of intelligence of the pupils any more than she does her loathing for Philadelphia's police chief and for Chicago's **boys in blue** Cowie (1985:75).” ST³*

This expression can be translated into Czech as *muži v modrém* the Czech equivalent, however, having no idiomatic connotation. Therefore, it would maybe be better not to translate the idiom literally but to use the term *policisté* instead. *Policisté byli nuceni celý objekt neustále sledovat a podávat o průběhu akce rozsáhlé hlášení.*

All the above mentioned idioms with the colour blue were found in English dictionaries dealing with idiomatic expressions.

I found following Czech idioms in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)*: **být modrý jako nebe** (*be as blue as the sky*), **nebe je modré jako chrpa** (*the sky is cornflower blue*), **(mít) oči (modré) jako chrpy/len/šmolka** (*have eyes like forget-me-nots*), **nebe/obloha (je) (modrá/modré) jako šmolka, (mít) oči jako pomměňky; mít oči (modré) jako čekanka/čekanky** (*have forget-me-not eyes*). It must be emphasized though that these Czech expressions are not idioms in the English language.

In this chapter I have presented all the English idioms which are connected with the colour blue. I have tried to identify suitable Czech equivalents for these English colour idioms. An important condition being that the Czech counterparts corresponded with the English idioms.

7.3. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH BROWN

In English dictionaries which are focused on idiomatic language, I found only one idiom containing the colour brown – **(as) brown as a berry**. Because of this fact I decided to consult the *Oxford Advanced Learner's* dictionary, and although is not primarily focused on idioms. I found there the following expressions containing the

17 ST = Cooper, W. (1967-83) *The Sunday Times*

colour brown in their structure – **in a brown study**, **browned off (with sb)**, and **brown-nose**. In comparison, the Czech lexicon has not a single idiom which includes the adjective *hnědý* (*brown*) in the structure of the phrase.

7.3.1 Partial correspondence

- **(AS) BROWN AS A BERRY – BÝT HNĚDÝ JAKO CIKÁN**

The expression **(as) brown as a berry** means “very brown (skin), esp. from the sun or constant exposure to the weather **V**: be, become, look □ *How quickly suntan disappears! You wouldn't think the twins were **brown as berries** only a month ago. □ A little old woman with a wrinkled face **as brown as a berry** told us our fortunes for ten pence* Cowie (1985:17).”

The mentioned idiom would be translated into Czech as *být tmavý jako cikán*, which is a simile not an idiom. *Po týdenní dovolené ve slunné Itálii přijel domů hnědý jako cikán.*

7.3.2. Non correspondence

7.3.2.1 Periphrasis

- **TO BE IN A BROWN STUDY – BÝT JAKO TĚLO BEZ DUŠE**

The idiom **to be in a brown study** is considered to be an old-fashioned term which could be described as “thinking deeply so that you do not notice what is happening around you.¹⁸”

On the basis of the English definition I would choose as the most suitable Czech counterpart the expression *být jako tělo bez duše* which also indicates reverie, and partially melancholy. *Musím říci, že byla jako tělo bez duše. Celé dny proseděla u okna a stranila se ostatních členů rodiny.*

¹⁸ http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/dictionary/brown+study#brown_1

- **TO BE BROWNE OFF (WITH SB) – BÝT OTRÁVENÝ (ZNUDĚNÝ)**

The meaning of the informal expression **to be browned off (with sb)** is characterized as “bored, unhappy and /or annoyed: *By now the passengers were getting **browned off** with the delay* Hornby (2000:139).”

The Czech equivalent of this English idiom would probably be the phrase **být otrávený**, possibly **být znuděný**. *Na místním úřadě strávil snad věčnost a to kvůli jednomu formuláři. Nedivím se mu, že po hodině marného čekání **byl** značně **otrávený**.*

- **TO BROWN-NOSE – LÉZT (NĚKOMU) DO ZADKU**

To brown-nose is a disapproving expression which means “to treat sb in authority with special respect in order to make them approve of you or treat you better Hornby (2000:140).”

According to the English definition the most suitable Czech equivalent would be **lézt někomu do zadku** which also has a strongly negative connotation. *Touha po kariérním postupu byla tak obrovská, že neváhal šéfovi **lézt do zadku** a neustále mu pochlebovat.*

7.4. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH GREEN

7.4.1. Total correspondence

7.4.1.1. 100% correspondence

- **A GREEN BELT – ZELENÁ ZÓNA**

The idiom **a green belt** can be explained as “an area of fields and woodlands around a town. *The planning committee is firmly opposed to any building in **the green belt*** Seidl (1988:205).”

If we were to translate this idiom literally we would arrive at the Czech expression **zelená zóna**, which already exists in the Czech lexicon. There is a total correspondence between the English and Czech idiom because the meaning and the morphological structure are the same. *Městské zastupitelstvo se na posledním zasedání shodlo, že vytvoření **zelené zóny** v blízkosti sídliště bude alespoň částečně nahrazovat park.*

- **(TO BE) GREEN WITH ENVY – (BÝT) ZELENÝ ZÁVISTÍ**

“If you say that someone is **green with envy**, you mean that they are extremely envious of something that another person has or does. This expression is usually used lightheartedly rather than disapprovingly. *She told us all she was planning a weekend in Paris, where she could whirl around the boutiques, linger at outdoor cafes and dine by candlelight. Not surprisingly, we were all green with envy./ This is the most unexpected discovery I have made in 20 years of digging. Archaeologists in other parts of the world will be green with envy* Sinclair (1995:170).”

This idiom can be translated into Czech as the phrase *být zelený závistí*. *Byla při nejmenším zelená závistí, když viděla nové auto své kamarádky, ale snažila se na venek na sobě nedat nic znát.*

- **THE GRASS IS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE (OF THE FENCE/HILL) – NA DRUHÉ STRANĚ (PLOTU) JE TRÁVA ZELENĚJŠÍ**

The saying **the grass is greener on the other side (of the fence/hill)** means that “things always seem better in another place, job etc: *She says she would be able to do business better in France, but the grass is always greener on the other side* Warren (1994)!”

This idiom also exists in Czech as *na druhé straně (plotu) je tráva zelenější* and so having the same morphological structure and the same meaning. *Myslel si, že na druhé straně je tráva zelenější a že v jiném městě by jeho výdělků byly minimálně dvojnásobné.*

7.4.2. *Partial correspondence*

- **TO GIVE SB/GET THE GREEN LIGHT – DÁT NĚKOMU ZELENOU**

The meaning of the informal expression **to give sb/get the green light** is to “allow sb/be allowed to begin sth: *The council has given the green light for work to begin on the new shopping centre. As soon as we get the green light, we’ll start advertising for new staff* Warren (1994:100).”

There is a partial correspondence between the English idiom and the suitable Czech equivalent *dát (někomu/něčemu) zelenou*. *Po půl roce od projednávání dali poslanci zelenou novele zákona o spotřební dani.*

7.4.3. Non correspondence

7.4.3.1 Periphrasis

- **TO BE (AS) GREEN AS GRASS – BÝT NEZKUŠENÝ**

“In British English, if you say that someone is as **green as grass**, you mean that they are inexperienced or naive. *I was a newcomer to the sport, green as grass, but now I've had a chance to evaluate the costs for a season. / My brother's a joiner and he said 'You don't want to be a bricklayer.' I was still green as grass so I said 'Oh well, I'll be a painter then.'* It is much more common just to say that someone is **green**. *They admit they were very green when they arrived in Afghanistan* Sinclair (1995:170).”

The idiom *green as grass* can be translated into Czech as the phrase *být nezkušený*. *To že je vyučený automechanik v jeho případě v podstatě nic neznamená, protože tuhle práci nikdy nevykonával. V tomto směru byl nezkušený a odstranění byt malé závady na autě pro něj představoval obrovský problém.*

- **GREEN ABOUT THE GILLS – MOŘSKÁ NEMOC**

The idiom **green about the gills** is an informal expression with the meaning “looking or feeling as if you are going to vomit, especially at sea; seasick: *You look a bit green about the hills. Go up on deck and get some fresh air* Warren (1994:100).”

In comparison the suitable Czech term is *být (někomu) špatně od žaludku*, which is rather universal, although the expression *mořská nemoc* (seasickness) is more specific. *Svoji první plavbu po moři nesla velice špatně. Od prvního dne trpěla mořskou nemocí a představa, že do přístavu dorazí až čtvrtý den ji ničila.*

- **TO HAVE (GOT) GREEN FINGERS – BÝT VÝBORNÝ ZAHRADNÍK**

The idiom **to have (got) green fingers** means to “be good at gardening, looking after plants etc. *Madge can get anything to grow – she's really got green fingers* Seidl (1988:205).”

On the contrary, the American variant of this idiom is **to have a green thumb**. “*She had a green thumb and using only instinct and countless loads of cow manure, casually grew tomatoes, scallions, peonies, roses and bumper crops of fruit* Sinclair (1995:389).”

The appropriate Czech phrase is *být výborný zahradník*, which has no idiomatic significance. *Martinův otec byl výborný zahradník – jeho zahrada byla vždy plná zeleniny, o kterou se s nesmírnou láskou staral.*

• GREENER PASTURES – NOVÝ ZAČÁTEK

“If someone seeks **greener pastures**, they try to leave a situation which they do not like, in order to find a new and better one. *There are drawbacks for nurses seeking greener pastures overseas, and many are put off by the lengthy process involved in going to work in the US. / The moved around for years, sometimes even leaving the state for what they thought would be greener pastures.*

Instead of 'greener', we can use an adjective which describes the new situation. *A defeatist might retreat to quieter pastures* Sinclair (1995:290).”

The literally translation is *zelená pastvina*, but in fact this Czech expression has no idiomatic connotation. The expression *nový začátek* is the most suitable Czech phrase, however, this phrase includes no colour. *Přestěhování do cizího města brala jako výzvu a nový začátek svého života.*

• SB'S MEMORY IS GREEN – ŽIVÉ VZPOMÍNKY

Sb's memory is green means that “sb has not been forgotten after death; others have not allowed their memories of sb to fade or die □ *America may be withdrawing from the paddy fields of South Vietnam, but the war is still not over, and the memory of those who died is very green.* L¹⁹ □ *She ought to be proud to gather in the facts while Waterman's memory's green.* In a month's time he'll be as dead as cold cod. PP²⁰ □ *The tiny churchyard is scarcely able to contain those who gather there, some still to mourn, others out of community feeling and to keep memory green.* RT²¹ □ variant keep (sb's) memory green Cowie 1985.”

19 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

20 PP = Harling, R. (Chatto & Windus 1951) *The Paper Palace*

21 RT = Mackenzie, C. (Scottish edition 29 December 1960, 1971-78) *Radio Times* (periodical)

The Czech term for this idiom is *živé vzpomínky*. Unfortunately this equivalent has no idiomatic connotation. *Živé vzpomínky na dětství prožité v pohraničí ji vehnaly slzy a nebyla schopná ve vyprávění plynule pokračovat.*

7.4.3.2. One- word expression

- **LITTLE GREEN MEN – MIMOZEMŠŤANÉ**

Little green men is a facetious expression for “extra-terrestrial beings □ *What possible natural object could be launching signals like this? You begin to ask – is it intelligence from a planet? We really did think of little green men. RT*²² □ *Personally I have enough on my mind without worrying about another Ice Age, anti-Christ, or Earth being taken over by rats, ants or little green men* Cowie 1985:359.”

The translation of this expression is *mimozemšťané*, however, this Czech equivalent has idiomatic meaning. *Každopádně do pracovního kolektivu od začátku nezapadli a cítili se mezi kolegy jako mimozemšťané.*

Interestingly I found only one idiom in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics* which contains the colour green – **být zelený jako brčál** (*be as green as grass; be leaf-/grass-/sea-green, be bottle green*). Moreover, the expression *být zelený jako brčál* is more of a simile than an idiom.

7.5. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH GREY

7.5.1. Total correspondence

7.5.1.1 100% correspondence

- **A GREY EMINENCE – ŠEDÁ EMINENCE**

A person who is called **a grey eminence** is “a background figure in government, administration etc who has considerable power in an influential, or advisory, capacity (anglicization of *éminence grise* (French), often left untranslated in English writing). *Both are truly grey eminences who have become accustomed to the delectable pursuit,*

22 RT = Mackenzie, C. (Scottish edition 29 December 1960, 1971-78) *Radio Times*

*the exercise of influence. ST*²³ □ *By then the Six (a European economic coalition in the 1950s) had formed the Coal and Steel Community, in vented and headed by that French grey eminence of genius, Jean Monnet. L*²⁴ Cowie (1985:246).”

This idiom also exists in Czech. The meaning and the morphological structure of the English idiom is the same as it is in Czech – *šedá eminence*. *Na politické scéně byl opozicí často nazýván jako šedá eminence. O jeho značném vlivu nebylo pochyb, ačkoliv on tento fakt vždy zásadně popíral.*

- **A GREY AREA – ŠEDÁ ZÓNA**

“If you refer to something as a **grey area**, you mean that it is unclear, or that it does not fall into a specific category of things, so that nobody knows how to deal with it properly. *The court action to decide ownership of Moon Shadow has highlighted the many grey areas in the law affecting stolen animals. □ Tabloid papers in England have reached a stage where sportsmen must either be painted as heroes or villains. There is no grey area in between. □ There is always going to be a gray area. No commander who has ever fought a battle was completely sure of victory on the eve of that battle* Sinclair, J. (1995:8).”

The same idiom exists in Czech *šedá zóna* with the same meaning. *O mezeře v zákoně novináři hovořili jako o šedé zóně, která byla plná nejasností.*

7.5.2. Partial correspondence

- **GREY MATTER – ŠEDÁ KŮRA MOZKOVÁ**

Grey matter is an informal term which denotes “the substance of a person's brain and nervous system and refers to the ability to think: *It's not the sort of movie that stimulates the old grey matter much* Procter (1995:623).”

If we were to translate this idiom literally, we would get the expression *šedá hmota*, which already exists in Czech lexicon. In this situation, it would be perhaps more suitable to use the term *šedá kůra mozková*, which is both closer to the English original, and still includes the colour grey. *Šedá kůra mozková je tedy součástí centrální nervové soustavy a tvoří tak povrch obou mozkových hemisfér.*

23 In the *Oxford dictionary of current idiomatic English*, the abbreviation “ST” means the reference in to the original text, in which the idiom was appeared.

ST = Cooper, W. (1967-83) *The Sunday Times*

24 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

This expression is, however, not usually used in the field of idiomatic language belonging rather to medical terminology, and has no idiomatic connotation in the Czech lexicon.

- **ALL CATS ARE GREY IN THE DARK – KAŽDÁ KOČKA JE V NOCI ČERNÁ**

The saying **all cats are grey in the dark** means that “differences between persons, animals, or things of a certain kind, are indistinguishable in the dark, or in other obscuring circumstances; any differences which exist no longer matter □ *Having lost my sense of smell, if I didn't see what I was eating I could only guess at it by the texture. It was not unlike all cats being grey in the dark.* □ *A libertine of the most cynical kind, he even affected not to remember whether a certain woman had been his mistress or not, saying that all cats were grey in the dark anyway.* □ *His persecution mania is such that he suspects everybody. In his state of mind, all cats are grey and pose an equal threat* Cowie (1985:6).”

The Czech equivalent for the English idiom is *každá kočka je v noci černá*. Nonetheless, there is a difference in the translation of the colour. If we were to translate this English idiom into Czech we would have to radically change the translation of the English word *grey* (šedý) into the Czech *černý* (black). *Je prakticky jedno, jaký produkt si z nabídky vybereš, protože každá kočka je v noci černá*.

- **TO GO/TURN GREY – BÝT (ŠEDIVÝ) JAKO POPEL**

The sense of the idiom **to go/turn grey** is to “become grey-haired. *When Wilson heard that 55% of his company's shares had been bought up by this rival, he turned grey overnight* Seidl (1988:205).”

I found following proverbs in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)* – *být (šedivý) jako popel* (be ashen/ash-grey), *mít hlavu/vlasy/vousy jako mléko* (have hair as white as snow, have snow-white hair) or *mít vlasy /hlavu jako stříbro* (have silvery hair). I consider *být (šedivý) jako popel* to be the most suitable equivalent because it refers to the fact of going grey. The others proverbs have connotations of hair being completely white. *Jeho vlasy už zdaleka nebyly černé jako za mládí, ale začaly být šedivé jako popel. Za žádnou cenu si nechtěl připustit, že ostatně jako každý stárne a čas prostě nezastaví*.

- **THE MEN IN GREY SUITS – MUŽI V OBLECÍCH**

“If you talk about **the men in suits** or **the men in grey suits**, you are referring to the men who are in control of an organization or company and who have a lot of power. These expressions are used mainly in British English. *Even if Prince Andrew wanted to put the clock back 30 months and restore happiness to his marriage, **the men in suits** who guide the monarchy would almost certainly rule against him.* □ *A lot of young people feel detached from older, stereotype politicians – **the men in grey suits*** Sinclair (1995:377).”

A translation into Czech would be **muži v oblecích**. Unfortunately, the colour the original English idiom is eliminated in the Czech equivalent. **Muži v oblecích** *procházeli neustále nákupním centrem a zajišťovali tak bezpečnost zákazníků.*

7.6. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH GOLDEN

7.6.1 Total correspondence

7.6.1.1 100% correspondence

- **A GOLDEN BOY – ZLATÝ CHLAPEC**

Calling someone **a golden boy** denotes that he is “a young man who is very successful and popular: *He had been the **golden boy** of English cricket* Warren (1994:97).”

According to the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, it is also possible to say that someone is a *golden girl* as a female equivalent of *golden boy*. “*She’s the current **golden girl** of American ice-skating* Procter (1995:610).”

The same idiom **zlatý chlapec** exists in Czech, and with the same meaning. *Nikdy na svého **zlatého chlapce** nedala dopustit, protože jeho studijní úspěchy byly opravdu bravurní.*

- **THE GOLDEN RULE – ZLATÉ PRAVIDLO**

The meaning of the idiom **the golden rule** is “the most important rule, principle, etc to remember when you are doing sth: *When you’re playing a stroke in golf, the **golden rule** is to keep your eye on the ball* Warren (1994:97).”

This expression also exists in Czech lexicon – **zlaté pravidlo**. *V tomto případě **zlaté pravidlo** zní – být ostražitý a hlídat si svoje osobní věci.*

- **TO WORSHIP THE GOLDEN CALF – UCTÍVAT ZLATÉ TELE**

The idiomatic expression **to worship the golden calf** is used, if rarely, for a situation when somebody “believes that money is the most important thing in life; worship wealth [V] <Referring to a golden calf in the Bible. It was made by the Israelites and worshipped as a god until it was destroyed by Moses (Exodus 32) Long (1979:45).”

Although Czech does not have a similar idiomatic expression the idiom **worship the golden calf** can be translated literally as *uctívat zlaté tele*. Nevertheless, this Czech expression has no idiomatic character. *Její životní filozofii nechápu a nebudu se o to ani snažit. Uctívat zlaté tele mi přijde prostě absurdní.*

7.6.1.2 Overall correspondence

- **A GOLDEN AGE – ZLATÉ ČASY**

The idiom **a golden age** express “a period of time, sometimes imaginary, when everyone was happy, or when a particular art, business, etc. was very successful: *Adults often look back on their childhood as a golden age. / She was an actress from the golden age of the cinema* Procter (1995:610).”

I consider the phrase *zlaté časy* to be the most appropriate Czech equivalent. *Po letech s nostalgií vzpomínal na zlaté časy strávené na gymnáziu.*

- **SILENCE IS GOLDEN – MLČETI ZLATO**

The expression **silence is golden** emphasizes that “silence is of great value (often used to advise someone of the wisdom of remaining silent in a particular situation) [saying] < Shortened from the earlier saying *speech is silver, silence is golden*. Long (1979:299).”

This expression also exists in Czech as *mlčeti zlato*. The difference is only from the morphological point of view because the morphological structure of this English idiom is noun-verb-adjective, in contrast, the Czech counterpart consists of verb-noun. *Neustále z úst vypouštěl hlouposti a každý si v tu chvíli musel říci v duchu pro sebe – Mluvíti stříbro, mlčeti zlato.*

7.6.2. *Partial correspondence*

- **TO KILL THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGGS – ZABÍT SLEPICI, KTERÁ SNÁŠÍ ZLATÁ VEJCE**

The saying **to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs** means to “destroy (out of greed or thoughtlessness) a source of continuous future profit □ *'The Times' contained the predictable well-turned warning about the folly of killing geese that lay golden eggs, through excessive wage demands.* L²⁵ □ *Tea production falters. The goose that lays Ceylon's golden eggs is being tormented to death.* SC²⁶ □ *It is always hard to see whether the North Sea (oil) is profitable and whether the Government action is killing off the golden goose before it lays any golden, eggs.* G²⁷ □ structural variation is possible, as in last example Cowie (1985:333).”

I decide to classify this idiom into the category of partial correspondence because the English noun goose (*husa*) is substituted in the Czech equivalent with slepice (*hen*). I chose the following Czech proverb as an acceptable equivalent to the English idiom: ***Zabít slepici, která snáší zlatá vejce. Ještě si prosím dobře rozmysli, jestli přestaneš podnikat. Není moc chytré zabít slepici, která snáší zlatá vejce.***

7.6.3. *Non correspondence*

7.6.3.1 One-word expression

- **GOLDEN HANDSHAKE – Odstupné**

The idiom **golden handshake** is an informal phrase for “a usually large payment made to someone when they leave their job, either when their employer has asked them to leave, or, if they are leaving at the end of their working life, as a reward for particularly long or good service in their job Procter (1995:610).”

Moreover, the idiom **golden parachute** represents a synonym of the mentioned idiom. The meaning of this idiom according to the *Cambridge International Dictionary*

25 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

26 SC = Mackenzie, C (6-29 April 1960, 1971-78) *The Scotsman*

27 G = Shaffter, P. (April-October 1967, 1971-78) *The Guardian*

of English: “is a large payment made to someone who has an important job with a company when they are forced to leave their job Procter (1995:610).”

The Czech equivalent *odstupné* is absolutely different from the English idiom, in addition it contains no idiomatic connotation. *Nemohl si stěžovat na firmu, ve které celý život pracoval. Zaměstnavatel mu vždy vycházel vstříc a dokonce i odstupné nebylo nejmenší.*

7.7. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH PINK

7.7.1 Non correspondence

7.7.1.1 Periphrasis

- **IN THE PINK – BÝT ZDRAVÝ JAKO RYBA**

“If you say that someone is **in the pink** or **in the pink of condition**, you mean that they are very fit and healthy. You can also say that they are **in the pink of health**. These are all old-fashioned expressions. *He insists that Mr Harris, a non-smoker, appeared in the pink of health* Sinclair (1995:299).”

The Czech equivalents for the above mentioned idiom are the proverbs *Být zdravý jako ryba* or *Být zdravý jako řípa*. Here, however, there are differences in the content and structure of these Czech proverbs. The colour pink is eliminated and the morphological structure is also absolutely different from the English idiom. *Troufám si říci, že celý život nezastonal, byl přece zdravý jako ryba.*

- **TO BE TICKLED PINK – BÝT ŠŤASTNÝ JAKO BLECHA**

The idiom **to be tickled pink** is a colloquial expression which means to be “delighted; very pleased or amused: *I cooked your dad his favourite meal and used our [new] dinner service. He was tickled pink with it all!* (advertisement, *Woman's Own* Oct 74) [Adj 1²⁸] Long (1979:339).”

The colour pink, a component of the English idiom, “refers to a person who is laughing so much that his face turns pink or red Long (1979:339).” It is possible to use not only **tickled pink** but also **tickled to death** to express the feeling of amusement and delight.

28 *Adj 1* = an adjective phrase that follows the verbs *be, seem, feel, grow, become*, etc., like *black in the cat is black*. Example: **up a gum tree**.

This idiom does not exist in Czech, the closest equivalent to the English phrase being the proverb *Být št'astný jako blecha* or alternatively *Být radostí celý bez sebe. Po úspěšném složení maturitní zkoušky byl št'astný jako blecha.*

- **TO HAVE A PINK/BLUE FIT – BÝT ROZZUŘENÝ**

The informal expression **to have a pink/blue fit** means to “be very angry: *If your mother catches you smoking, she'll have a pink fit* Warren (1994:83).”

The phrase *být rozzuřený* is similar to the English idiom but this Czech term represents rather a phrase than an idiom. *V životě jsem ho neviděla tak rozzuřeného, byl vzteky celý bez sebe.*

- **TO SEE PINK ELEPHANTS – VIDĚT BÍLÉ MYŠKY**

“If you say that someone has seen **pink elephants**, you mean that they have imagined seeing something because they were drunk Procter (1995:1068).”

To identify an equivalent from the Czech idiomatic lexicon we would have to choose an idiomatic expression using a different colour. Hence, the appropriate phrase is *vidět bílé myšky*. *Byli si jistí, že s jeho 2,5 promile v krvi, musel vidět všude kolem sebe bílé myšky.*

- **STRIKE ME PINK – BÝT JAKO V JIŘÍKOVĚ VIDĚNÍ**

The interjection **strike me pink** is considered to be a colloquial and old-fashioned expression “used to express surprise or disbelief: *He's got three children, all boys. – Well, strike me pink! I didn't even know he was married* Long (1979:321).”

If we were to translate this English idiom into Czech we would have to radically change the morphology of the phrase, *být jako v Jiřikově vidění* or simply *Pane Bože!*, as an interjection, being the closest equivalents. *Přestože se dlouhou dobu zabýval sbíráním známek, při návštěvě poštovního muzea byl jak v Jiřikově vidění.*

7.8. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH PURPLE

7.8.1. *Non correspondence*

7.8.1.1. Periphrasis

- **A PURPLE PATCH/PASSAGE – ZLATÝ HŘEB**

The idiom **a purple patch/passage** is characterized as “an extremely, or too, ornate portion in a literary work, music, painting, architecture etc. *If we had confined himself to the dialogue and action and cut out **the purple patches** where he describes the scenery and moralizes on the folly of mankind and so on he might have found a publisher for his novel.* □ ... *the great prima donna singing not only famous **purple patches** but the entire works to which these patches belong.* T²⁹ □ *Doesn't a brutally edited version of Mr. Callaghan's **purple passages** make them seem more dramatic and sensational than they really are* SC³⁰ Cowie (1985:469)? ”

The Czech equivalent for this idiom is **zlatý hřeb** (*něčeho*). Instead of the colour purple the Czech counterpart contains the colour *gold* (zlatý). **Zlatým hřebem celého večera bylo pěvecké číslo světoznámé italské sopranistky.**

- **TO BORN IN/TO THE PURPLE – NARODIT SE DO ZLATÉ KOLÉBKY**

The meaning of the idiom **to born in/to the purple** is to be “born of royal, or very aristocratic, parents (and thus be a privileged member of society) □ *From a very early age the Prince was aware that he was **born in the purple** and was very conscious of his elevated state.* □ *From the way he talks and behaves you'd think he was **born to the purple** or something. Whereas the truth is his parents are ordinary middle class, living in the stockbroker belt in Surrey* Cowie (1985:74).”

The translation into Czech would be **narodit se do zlaté kolébky**. Unfortunately, the colour purple is substituted with gold. Furthermore, the Czech equivalent contains the word *kolébka* (*cradle*). **Měl v životě zásadní štěstí a to byl ten fakt, že se narodil do zlaté kolébky. Velice dobře zajištění rodiče mu po celou dobu výchovy dopřávali luxus a materiální nadbytek.**

29 T = Cooper, W. – *The Times*

30 SC = Mackenzie, C (6-29 April 1960, 1971-78) *The Scotsman*

- **TO GO PURPLE IN THE FACE – BÝT RUDÝ HNĚVEM**

The expression **to go purple (in the face)** is an informal expression which means to “start to look dark red (in the face) through being flushed with blood **V:** go, be; turn sb. **A:** with anger, with fury, with rage, with frustration □ *He held the kinds of left-wing views that can **turn the face** of a retired colonel **purple** with fury.* □ *The delay was enough to make a patient man **go purple in the face*** Cowie (1985:236).”

The Czech equivalent for this idiom, *být rudý hněvem*, includes a different colour, *rudý* meaning *red/scarlet* instead of purple. *Argumenty v závěrečné diskuzi ho natolik vytočily, že začal být rudý hněvem a nebyl schopný jediného slova.*

7.9. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH RED

7.9.1. Total correspondence

7.9.1.1. 100% correspondence

- **THE RED CARPET – ČERVENÝ KOBEREC**

The idiom **the red carpet** means “a very special welcome given to an important visitor: *When I went to my girlfriend’s house for the first time, her family really put out **the red carpet** for me* Warren (1994:226).”

Moreover, “a red carpet is sometimes used on official visits by royalty, presidents, etc) Warren (1994).”

Besides, the expression **red-carpet** can have the function of the adjective. “*It was an unofficial visit so the queen didn’t get the usual **red-carpet** treatment* Warren (1994).”

In Czech there is the same idiom *červený koberec* with the same meaning. *Před hotelem byl položený červený koberec, po kterém se prošli filmové hvězdy a některé ještě zapózovali fotografům.*

- **(LIKE) A RED RAG TO A BULL – JAKO ČERVENÝ HADR NA BÝKA**

The idiom **(like) a red rag to a bull** is an informal expression which means “to make a particular person very angry or even violent: *Don’t mention anything about religion to*

your uncle. It's like a red rag to a bull Warren (1994).” This idiomatic expression “refers to the belief that bulls do not like the colour red Warren (1994:227).”

There is a total correspondence in the translation of the idiom **(like) a red rag to a bull** into Czech because the colour form and the meaning is the same as in the English – *jako červený hadr na býka. Začít konverzaci na téma finanční problémy jejího podnikání je vždy jako červený hadr na býka, proto bych s ní tuhle problematiku rozhodně neřešila.*

- **TO SEE RED – VIDĚT RUDĚ**

“If you **see red**, you suddenly become very angry or annoyed because of something which has been said or done. *I cannot stand humiliation of any kind. I just see red. I could pick up a bottle and just smash it in someone's face because of it. / The programmes so far have simply reinforced negative stereotype images of young Black people. It makes me see red. What on earth do the producers of these programmes think they are doing* Sinclair (1995:320)?”

The same idiom with the same meaning is found in Czech as **vidět rudě**. *Maximálně ji vytáčelo, když začal kritizovat její odvedenou práci. V takové chvíli začala vidět rudě a dobrá nálada zmizela nenávratně pryč.*

7.9.2. Partial correspondence

- **(AS) RED AS A BEETROOT – (BÝT) ČERVENÝ JAKO RAK**

“If you say that someone goes **as red as a beetroot** or **as red as a beet**, you mean that their face goes very red, for example because they are very hot or very embarrassed. 'Red as a beetroot' is used in British English and 'red as a beet' is used in American English. *She ran her bath, then she plunged into the water and topped it up until it was as hot as she could bear. It would make her face as red as a boiled beetroot, but that was too bad./He turned as red as beetroot when I told him* Sinclair (1995:320).”

The simile **red as a beetroot** can be translated into Czech as **(být) červený jako rak**. I consider the main difference to be in the substitution of the word *beetroot* (*červená řepa*) with *rak* (*crayfish*). *Když uslyšel svoje jméno, otočil se a červený jako rak začal zmateně vysvětlovat příčinu neúspěchu celého projektu.*

- **TO NOT HAVE A RED CENT – NEMÍT ANI VINDRU**

The phrase **to not have a red cent** is the American informal expression which means to “have no money: *I wish I could come skiing with you, but I haven’t got a red cent at the moment* Warren (1994:226).”

This idiom can be translated into the Czech language as *nemít ani vindru*. The second part of the English idiom is partially different because the word *cent* is replaced with the Czech term *vindra*. Generally speaking the expressions *cent* and *vindra* are parallel from the semantic point of view but unfortunately their meanings are not identical, the colour red is also lacking in the Czech equivalent. *Neměl ani vindru, zpravidla trávil celý den před vlakovým nádražím a žebrol.*

- **A RED FACE – ZRUDNOUT**

The idiom **a red face** is an informal saying with the meaning “embarrassment: *There are going to be a lot of red faces at the bank when they discover how easily we stole the money* Warren (1994:226).”

It would seem that the expression *zrudnout* corresponds most closely in meaning to the English idiom. *Výtky související s jeho prací si vzal hodně osobně. Zrudnul a krev se v něm vařila vzteky.*

- **A RED-LIGHT DISTRICT – VYKŘIČENÁ ČTVRŤ**

If you refer to an area as **a red-light district**, you mean the “part of a city where prostitutes work and sex shops are found Warren (1994:227).”

The phrase in the Czech lexicon used as an equivalent to the idiom **the red-light district** is *vykřičená čtvrť*. Nevertheless, the Czech phrase includes no colour. *Okrajová část města plná prostitutek byla označovaná vždycky jako vykřičená čtvrť.*

7.9.3. *Non correspondence*

7.9.3.1. Periphrasis

- **TO BE IN THE RED – BÝT NA SUCHU**

The idiom **to be in the red** is an informal expression meaning to be “in debt: *At this time of year we are usually in the red* (in bank accounts, an amount owed used to be written in red figures, not black) Warren (1994:226).”

I consider the phrase *být na suchu* to be the most appropriate Czech equivalent. It differs from the English **to be in the red** because it does not include a word which denotes colour. *Není pochyb o tom, že byli na suchu. Nájem a elektřina nebyla zaplacená za tři měsíce nazpět.*

- **TO BE ON RED ALERT – BÝT VE STAVU POHOTOVOSTI**

The idiom **on red alert** is described as “a state of complete readiness to deal with an emergency, for example the beginning of a war, a terrorist attack, an accident, etc: *If there’s an underground accident in London, all the big hospitals are immediately put on red alert* Warren (1994:226).”

The close Czech equivalent *být ve stavu pohotovosti* is absolutely different from the English idiom because of the lexical and morphological structure. *Politická situace země byla natolik vážná, že lídři jednotlivých stran byli ve stavu nejvyšší pohotovosti.*

- **A RED HERRING – FALEŠNÁ STOPA**

The expression **a red herring** denotes “an unimportant or irrelevant matter which is introduced into a discussion to divert attention from the main subject, the truth etc. *Make sure Matthews answers all our complaints at the meeting. Don't let him confuse you with any red herrings* Seidl (1988:206).”

I chose the Czech phrase *falešná stopa* as an acceptable translation of the idiom **a red herring**, it however does not contain the colour red. *Získané informace od nepřítelů věrohodného zdroje kriminalisty odvedly na falešnou stopu.*

- **A RED LETTER DAY – PAMÁTNÝ DEN**

“You refer to a day as **a red letter day** when something very important or exciting happens then. *Back in 1986 Jim had his first picture published in BBC Wildlife Magazine. 'That was a real red letter day for me!' he confesses./ Aleksandra loved her son-in-law and each time he came to see her was a red-letter day* Sinclair (1995:320).”

The presence of the colour red as part of the whole idiom comes from “the custom of printing Sundays and religious days (holidays) in red on calendars Warren (1994:226-227).”

The most suitable Czech expression is *památný den*, which does not have the same idiomatic significance as the original English idiom, nor does it include the colour red. *17. listopad se stal památným dnem boje studentů za svobodu a demokracii.*

- **TO CATCH SOMEONE RED-HANDED – DOPADEN PŘI ČINU**

“If someone **is caught red-handed**, they are caught while they are doing something illegal or wrong. *In fact, the burglar wasn't inside the flat, but on the roof and was caught red-handed by the police./ Three smugglers caught red-handed with several kilograms of uranium and other radioactive materials were detained last week in the southern Polish city of Rzeszow Sinclair (1995:321).*”

Here the Czech equivalent is absolutely different from the English idiom because the best translation of the idiom **to catch red-handed** is *dopaden při činu*, which does not include the colour red, nor does it have any idiomatic significance. *Lupič byl prakticky dopaden přímo při činu a to díky náhodnému chodci, který neváhal a okamžitě zavolal policii.*

- **TO PAINT THE TOWN RED – JÍT NA FLÁM**

The idiom **to paint the town red** is an informal phrase which means to “celebrate sth by going out with other people to bars, discos, restaurants, etc and having a very good time: *It was the end of the term and students decided to celebrate by painting the town red Warren (1994:195).*”

The Czech equivalent *jít na flám* is absolutely different to the English idiom, both the colour red and the idiomatic nature of the English original being absent. *Sobotní večer byl jako tradičně příležitost proto, aby se sešla celá parta a šla na flám.*

- **TO BLEED RED INK – DOSTAT SE NA MIZINU**

“If a company **is bleeding red ink**, it has severe financial problems. This expression is used mainly in journalism.

Even large companies are bleeding red ink. But they are quickly closing plants and axing thousands of jobs to boost performance./ In 1991, although growth was at a solid 4.4%, annual inflation was 50% and government-owned businesses continued to bleed red ink Sinclair (1995:221).”

The best Czech translation of the English idiom is the saying *dostat se na mizinu*, both the colour red and the idiomatic nature of the English original being absent. *Dostat se na mizinu* by pro Petra znamenal úplný konec. Život bez nadprůměrného platu si nedovedl vůbec představit.

- (AS) **RED AS A TURKEY-COCK – JAKO BY HO KRVÍ POLIL**

The meaning of the simile (as) **red as a turkey-cock** can be described as “flushed with anger or embarrassment (from a turkey-cock’s comb and wattles, which become more conspicuously red when it is excited or angered) *The Sergeant-Major, his face as red as a turkey-cock, was abusing the squad at the top of his voice.* □ *I felt myself turning as red as a turkey-cock when the teacher praised my essay and read it to the class* Cowie (1985:27).”

This idiom does not have a Czech counterpart which absolutely corresponds to the original. I would consider the most suitable Czech phrase to be the saying *jako by ho krví polil*. *Jako by ho krví polil, nebyl schopný jediného slova na svou obhajobu.* While the morphology of the Czech phrase differs from the English original the colour red is strongly paralleled by the use of the word *krv* (blood).

7.9.3.2. One-word expression

- **RED TAPE – BYROKRACIE**

The expression **red tape** indicates “official, bureaucratic formalities and procedure which slow down people and processes. *I hate applying for visas. For some countries there's so much red tape involved* Seidl (1988:206).”

The verb *cut* can be connected to the idiom **red tape** to create the phrase **to cut the red tape**. “*I think that a lot of the official red tape could be cut so that we could get our contracts out more quickly* Seidl (1988:206).”

In my opinion the appropriate Czech translation would be *byrokracie*, but this expression has no idiomatic significance. *Většina obyvatel městečka nesnášela zbytečnou byrokracií, kterou však starosta obce považoval za nutnost správného chodu úřadu.*

- **REDS UNDER THE BED – KOMUNISTÉ**

The facetious expression **Reds under the bed** denotes “Communists, left-wing activists, seen as threats to Western democracy, the instigators of industrial unrest, etc □ (1974) *A South Wales Labour MP said to me 'If only Roy Jenkins was to come out clearly and publicly on the side of the miners. Because Roy's a moderate, he could stop all this talk about **Reds under the bed.**'* NS³¹ □ *It surely cannot be seriously maintained that Communists, fellow-travellers and other '**Reds under the beds**' nowadays constitute the main class of person who potentially put the state at risk?* L³² □ *The hunt for **reds under the Hollywood bed**, led by the US Committee on Un-American Activities in 1947, has become a legend.* RT³³ □ (NONCE) *I should not have thought that fascism was likely to threaten Western Europe at the present time. Breton must see **swastikas under the bed.*** L □ expression used mainly to satirize point of view defined above. Cowie (1985:478).”

I consider the Czech term *komunisté* to be a counterpart to the English idiom *Reds under the bed*. The Czech equivalent does not, however, contain the idiomatic aspect seen in the original English expression. *Politolog ve veřejné debatě tvrdil, že se komunisté s velkou pravděpodobností nedostanou do čela volebního okrsku.*

- **RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW – BEZOHLEDNÝ**

“If you describe something as **red in tooth and claw**, you mean that it involves competitive and ruthless behaviour. This is a literary expression. *My wife and I both now work for companies that are **red in tooth and claw.** / His attention was to demonstrate that Labour is no longer **red in tooth and claw**, but a serious and sober political party.*

People sometimes talk about **nature red in tooth and claw** when they are describing the way wild creatures hunt and kill each other for food. *We had left orderly Canberra with its just-so boulevards and civic monuments and were heading into the bush to take on nature **red in tooth and claw*** Sinclair (1995:396).”

I consider the adjective *bezohledný* to be the most appropriate Czech counterpart. Unfortunately, this equivalent does not cover an idiomatic aspect. *Zpětně si uvědomila jeho bezohledné chování vůči její rodině. Styděla se za něj jako nikdy předtím.*

³¹ NS = Snow, C. P. (1971-78) *New Statesman*

³² L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

³³ RT = Mackenzie, C. (Scottish edition 29 December 1960, 1971-78) *Radio Times*

The following Czech idioms were also found in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)*:

Být červený jako cihla, být rudý jako krev (*be red as blood*), **rudý jak plamen** (*be fiery-red*), **být rudý jako vlčí mák** (*be/go red as a poppy*), **být červený jako malina, být v jednom ohni** (*get all hot under the collar*), **červenat se/být červený jako panenka** (*be like a blushing bride*), **být červený jako pivoňka/začervenat se** (*blush like a rose; go/turn crimson*), **být (červený)/zčervenat/zrudnout jako rak** (*be/go/turn red as a lobster*), **být červený /začervenat se jako růže** (*blush like a rose*), **být (červený) jako kohout, být (červený/rudý) zrudnout jako krocan** (*be/turn/go red as a turkey-cock*), **(být) červený/mít tváře jako míšenské jablko** (*be rosy-cheeked, have cheeks like roses*), **mít tváře jako malované** (*have rosy cheeks*), **mít rty jako jahody/třešně/maliny** (*have lips like cherries, have cherry lips*), **být červený jako prase** (*be as red as a lobster*).

7.10. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH SILVER

7.10.1. Total correspondence

7.10.1.1 100% correspondence

- **THE SILVER SCREEN – STŘÍBRNÉ PLÁTNO**

The phrase **the silver screen** is a dated formulation of “the film industry: *the heroes and heroines of the silver screen* Warren (1994:256).”

This idiom also exists in Czech. The meaning and the morphological structure of the Czech idiom *stříbrné plátno* is the same as in the English. *Není pochyb o tom, že byla hvězdou stříbrného plátna. Zahrála si ve více jak třiceti filmech a celý Hollywood ji ležel u nohou.*

- **ON A SILVER PLATTER – NA STŘÍBRNÉM PODNOSE**

“If you are given something **on a silver platter** or **on a platter**, you are given it without having to work or make an effort to get it. *If someone offers you Paris, fashion, and the Louvre on a silver platter, how can you hesitate? / You act like a five-year-old. You expect me to hand you everything on a silver platter, and when you don't get it, you*

stamp your little foot and cry. / The Opposition has been handed this issue on a platter Sinclair (1995:302).”

Here too there is an idiom in Czech which includes the same colour, and with the same morphology and meaning. *Vždycky všechno dostal na stříbrném podnose. Nemusel se nikdy o nic starat, protože veškeré záležitosti týkající se rodinného panství měl na starosti jeho oddaný personál.*

7.10.1.2 Overall correspondence

- (SPEECH IS SILVER BUT) SILENCE IS GOLDEN – MLUVITI
STRÍBRO MLČETI ZLATO

The saying (**speech is silver but**) **silence is golden** describes a situation in which “it is desirable, and may be more effective to remain silent □ *I'm thinking of putting up a 'Silence is golden' placard in this office. Nobody can hear themselves think.* □ (advertisement appeal, Royal national Institute for the Deaf) *Ask the deaf if **silence is golden*** RT³⁴ Cowie (1985:501).”

This expression is “often used as recommendation to remain silent Cowie (1985:501).”

This idiom is also found in Czech with the same meaning and morphological structure as in the English – *Mluvíti stříbro, mlčeti zlato. Často přerušoval rozhovor druhých nevhodnými poznámkami. Jeden z přítomných okomentoval jeho chování jako **mluviti stříbro a mlčeti zlato**. Ostatní pouze přikyvovali a dotyčného polil stud.*

7.10.2. Partial correspondence

- A SILVER/SMOOTH TONGUE – VYTŘÍBENÝ JAZYK

To have a **silver/smooth tongue** denotes “the ability to talk in a very pleasing and polite way, to make people do what you want: *It was his **silver tongue** that got him the job* Warren (1994:300).”

The Czech equivalent of this idiom is *vytříbený jazyk*. In the translation of this English idiom into Czech the English word *silver* is replaced by the Czech word

34 RT = Mackenzie, C. (Scottish edition 29 December 1960, 1971-78) *Radio Times*

vytříbený (*elegant*). Jeho způsob vyjadřování mě vždy fascinoval. **Vytříbený jazyk** plný přirovnání a metaphor z něj dělá velice sečtělého a vzdělaného pána.

7.10.3. Non correspondence

7.10.3.1 Periphrasis

- **TO BORN WITH A SILVER SPOON IN YOUR MOUTH – MÍT NA RŮŽÍCH USTLÁNO**

“If you say that someone **was born with a silver spoon in their mouth**, you mean that their family was very rich and they had a privileged upbringing. You usually use this expression to show resentment or disapproval. *People like Samantha and Timothy had been **born with a silver spoon in their mouth**; they hadn't a worry in the world, and there was always someone to pay their bills if their own inheritance was not sufficient.*

People sometimes vary this expression, for example by replacing 'silver' or 'mouth' with other words. *Henry Adams was born with a complete set of sterling silver in his mouth.*

You can use **silver-spoon** before a noun to describe a person like this or their lifestyle Sinclair (1995:351).”

In this case the Czech equivalent is both morphologically different from the English idiom, and contains no reference to silver. If we want to describe someone who was born into rich family and because of this fact had an easy life, we would probably use the phrase *mít na růžích ustláno*. *Celý život měla prakticky na růžích ustláno. Byla vychována v přepychu, otec ji hýčkal a luxus představoval samozřejmost.*

- **EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING – VŠECHNO ZLÉ JE PRO NĚCO DOBRÉ**

The saying **every cloud has a silver lining** means that “there is always some comforting or brighter side to a sad or gloomy situation, sth pleasant that can happen now or in the future, even though it may not be immediately clear □ *Oh well, every cloud has a silver lining. I may not be so well off now, but I'll have more time to enjoy my family.* □ *Patrick decided things were far from bad just now. Even **an** alcoholic*

cloud may turn out to **have a silver lining** if taken in time. TGLY³⁵ □ *He turns out to be considerably less pessimistic than most writers whom we think of as 'serious', for whom every silver lining was a cloud* L³⁶ □ Cowie (1985:169).”

I chose the following Czech proverbs as acceptable equivalents to the English idiom, they are however much more literal in nature than the English original and do not include the colour silver: *Všechno zlé je pro něco dobré* or *Co mě nezabije, to mě posílí*. *Blízká osoba se ji pokoušela uklidnit tím, že všechno zlé je pro něco dobré a že i nepřítel úspěšný pohovor může být určitou životní zkušeností.*

- (FOR) THIRTY PIECES/ (FOR) A HANDFUL OF SILVER –
ŠPINAVÉ PENÍZE

The expression (for) **thirty pieces/ (for) a handful of silver** characterizes “money given as bribe or reward for doing sth dishonourable, betraying another, etc □ (source) *And (Judas Iscariot) said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.* MATTHEW XXVI 15 □ (source) *Just for a handful of silver he left us, /Just for a riband to stick in his coat.* THE LOST LEADER (R BROWNING 1812-89) □ *I thought of my father. He was a good workman – too good a workman to be sacked and too outspoken about his Labour convictions to be promoted. My mother knew what was in my mind. 'Your father would starve before he'd sell himself for a handful of silver.'* RATT³⁷ □ *He has thrown his humanity into the gutter, he had betrayed the trust that men place in one another, and with his **thirty pieces of silver** he had bought – what had he bought* HD³⁸Cowie (1985:552)?”

This idiom does not exist in the Czech lexicon. In such a situation we would use the phrase *špinavé peníze*, which has a similar meaning, but does not include a reference to silver. *Spekulace, že peníze nebyly získány legální cestou se nakonec potvrdily. Šlo o špinavé peníze, které agentura nezahrnula do finanční kalkulace celé stavby.*

35 TGLY = Amis, K. (Penguin 1962, Gollancz 1960) *Take a Girl Like You*

36 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

37 RATT = Braine, J. (Penguin 1960, Eyre & Spottiswoode 1957) *Room at the Top*

38 HD = Wain, J. (Penguin 1960, Secker & Warburg 1953) *Hurry On Down*

- **TO CROSS SOMEONE’S PALM/HAND WITH SILVER – PLATIT ZLATEM**

The idiom **to cross someone's palm/hand with silver** means “to give money to (a person, esp. a fortune-teller or someone who has a desirable piece of information to tell): *Cross my palm with silver and I'll tell you something you'll be pleased to hear* Long (1979:246).”

The closest Czech translation of this English idiom would probably be *platit (za něco) zlatem*, but this phrase does not have the same specific meaning as the English one. *Za poslední poštovní známku, která by tak zkompletovala jeho sbírku by bezesporu platil zlatem, jen aby ji získal.*

7.11. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH WHITE

7.11.1 Total correspondence

7.11.1.1 100% correspondence

- **(AS) WHITE AS A SHEET – BÝT BÍLÝ JAKO PAPÍR**

“If someone looks as **white as a sheet** or as **white as a ghost**, they look very pale and frightened. *There was another lady lorry driver who pulled in in front of me, who it affected badly. She was as white as a sheet./ In 30 years of marriage I have never seen my husband in such a state. He was as white as a ghost and trembling* Sinclair (1995:419).”

Such an idiom with the same morphological structure and meaning is also found in the Czech lexicon (*být*) *bledý/bílý jako papír* (be/go/turn as white/pale as paper). *S obavami otevíral dopis, bílý jako papír, začal číst jeho obsah nahlas.*

- **(AS) WHITE AS CHALK/A SHEET – (BÝT) BÍLÝ/ BLEDÝ JAKO KŘÍDA**

The meaning of the simile (**as**) **white as chalk/a sheet** is “very pale in appearance as a result of illness, fear, shock etc: (as) pale as death (qv) **S:** he, she, you, they; face, hands, complexion. **V:** be, go, turn □ *I've never seen anyone looking as ill as Geoffrey. His face was as white as chalk when he arrived home from work this evening.* □ *No*

wonder some bridegrooms looked **as white as a sheet** on their wedding-day. SML³⁹ □ *It was dreadful to see him lying there white as a sheet and in such pain.* □ *Mary has just come in with a face as white as a sheet to say there's been an accident at the corner of the lane* Cowie (1985:32).”

This idiom also exists in Czech, and with the same meaning and morphological structure as in the English idiom – *(být) bílý/bledý jako křída. Začala mít mžitky před očima a bílá jako křída požádala člověka na ulici o pomoc.*

- **WHITE COFFEE – BÍLÁ KÁVA**

The phrase **white coffee** denotes “coffee with milk or cream. *For breakfast I always have two slices of toast and white coffee* Seidl (1988:206).”

Likewise, *bílá káva* is used ordinarily for expressing the same meaning in Czech. *Bez bílé kávy k snídani si nedokáže představit, že by fungovala celé dopoledne.*

- **A WHITE CHRISTMAS – BÍLÉ VÁNOCE**

The expression **a white Christmas** means “snow at Christmas time □ *There seems to be snow in the air. To judge from the forecast, we may expect a white Christmas.* EM⁴⁰ □ *The woman rubbed her hands and observed that it was cold enough to have a white Christmas yet* AITC⁴¹ Cowie (1985:588).”

In this case too there is a direct Czech equivalent, we can translate the English idiom literally as *bílé Vánoce*. *Děti si toužebně přály, aby letošní bílé Vánoce byly i bohaté co se týká nadílky pod stromečkem.*

- **(AS) WHITE AS SNOW – BÍLÝ JAKO SNÍH**

The meaning of the idiom **(as) white as snow** is “very white **S**: cloud; blossom, petal; hair, beard; dress, sheet. **V**: be, go turn □ *The sheets were rough but as white as snow.* □ *I scarcely knew him when we met again. His hair had gone as white as snow.* □ *The ground was as white as snow with petals that had drifted down from the apple trees* Cowie (1985:32).”

39 SML = Cooper, W. (Macmillan 1961) *Scenes from Married Life*

40 EM = Hare, C. (Penguin 1960, Faber & Faber 1951) *An English Murder*

41 AITC = Dickens, M. (Penguin 1960, Michael Joseph 1956) *The Angel in the Corner*

Likewise, in Czech the same idiom *bílý jako sníh* is used for describing something which is very white in colour. *Nevěstiny šaty byly bíle jako sníh, přesně takové jak o nich vždy snila.*

7.11.2. Partial correspondence

- **A (LITTLE) WHITE LIE – MILOSRDNÁ LEŽ**

A (little) white lie is “a lie which does no harm and is more polite than the truth, usually told to spare someone's feelings or for convenience. *I don't want to go to Steve's party, so I'll tell him I won't be in town until late on that evening. A little white lie is better than hurting his feelings* Seidl (1988:206).”

Milosrdná lež is a good Czech equivalent for the explained English idiom. Nonetheless, there is a difference in that the translation of the word *white* in the English idiom into Czech transforms it into merciful *milosrdný*. *Milosrdná lež se v tu chvíli zdála jako nejlepší řešení, protože nikdo z přítomných neměl sílu říci Haně celou pravdu.*

- **A WHITE NIGHT – PROBDĚNÁ NOC**

The idiom **a white night** has a meaning “a sleepless night Cowie (1985:588).” This expression is original “from French **nuit blanche** with the same meaning. *I didn't feel particularly tired, or sleepy, after my white night. It was the day after that again, that it hit me.* SC⁴² □ *Isabel didn't sleep at all that night: it was a nuit blanche, the first she had ever had* PW⁴³ Cowie (1985:588).”

The Czech phrase which is most similar to a *white night*, is probably *probděná noc*. This Czech expression does not, however, have an idiomatic connotation. *Další probděnou noc strávil přemýšlením o tom, jak rodinnou krizi co nejrychleji vyřešit.*

42 SC = Mackenzie, C. (6-29 April 1960, 1971-78) *The Scotsman*

43 PW = Hartley, L.P. (Penguin 1959, Hamish Hamilton 1955) *A Perfect Woman*

7.11.3. *Non correspondence*

7.11.3.1. Periphrasis

- **A WHITE ELEPHANT – ZBYTEČNÁ VĚC**

“If you describe something such as a new building, plan, or project as a **white elephant**, you mean that it is a waste of money and completely useless. *Will the complex, constructed at some expense but never used, be regarded as a monumental folly, a great white elephant?/ I don't see any train line turning into a white elephant unless we made some stupid decision to build a train line in some remote rural location where it wasn't needed in the first place* Sinclair (1995:122).”

The Czech equivalent is absolutely different from the English idiom because the closest translation of the phrase *a white elephant* is **zbytečná věc** (useless thing). *Koupit si další televizi mi přijde jako zbytečná věc, kterou není potřeba si v žádném případě pořizovat.*

- **TO BLEED SOMEONE WHITE – OBRAT (NĚKOHO) O POSLEDNÍ VINDRU**

“If a person, organization, or country is **bled dry**, they are made weak, for example by being forced to use up all their money or resources. You can also say that someone is **bled white**. *The English bled my parents' country dry just like they have bled Scotland dry. / He extorted money from me on a regular basis for five years. But he was careful not to bleed me dry. / The most ludicrous and tragic spectacle on earth is to see a powerful nation bleeding itself white to build up vast heaps of armaments to put down a menace that cannot be put down by military means at all* Sinclair (1995:33).”

In my opinion the Czech phrase **obrat (někoho) o poslední vindru** is a suitable equivalent to the English idiom, lacking however a reference to the colour white, and being otherwise morphologically different. *Nebylo mu nic svaté a klidně obral svého bratra o poslední vindru a zmizel neznámo kam.*

- **A (GREAT) WHITE HOPE – ČERNÝ KŮŇ**

A (great) white hope denotes “a talented person who is thought likely to bring success or victory (eg in sport) □ *Our white hope wrecked his knee on the eve of the match – so*

*we were doomed from the start. BM⁴⁴ □ Still only thirty-two, Kubrick is one of **the great white hopes** of the commercial film industry. OBS⁴⁵ □ I'm going to go and look at some of his other works before trying to guess whether we really do have **a new UK white hope** shaping up in the gym NS⁴⁶ Cowie (1985:588)."*

The Czech counterpart to the idiom a **white hope** is the Czech expression **černý kůň** (*black horse*), which is absolutely different from the original English term. Not only is the colour radically changed from *white* in *black*, but also the noun *hope* is replaced with the Czech for horse *kůň*. *Nadáný tenista pro oddíl představoval černého koně celého turnaje. Trenér byl přesvědčený, že naděje na jeho postup do finále je pouze otázka času.*

7.11.3.2. One-word expression

- **A WHITE COLLAR WORKER JOB – ÚŘEDNÍK**

The term a **white-collar worker/job etc.** is described as “a non-manual worker, e.g. office worker/professional or business worker/professional or business work etc. *For years Bill was a mechanic, but he was given **a white-collar job** when his health trouble started* Seidl (1988:206).”

The appropriate Czech expression is **úředník**, which does not include the colour white, nor have the idiomatic significance of the original English idiom. *Už půl roku pracuje jako **úředník** na ministerstvu vnitra a nikdy si na nadřízeného nestěžoval.*

- **THE WHITE FEATHER – ZBABĚLEC**

The idiom **the white feather** denotes “a symbol of fear, cowardice, or timidity (from cock-fighting, where a game cock displaying the white rim of feather under his hackle acknowledges defeat, wants to give up) □ *The early attacks (on Britain) from the air were noticeable enough for a naval officer to be heard saying playfully to another. 'What! Going to sea, are you? So you're showing **the white feather** AH⁴⁷ Cowie (1985:588)!*”

⁴⁴ BM = Bates, H.E. (July 1960) *Blackwood's Magazine*

⁴⁵ OBS = Snow, C.P. (1960-78) *The Observer*

⁴⁶ NS = Snow, C. P. (1971-78) *New Statesman*

⁴⁷ AH = Plomer, W. (Penguin 1961, Jonathan Cape 1958) *At home*

There is no parallel idiom to this in Czech. The following Czech terms **zbabělec** or alternatively **strašpytel** are the closest Czech equivalents, but are both radically different in morphology and lack the use of a colour. *Zachoval se jako naprostý zbabělec, neschopný mi říci pravdu do očí.*

• **WHITER THAN WHITE – CTNOSTNÝ**

“If you describe someone as **whiter than white**, you mean their actions are always honest and moral. You usually use this expression when you are referring to doubts about the person's character or behaviour, or when you are being ironic and trying to suggest that the person is less honest or moral than they appear to be. *He is prepared to forgive Atherton's deceit this time, but has left him in no doubt that his behaviour must be whiter than white in future. / You can't pretend that somehow or other the police are whiter than white. We're living in a real world* Sinclair (1995:420).”

The expression **whiter than white** may also be used before a noun. “*This brush with the law seems to have been the only taint in an otherwise whiter than white lifestyle* Sinclair (1995:420).”

In my opinion, the appropriate Czech counterpart to this idiom is **ctnostný**, however, it does not include use of the colour white and has no idiomatic connotation. *Chrabrý rytíř vykonával vždy ctnostné činy.*

The following Czech idioms were found in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)*: **být bílý jako slonová kost**, **mít vlasy/hlavu jako mléko** (*have hair as white as snow, have snow-white hair/beard*), **být bílý jako mramor** (*be white as the driven snow, have arms/forehead as white as marble*), **mít zuby jako perličky**, **mít hlavu/vlasy jako sníh**, **být jako alabaster**, **být jako z alabastru**, **být bílý jako lilie**, **být jako mléko**, **být (bílý) jako sejra** (*need to get some colouring in one's cheeks*), **být (bílý/bledý) jako tvaroh** (*be whey-faced/pasty-faced*), **být (bílý/bledý) jako křída** (*be/turn white as a sheet*), **(být) bledý/bílý jako papír** (*be/go/turn as white/pale as a sheet*), **(být) bledý/zblednout jako plátno** (*be as white as a sheet; be as pale as death, turn/go white as ashes*), **být (bledý/bílý) jako smrt** (*be/go as pale as death*), **být (bledý) jako stěna** (*be/turn as pale as a sheet*).

7.12. IDIOMS CONNECTED WITH YELLOW

7.12.1. Total correspondence

7.12.1.1. 100% correspondence

- **THE YELLOW PERIL – ŽLUTÉ NEBEZPEČÍ**

The Yellow Peril denotes “fear (first raised, esp in Germany and North America, in the 1890s and whipped up from time to time since then) that the Chinese and/or Japanese nations will overrun the world. *We were scornful of messmates who held that if war in the Far East did come it would not be between European Nations but between Whites and Yellows: had not the German Emperor spoken of **the Yellow Peril**? 'Nonsense!' we scoffed. BM⁴⁸ / In Lyndon Johnson's final days in the White House his own Secretary of State publicly defended the Vietnam War by evoking the spectre of '**the Yellow Peril**'. NS⁴⁹ / The other myth that's now quite abandoned is that of the Chinese as a '**yellow peril**' wanting to flood through Asia with invading hordes L⁵⁰Cowie (1985:602).”*

It is extremely complicated to find a suitable Czech equivalent to this idiom because the term *the Yellow Peril* is so narrowly specific to the historical context. We can of course translate this term as *žluté nebezpečí*, but without the historical background the meaning is lost, the reader likely being unable to understand the term out of context. *V minulosti byli Japonci a Číňané označováni jako žluté nebezpečí pro západní svět.*

7.12.2. Partial correspondence

- **THE YELLOW PRESS – BULVÁRNÍ TISK**

The idiom **the yellow press** characterizes “newspapers, journalism, specializing in sensational items of news, or in presenting any items of news, or in presenting any items as sensationally as possible / (news coverage of an air crash) *The gratuitous film reports of the Hong Kong and French disasters were in the worst traditions of **the yellow press*** L⁵¹ Cowie (1985:602).”

This term is commonly used only in the Anglo-Saxon world. In the Czech cultural context idioms such as *bulvární tisk* or *bulvární plátek* would be the suitable

48 BM = Bates, H.E. (July 1960) *Blackwood's Magazine*

49 NS = Snow, C.P. (1971-78) *New Statesman*

50 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

51 L = Beckett, S. (14 February & 4 April 1963, 1971-78) *The Listener*

counterparts. *Nepochopím její zálibu ve čtení **bulvárního tisku**. Přejde mi to jako ztráta času a osobně dávám přednost serióznímu plátku.*

- (AS) **YELLOW AS A GUINEA** – ŽLUTÝ JAKO CITRÓN

The meaning of the idiom (as) **yellow as a guinea** is “clearly yellow in colour (because affected by illness or climatic conditions) **S**: skin; he, she, they. **V**: be, turn, go / *I say, it's high time you got a tonic, you're **as yellow as a guinea**. US⁵² *He used to be a fine fresh-looking fellow, but after fifteen years of West Africa he came home **yellow as a guinea** and thin as a match-stick* Cowie (1985:32).”*

There is a definition of the word *guinea* in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*: “an old British gold coin or unit of money worth 21 shillings (= now £1.05). Prices are sometimes still given in guineas, for example when buying or selling horses.”

This idiom represents a reference to the British culture heritage. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent in the Czech lexicon which could be used in a similar way to the idiom. It is of course possible to translate this expression literally as **žlutá guinea**, but this translation lacks an idiomatic connotation. I consider use of the Czech simile **žlutý jako citrón** as the best solution, because the expression is relatively similar to the original English idiom. On the other hand, the Czech counterpart includes no reference to British culture. *Po tom co snědl místní specialitu, **žlutý jako citrón** se omluvil a šel se nadýchat ven čerstvého vzduchu.*

7.12.3. *Non correspondence*

7.12.3.1. Periphrasis

- **A YELLOW STREAK** – BÝT ZBABĚLÝ

The idiom **a yellow streak** is a disapproving expression for “cowardice; being afraid: *He won't fight? I always thought he had **a yellow streak*** Warren (1994:333).”

The appropriate equivalent of this idiom would be the phrase **být zbabělý**. *Co si pamatují, tak vždycky **byl zbabělý** a neschopný říci nám své výtky ke kompozici stavby narovinu.*

52 US = Johnson, P.H. (Penguin 1961) *The Unspeakable*
(Macmillan 1959) *Skipton*

In Czech, as well as in English, we find relatively few idioms connected to the colour yellow. I found the following proverbs in *The Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics (Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky)* – **být žlutý jako citrón** (be yellow as a canary/banana/Chinaman/cowslip), **být žlutý jako kanárek** (be yellow as a canary), **být žlutý jako síra** (be yellow as sulphur), **být žlutý jako šafrán** (be saffron yellow). Nonetheless, none of them are similar to the meaning of English idioms connected to the colour yellow.

8.0.THE RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF IDIOMS

The aim of the previous chapter was not only to find suitable Czech equivalent to English colour idioms, but also to compare those English colour idioms with their Czech counterparts on the basis of correspondence. In total 119 English colour idioms were analysed. Unfortunately, I was not able to find suitable Czech equivalents to the following English colour idioms: *to grow grey in the service*, *the red meat (of sth)*, *neither fish, flesh nor good red herring/fresh meat*, *the thin red line*, *white trash*.

Nevertheless, I was able to find equivalents for the vast majority of the English idioms, 114 in total, and on the basis of correspondence place them into categories as follows. 32 English colour idioms were sorted into the category of total correspondence, a further 20 English colour idioms belonged in the category of partial correspondence, and finally 62 idioms constituted a group with non correspondence. The result of the analysis is, therefore, that the majority of researched English colour idioms were absolutely different from their Czech counterparts on the basis of correspondence. This fact emphasizes not only the variety but also the dissimilarity in the lexicon of the two compared languages.

The results of correspondence analysis for each colour are presented in the following table:

	TOTAL CORRESPONDENCE		PARTIAL CORRESPONDENCE	NON CORRESPONDENCE	
	100% corresp.	Overall corresp.	(no subcategories)	Periphrasis	One-word expression
black	7	1	3	7	1
blue	2	0	2	6	7
brown	0	0	1	3	0
green	3	0	1	5	1
grey	2	0	4	0	0
golden	3	2	1	0	1
pink	0	0	0	5	0
purple	0	0	0	3	0
red	3	0	3	9	3
silver	2	1	1	4	0
white	5	0	2	3	3

yellow	1	0	2	1	0
Sums	32		20	62	

Because of the definition of non-correspondence from chapter 5.3 *Non correspondence*, where the category non correspondence “contains, on one hand, idioms which do not have any equivalent and, on the other hand, it also encompasses all idioms which are expressed non-idiomatically (Vokáčová 2008:67).” Five idioms which do not have Czech counterparts had to be added. In the final analysis then, the category of non correspondence contains not 62 idioms, but 67 idioms. This sum represents 56,3 % of the total number of idioms. This result speaks to the expansiveness of the category of non correspondence. In summary, it can be said that only 32 idioms, which constitute only 26,9 % of the whole fall into the category of total correspondence. Finally, the last category with the smallest number is represented by partial correspondence, constituting 20 idioms which can be transformed into 16,8 %.

9.0. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

After the formation of the corpus of English colour idioms the next aim of the thesis consisted in the compilation of a questionnaire to be given to English native speakers and Czech learners of English. From the corpus of English idioms included in the previous chapter only 20 idioms were chosen to be the constituents of the questionnaire. Generally speaking I tried to choose a mix of idioms which were, in my opinion, commonly known and unfamiliar.

In devising the questionnaire emphasis was placed on ascertaining whether or not respondents know and commonly use English colour idioms. It must be pointed out that the questionnaire was the same for both mentioned groups, and of course is included in the appendix of the thesis.

Thirty-three students in the third (9 students) and fourth (24 students) years of the English master's degree course at the faculty of Education at the University of South Bohemia were involved in the research. It is assumed that the language level of the group members is C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In contrast, the group of English native speakers contained 14 respondents who can be considered a heterogeneous group as of the 14 respondents 9 are Brits, 2 Americans, and 3 New Zealanders. In relation to this composition I would like to mention that the primary aim was to form a homogeneous group consisting of one nationality only. Unfortunately I was not able to gather homogeneous groups of any significant size, and thus approached, apart from Brits, also Americans, and New Zealanders. In the end, though this was not my primary aim, the chance to compare the comments of people of different nationalities was also interesting and beneficial.

The questionnaire contains two exercises. I would like to add that the sentences mentioned in the questionnaire are copied from the English idiomatic dictionaries which are enumerated in the Bibliography of the thesis.

The first exercise is focused on filling the right idioms into the context of the sentence. According to the instruction respondents were to choose only 10 idioms from a list containing 15 idioms. This fact implies that not all idioms were to be used.

Similarly as in the first exercise the second exercise included only 10 items, but respondents had only to fill in the right colour without the context of a supportive sentence.

Further, in both exercises, respondents were requested to estimate their success in completing the exercise as a percentage. In addition they had the option of writing comments on the form and content of each exercise and of indicating expressions which they had never heard of.

The final version of the questionnaire is integrated into the Appendix of the thesis. Nevertheless, at this stage I would like to comment on some of the idioms which were included in the questionnaire. The right answer to the second sentence of the first exercise should have been *between the devil and the deep blue sea*. However, some respondents replaced this idiom with the idiomatic expression *as white as chalk* which in a fact also fits into the context of the sentence and was also included in the list of idioms offered. I, therefore, decided to accept not only the idiom *between the devil and the deep blue sea* but also *as white as chalk* as the right answer because the latter also fitted into the structure and meaning of the sentence.

The next note is connected to the second exercise, particularly with the filling in of the gap in the expression *a-collar worker/job*. Not only *a white-collar* but also *a blue-collar* is considered to be the right answer.

In general both groups, English native speakers and the Czech learners of English, regarded the second exercise as being more difficult than the first due to the missing context of a sentence, helpful in researching for the right colour idiom. Completion of the second exercise with the right colour represented a huge problem.

As a consequence of the fact that the Czech learners of English language were doubtful about correctly completing the second exercise, they estimated their potential success as on average only 32%. Though the real average success rate of the Czech students was at 48% higher than estimated, this figure still represents a low value regarding the result of the first exercise.

While attempting to fill in the right English idioms the Czech learners of English translated idioms literally in an effort to find the same idiom in the Czech lexicon. Not only the context of the sentence but also the method of elimination applied to the list of

given idioms may have helped respondents to successfully complete the exercise without knowledge of the idioms themselves.

As indicated above many Czech respondents admitted in their comments that they only guessed the meaning of some of the unknown idioms and they had never heard of them before. Despite being unfamiliar with, and not understanding, many idioms, the Czech respondents were able to complete the majority of sentences from the first exercise correctly, being able to guess the meaning of the whole idiomatic expression due to the context of the sentence. This, therefore, represented an important factor in the successful completion of the first exercise, and one which clearly significantly distorts my results. All in all, the Czech learners of English estimated their success rate at 59% on average. On correction the level of success was found to be significantly higher at 82%.

From among the idioms included the Czech learners of English denoted the following idioms as being particularly difficult: *between the devil and the deep blue sea*, *strike me pink*, *like a blue-arsed fly*, and *brown as berries*. In my opinion the respondents had particular trouble with these idioms because there are simply no idioms which are morphologically and lexically similar to be found in the Czech lexicon.

Compared with the first exercise the second exercise was considered by the Czech respondents as more difficult than the first. Without the context of a sentence it is simply more difficult to choose the correct colour.

Low levels of knowledge in relation to idioms can be considered to be a significant reason for the low success rate in answering the second exercise. Being unfamiliar with the particular idioms, and without the context of a sentence, the Czech learners of English were not able to complete the second exercise correctly. In general, the Czech respondents themselves agreed that they were not familiar with the idioms in the second exercise which required a good prior knowledge of the particular idioms, and which also provided no list of idioms as options with which to complete the exercise. The respondents were simply not familiar with the idioms involved, and this, in combination with the composition of exercise explains the relatively low rate of success in completion of the second exercise.

In addition, not only the Czech respondents but also the English native speakers had problems with correctly completing the second exercise. For example, a 22-year-old British student, whose success of the second exercise was 70%, wrote that: "I didn't

recognise quite a few of these, maybe in a sentence or in context it might have been easier.” It is there interesting to note that the context of the sentence signifies an extremely important and helpful factor even among native speakers.

In general, the success rate attained by the English native speakers was quite high, on average 80% in both exercises. However, some of the respondents claimed that they do not personally use some of the idioms. The following comments deal with the particular idioms which were mentioned in the questionnaire. I have decided to publish only the comments made by the English native speakers because I find their notes most enlightening and helpful in gaining a better understanding of the substance of the idioms in question. I assume that their comments are highly subjective, and not to be perceived as the general rule.

- *THE YELLOW PRESS*: A lot of respondents had a problem with completion of the expression *the yellow press*. Out of 14 native speakers only 2 completed this idiom correctly.
- *TO HAVE (GOT) GREEN FINGERS*: Both American respondents concurred on the substitution the noun *fingers* instead with *thumb*. Similar to Sinclair’s *Dictionary of Idioms*, the author admits that the American variant of this idiom is *to have a green thumb*.
- *(AS) BROWN AS A BERRY*: Of 14 respondents only 8 denote the idiom *brown as berries* as an unknown expression. In relation to this I consider a comment made by a 17-years-old Brit to be considerably subjective. She says: “I have heard all of them (idioms included in the first exercise) except brown as berries, might just because I’m a ginger who’s never tanned so nobody is ever going to tell me I’m brown as berries!”
- *A GREY EMINENCE*: Similar to as *brown as berries*, 9 native speakers had never heard of the idiom *a grey eminence*. On the contrary, the Czech learners of English had no problem with the particular idiom. One explanation for this fact is that the idiom may also be used more often in Czech than in English.

- **AS WHITE AS CHALK:** The American respondent attaches the following comment to the idiom *as white as chalk*: “I don’t believe I’ve heard this before, but “white as a ghost” or “white as a sheet” means something like scared so maybe it’s similar.”
- **STRIKE ME PINK:** Several native speakers describe the idiom *strike me pink* as the old fashioned expression. A 25-years-old British agrees to this idea and at the same time, he adds that “strike me pink is much more likely to be replaced by modern slang and/or swear words!”
- **TO PAINT THE TOWN RED:** A 25-years-old English comments: “to paint the town red isn’t old fashioned but is used more so in my parents’ generation.” On the contrary, the American respondent claims that “*to paint the town red* is not as common, but I have definitely heard it on several occasions, and it is still well known.”
- **TO GIVE THE GREEN LIGHT:** The English respondent considers the idiom *to give the green light* as old fashioned. Further, she adds: “People usually say give me the heads up or thumbs up where I’m from.”
- **TO SEE PINK ELEPHANTS:** As a very subjective observation, I find the comment of 17-years-old British respondent interesting, though very subjective, he claims: “To see pink elephants, only my granddad says that and when I’ve said it before nobody else has really understood. ”
- As commonly used idioms, the group of native speakers highlighted in their comments the following expressions: the black sheep of the family, blue blood, silver screen, white lie, to get green fingers, and to give the green light.

In conclusion, I consider the comments of the native speakers of English engrossing and extremely helpful in understanding how they view particular idiomatic expressions. Moreover, the comments serve to enhance our knowledge of the particular idioms,

helping Czech learners of English language form a better picture of them from the semantic and lexical point of view. It is also worth noting that many of idioms may be becoming outdated but, on the other hand that new idioms are constantly being created by the dynamics and liveliness of the language.

10.0. CONCLUSION

In the theoretical part of the thesis I deal with the question not only of how to define the idiom, but also how to understand the substance of the meaning of idioms. In the next chapter, I deal with the definition of the main functions of idioms which are particular denominative and structural functions. Apart from these two functions, of course, other functions of the idiom are discussed, for example the aesthetic, economic, evaluative, and metalinguistic functions.

The next part of the thesis focuses on the various classifications of idioms. The first criterion for the division of idioms represents the *Makkai's classification* of lexemic idioms. The next criterion to be considered was *the structure* of idioms. Further, the standpoint of *syntactic characteristics* was used in classifying the idioms. Finally, *semantic transparency* formed the last criterion for the classification of idioms which I have used in this thesis.

The next aim of the thesis was to excerpt English colour idioms from several dictionaries and to create a corpus of idiomatic expressions. After the formation of the corpus I tried to find the most suitable Czech equivalent for each English colour idiom. Further, I divided the idioms on the basis of their level of correspondence. Nevertheless, I admit that the classification is considerably subjective, often depending on one's own linguistic attitudes.

For each English colour idiom included in the corpus I chose a definition from an English dictionary focusing on idiomatic language. As a constituent of the definition I also integrated the sample sentence given in the dictionary. Further, I operated with the suitable Czech equivalent. As with the English idiom the Czech counterpart was placed in the context of a sentence, but with the difference that I created the Czech sentences myself.

The next aim of the thesis was to recognize the ability of native speakers and Czech learners of the English language in using English colour idioms. The chosen method was to create questionnaire containing a sample of English idioms. Finally, I put together a limited list of 20 English colour idioms which are presented not only in

chapter 7.0. *Analysis of idioms* but also in the *Appendix* to this thesis. From the chosen idioms I formed the final questionnaire.

On the base of the results from the questionnaire it can be said in general that English native speakers were able to fill in both exercises of the questionnaire correctly with an 80% success rate on average. Another finding revealed by comments attached to particular idioms was that they considered several idioms to be old fashioned, or that they were unknown to them. The results of Czech learners of English were worse in comparison with the previous group of respondents.

The success rate of the Czech learners of English in both exercises was on average of 65%. A lot of Czech respondents admitted that the context of the sentence was extremely helpful in the successful completion of the first exercise. Using a process of elimination they often simply guessed the meaning of some idioms.

The great difference in success levels attained by the Czech learners of English and the native speakers can quite easily be explained. Non-native learners of English are clearly at a greater “disadvantage” regarding exposure to, acquisition of, and use of idioms, in comparison to native speakers than in other areas of language. Idioms belong largely to the colloquial sphere, and though work may be done to compensate for non-native speakers’ lack of contact with them, this will most often be done in non-colloquial contexts, their knowledge of them, therefore, remaining limited and passive.

One interesting exception from the idioms included in the questionnaire is *a grey eminence*, in that this is a phrase heard more often in an academic context. Also, it belonged to the total correspondence category and, therefore, the Czech learners had more chance of understanding it than with many of the other idioms, in fact they seem to have done so with no trouble at all. Not only that, but they were more familiar with its use than the native speakers, which possibly indicates either its greater frequency of use in Czech than in English, or that the Czech respondents have a better, or at least different, education to their non-Czech counterparts. This last point is beyond the intended bounds of this thesis, but does, however, present an interesting viewpoint for future research on the topic of idioms.

RESUMÉ

Idiomy patří k velice zajímavé a současně rozsáhlé oblasti lexikologie. Používání těchto výrazů v běžné řeči naznačuje vyšší úroveň jazykových schopností uživatele daného jazyka. Idiomy zastávají v jazykovém projevu důležitý aspekt, který tak podává obraz jazykové vybavenosti a poukazuje tak na jazykovou úroveň jedince.

Tato práce je zaměřena na anglické a české idiomy spojené s barvou. V úvodní části se zabývám definováním termínu idiom podle vybraných lingvistů (Čermák, Crystal, Strässler) a slovníků (*Oxford English Dictionary*, *Dictionary of Idioms*, *Dictionary of Idioms*). Dále se práce zabývá významem idiomů, který je demonstrován na příkladu Makkaie *hot potatoe*. Na tomto idiomu je poukazováno na nemožnost odhadnutí významu celého idiomu na základě doslovného překladu významu jednotlivých komponentů idiomu. Nelze tedy vytvořit pouze mechanické spojení významů jednotlivých slov daného idiomu. Další kapitola se zaměřuje na hlavní funkce idiomů, kterými jsou podle Čermáka nominativní a strukturní složka funkce. Kromě těchto dvou zmiňovaných jsou prezentovány další funkce idiomů, konkrétně funkce estetická, ekonomická, hodnotící, ale i metalingvistická.

V další části práce jsou idiomy děleny podle několika kritérií. Jako první způsob klasifikace je v práci uváděno Makkaiovo dělení, který vychází z rozdělení idiomů na *encoding* a *decoding idioms*, které jsou následně děleny na *lexemic idioms* a jejich následné podkategorie. Dalšími hledisky pro dělení idiomů byly následující aspekty: struktura, syntaktické hledisko a konečně semantická průhlednost.

Součástí práce byla snaha o vytvoření korpusu anglických idiomů spojených s barvou. Následující slovníky jsem používala jako hlavní zdroje: Applebee (1992) *Help with Idioms*, Cowie (1985) *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English*, Long (1979) *Longman Dictionary of English Idioms*, Procter (1995) *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, Seidl (1988) *English Idioms*, Sinclair (1995) *Dictionary of Idioms*, Warren (1994) *Oxford Learner's Dictionary of English Idioms*. Hlavní zdroj českých idiomů představuje *Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky (Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idiomatics)* sestavený v roce 1983 a obsahující 16 000 hesel představoval důležitý zdroj pro hledání českých ekvivalentů.

Ze zmíněných anglických slovníků jsem vyhledala všechny idiomy, které ve své struktuře měly jednu z následujících barev: black, blue, brown, green, grey, golden, pink, purple, red, silver, white and yellow. Z množství takových to výrazů jsem vytvořila obsáhlý korpus, ve kterém se však některé idiomy opakovaly. Proto jsem vždy vybrala jednu definici, která mi podle mého názoru zachytila podstatu výrazu co nejjasněji.

Následně jsem ke každému anglickému idiomu hledala vhodný český protějšek, který se v ideálním případě co nejvíce podobal anglickému originálu. České ekvivalenty jsem pak následně na základě stupně ekvivalence zařadila do jedné z následujících skupiny: total correspondence (podkategorie 100% correspondence nebo overall correspondence), partial correspondence nebo non correspondence (podkategorie periphrasis či one-word expression).

Ne vždy však hledání vhodného české ekvivalentu bylo úspěšné. Z celkového počtu 116 idiomů jsem nebyla schopná najít protějšek k pěti následujícím idiomům: *to grow grey in the service*, *the red meat (of sth)*, *neither fish, flesh nor good red herring/fresh meat*, *the thin red line*, *white trash*. Tyto idiomy jsem proto pouze zařadila do závěrečného seznamu anglických idiomů, kde jsem doslova přeložila pouze definici, kterou udává jeden z anglických slovníků a to ve snaze přiblížit podstatu významu, který by tak pomohl českému mluvčímu udělat si představu o tom, co termín může označovat. U zmíněných idiomů jsem tedy bohužel nemohla porovnávat stupně ekvivalence.

České protějšky anglických idiomů jsem použila v českých větách, které jsem sama vymyslela. Důvodem bylo zasadit výrazy do vět a přiblížit tak význam výrazu v kontextu věty.

Anglické idiomy spojené s barvou byly dále zkoumány anglickými a českými mluvčími s cílem zjistit, zda dané idiomy respondenti znají a běžně používají. Z tohoto důvodu byl vytvořen dotazník obsahující vybraných dvacet idiomů. Obecně lze říci, že co se týká prvního cvičení dotazníku, skupina anglických mluvčí je schopná na 90% správně doplnit barvu do zkoumaného idiomu, i přesto, že výraz v běžné řeči nepoužívají. Skupina českých mluvčí je schopna s pomocí kontextu věty a nabídky idiomů k doplnění vypracovat cvičení s úspěšností 82%, ale současně většina z nich dodává, že některé doplněné idiomy nezná a tím pádem ani nepoužívá. Shodně poukazují na to, že k úspěšnému doplnění daného cvičení jim pohodla podobnost s českým výrazem, vylučovací metoda a kontext věty. Tyto aspekty se naplno projevíly

při hodnocení druhého cvičení, kdy úspěšnost českých mluvčích v doplnění byla ohodnocena pouze 48 %. Skupina anglických mluvčích druhé cvičení označila jako těžší vzhledem k prvnímu, ale ve finale jejich úspěšnost byla pořád ještě vysoká 79%.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Semantic classification of idioms⁵³

Yorio (1980)	Cowie, Mackin & McCaig (1983/93)	Alexander (1987)	Cacciari and Glucksberg (1991)	Howarth (1998)	Moon (1998a)	Fernando and Flavell (1981)	Fernando (1996)
Transparent (not idioms): <i>your face looks familiar</i>	Open collocation: <i>fill the sink, a broken window, in the raw</i>	Literal phrase: <i>hit the ball</i>	Analysable transparent: <i>break the ice, spill the beans</i>	Free combination: <i>under the table</i>	Transparent metaphor: <i>alarm bells ring, behind someone's back</i>	Literal and/or transparent: <i>cut wood, break eggs, rely on, add fuel to the fire</i>	Literal idiom [sic]: <i>tall, dark and handsome, on foot, for example</i>
Semi-transparent (expressions or idioms): <i>shake hands, bumper to bumper, skyscraper</i>	Restricted collocation/Semi-idiom: <i>jog one's memory, a blind alley, catch someone red-handed</i>	Semi-idiom: <i>hit a six</i>	Non- analysable: <i>by and large</i>	Restricted collocation: <i>under attack</i>	Semi-transparent metaphor: <i>on an even keel, grasp the nettle, the pecking order</i>	Metaphor/Semitransparent: <i>skate on thin ice, kill two birds with one stone, the boot/shoe is one the other foot</i>	Semi-literal idiom: <i>kith and kin, drop names</i> Semi-idiom: <i>catch your breath, foot the bill</i>
Figurative idiom: <i>catch fire, close ranks, beat one's breast, bleed someone white</i>	Metaphorical idiom: <i>hit the jackpot</i> Figurative idiom: <i>hit list</i>	Quasi-metaphorical: <i>giving up the ship, count your chicken before they're hatched, carry coals to Newcastle</i>	Figurative idiom: <i>under the microscope</i>		Metaphor/Semiopaque: <i>burn one's boats, tarred with the same brush, off the top of one's head</i>		
Opaque/True idioms: <i>by and large, take a leak, knock on wood, be on the wagon</i>	Pure idiom: <i>blow the gaff, kich the bucket, in a nutshell</i>	Opaque/Pure idiom: <i>hit the sack</i>	Analysable opaque: <i>kick the bucket</i>	Pure idiom: <i>under the weather</i>	Opaque metaphor/Pure idiom: <i>bite the bullet, over the moon, red herring, kick the bucket</i>	Full idiom/Opaque: <i>pull someone's leg, pass the buck, trip the light fantastic</i>	Pure idiom: <i>spill the beans, chin wag, red herring, take 40 winks, have cold feet</i>

⁵³ GRANT, L., BAUER, L. Criteria for re-defining idioms : Are we barking up the wrong tree?. In *Applied linguistics*. Oxford university press. March 2004, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 38-61.

Appendix 2: List of idioms**BLACK**

A BLACK BOX	ČERNÁ SKŘÍŇKA
THE BLACK SHEEP (OF THE FAMILY)	ČERNÁ OVCE RODINY
A BLACK DAY	ČERNÝ DEN
(AS) BLACK AS INK	ČERNÝ JAKO INKOUST
(AS) BLACK AS COAL/SOOT	ČERNÝ JAKO UHEL/SAZE
(AS) BLACK AS PITCH	ČERNÝ JAKO DEHET
A BLACK MARK	ČERNÝ PUNTÍK
IN BLACK AND WHITE	ČERNOBÍLÝ
BLACK AND BLUE	BÝT SAMÁ MODŘINA
A BLACK LOOK	NEVRAŽIVÝ POHLED
IN SOMEONE'S BLACK BOOKS	BÝT NA ČERNÉ LISTINĚ
IN THE BLACK	BÝT V PLUSU
NOT AS/SO BLACK AS ONE/IT IS PAINTED	NIC SE NEJÍ TAK HORKÉ, JAK SE UVAŘÍ.
THE POT CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK	KÁŽE VODU A PIJE VÍNO
TO SWEAR BLACK IS WHITE	TRVAT NA SVÉM ZA KAŽDOU CENU
A BLACK SPOT	MÍSTO ČASTÝCH NEHOD

(AS) BLACK AS THE ACE OF SPADES	BÝT ŠPINAVÝ
TWO BLACKS/WRONGS DO NOT MAKE A WHITE/RIGHT	TISÍCKRÁT OPAKOVANÁ LEŽ SE NESTÁVÁ PRAVDOU
A BLACK EYE	MONOKL

BLUE

TO HAVE BLUE BLOOD	MÍT MODROU KREV
A BLUE STOCKING	MODRÁ PUNČOCHA
A BOLT FROM THE BLUE	JAKO BLESK Z ČISTÉHO NEBE
UNTIL YOU ARE BLUE IN THE FACE	DOKUD NENÍ MODRÝ VZTEKY
TO SCREAM BLUE MURDER	KŘÍČET JAKO KDYŽ HO NA NOŽE BEROU
BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA	Z BLÁTA DO LOUŽE
ONCE IN A BLUE MOON	JEDNOU ZA UHERSKÝ ROK
TO DISAPPEAR/VANISH/GO OFF INTO THE BLUE	ZMIZET JAKO PÁRA NAD HRNCEM
TO TALK A BLUE STREAK	MLÍT PANTEM
LIKE A BLUE-ARSED FLY	LÍTAT JAKO HADR NA HOLI
A BLUE-COLLAR WORKER	DĚLNICKÝ
BLUE FILM / MOVIE	PORNO

OUT OF THE BLUE	ZČISTA JASNA
A TRUE BLUE	LOAJÁLNÍ
A BLUE FUNK	STRAŠPYTEL
THE BOYS IN BLUE	POLICISTÉ
A BLUE-EYED BOY	OBLÍBENEC

BROWN

(AS) BROWN AS A BERRY	BÝT HNĚDÝ JAKO CIKÁN
TO BE IN A BROWN STUDY	BÝT JAKO TĚLO BEZ DUŠE
TO BE BROWNE OFF (WITH SB)	BÝT OTRÁVENÝ (ZNUDĚNÝ)
TO BROWN-NOSE	LÉZT (NĚKOMU) DO ZADKU

GREEN

A GREEN BELT	ZELENÁ ZÓNA
(TO BE) GREEN WITH ENVY	(BÝT) ZELENÝ ZÁVISTÍ
THE GRASS IS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE (OF THE FENCE/HILL)	NA DRUHÉ STRANĚ (PLOTU) JE TRÁVA ZELENĚJŠÍ
TO GIVE SB/GET THE GREEN	DÁT NĚKOMU ZELENOU

LIGHT	
TO BE (AS) GREEN AS GRASS	BÝT NEZKUŠENÝ
GREEN ABOUT THE GILLS	MOŘSKÁ NEMOC
TO HAVE (GOT) GREEN FINGERS	BÝT VÝBORNÝ ZAHRADNÍK
GREENER PASTURES	NOVÝ ZAČÁTEK
SB'S MEMORY IS GREEN	ŽIVÉ VZPOMÍNKY
LITTLE GREEN MEN	MIMOZEMŠŤAN

GREY

A GREY EMINENCE	ŠEDÁ EMINENCE
A GREY AREA	ŠEDÁ ZÓNA
GREY MATTER	ŠEDÁ KŮRA MOZKOVÁ
ALL CATS ARE GREY IN THE DARK	KAŽDÁ KOČKA JE V NOCI ČERNÁ
TO GO/TURN GREY	BÝT (ŠEDIVÝ) JAKO POPEL
THE MEN IN GREY SUITS	MUŽI V OBLECÍCH
GROW GREY IN THE SERVICE (OF STH)	mít dlouhý a solidní záznam služby (úslužnosti)

GOLDEN

A GOLDEN BOY	ZLATÝ CHLAPEC
THE GOLDEN RULE	ZLATÉ PRAVIDLO
TO WORSHIP THE GOLDEN CALF	UCTÍVAT ZLATÉ TELE
A GOLDEN AGE	ZLATÉ ČASY
SILENCE IS GOLDEN	MLČETI ZLATO
TO KILL THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGGS	ZABÍT SLEPICI, KTERÁ SNÁŠÍ ZLATÁ VEJCE
GOLDEN HANDSHAKE	ODSTUPNÉ

PINK

IN THE PINK	BÝT ZDRAVÝ JAKO RYBA
TO BE TICKLED PINK	BÝT ŠŤASTNÝ JAKO BLECHA
TO HAVE A PINK/BLUE FIT	BÝT ROZZUŘENÝ
TO SEE PINK ELEPHANTS	VIDĚT BÍLÉ MYŠKY
STRIKE ME PINK	BÝT JAKO V JIŘÍKOVĚ VIDĚNÍ

PURPLE

A PURPLE PATCH/PASSAGE	ZLATÝ HŘEB
TO BORN IN/TO THE PURPLE	NARODIT SE DO ZLATÉ KOLÉBKY
TO GO PURPLE IN THE FACE	BÝT RUDÝ HNĚVEM

RED

THE RED CARPET	ČERVENÝ KOBEREK
(LIKE) A RED RAG TO A BULL	JAKO ČERVENÝ HADR NA BÝKA
TO SEE RED	VIDĚT RUDĚ
RED AS A BEETROOT	(BÝT) ČERVENÝ JAKO RAK
TO NOT HAVE A RED CENT	NEMÍT ANI VINDRU
A RED FACE	ZRUDNOUT
A RED-LIGHT DISTRICT	VYKŘIČENÁ ČTVRŤ
TO BE IN THE RED	BÝT NA SUCHU
RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW	BEZOHLEDNÝ
TO BE ON RED ALERT	BÝT VE STAVU POHOTOVOSTI
A RED HERRING	FALEŠNÁ STOPA
A RED LETTER DAY	PAMÁTNÝ DEN

TO CATCH SOMEONE RED-HANDED	DOPADEN PŘI ČINU
TO PAINT THE TOWN RED	JÍT NA FLÁM
TO BLEED RED INK	DOSTAT SE NA MIZINU
(AS) RED AS A TURKEY-COCK	JAKO BY HO KRVÍ POLIL
RED TAPE	BYROKRACIE
REDS UNDER THE BED	KOMUNISTÉ
THE RED MEAT (OF STH)	silnější, či hrubší věc (odvozeno od masa, hovězího nebo skopového, které kontrastuje se světlejšími druhy masa jakým je telecí nebo drůbeží)
NEITHER FISH, FLESH, NOR GOOD RED HERRING/FRESH MEAT	(rčení) nejasný; nejednoznačný; obtížné identifikovat nebo klasifikovat
THE THIN RED LINE	hrdinský odpor několika proti přesile (původně popisující uspořádání pěšího pluku s červenými kabáty v horách, v bitvě u Balaklavy v roce 1854 v rámci Krimské války)

SILVER

THE SILVER SCREEN	STŘÍBRNÉ PLÁTNO
ON A SILVER PLATTER	NA STŘÍBRNÉM PODNOSE
(SPEECH IS SILVER BUT) SILENCE	MLUVITI STŘÍBRO MLČETI ZLATO

IS GOLDEN	
A SILVER/SMOOTH TONGUE	VYTRÍBENÝ JAZYK
TO BORN WITH A SILVER SPOON IN YOUR MOUTH	MÍT NA RŮŽÍCH USTLÁNO
EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING	VŠECHNO ZLÉ JE PRO NĚCO DOBRÉ
(FOR) THIRTY PIECES/ (FOR) A HANDFUL OF SILVER	ŠPINA VĚ PENÍZE
TO CROSS SOMEONE'S PALM/HAND WITH SILVER	PLATIT ZLATEM

WHITE

(AS) WHITE AS A SHEET	BÝT BÍLÝ JAKO PAPÍR
(AS) WHITE AS CHALK/A SHEET	(BÝT) BÍLÝ/ BLEDÝ JAKO KŘÍDA
WHITE COFFEE	BÍLÁ KÁVA
A WHITE CHRISTMAS	BÍLÉ VÁNOCE
(AS) WHITE AS SNOW	BÍLÝ JAKO SNÍH
A (LITTLE) WHITE LIE	MILOSRDNÁ LEŽ
A WHITE NIGHT	PROBDĚNÁ NOC

A WHITE ELEPHANT	ZBYTEČNÁ VĚC
TO BLEED SOMEONE WHITE	OBRAT (NĚKOHO) O POSLEDNÍ VINDRU
(GREAT) WHITE HOPE	ČERNÝ KUŇ
A WHITE COLLAR WORKER JOB	ÚŘEDNÍK
THE WHITE FEATHER	ZBABĚLEC
WHITER THAN WHITE	CTNOSTNÝ
WHITE TRASH	osoba evropského nebo amerického původu, která je považována (někým nebo jinou skupinou) za bezcennou či opovrženíhodnou (vytvořeno dříve, termín používaný pro členy chudé bílé populace v jižních státech USA)

YELLOW

THE YELLOW PERIL	ŽLUTÉ NEBEZPEČÍ
THE YELLOW PRESS	BULVÁRNÍ TISK
(AS) YELLOW AS A GUINEA	ŽLUTÝ JAKO CITRÓN
A YELLOW STREAK	BÝT ZBABĚLÝ

Appendix 3: The questionnaire – English Colour Idioms

The aim of the questionnaire is to assess the ability of native speakers in using English colour idioms. (Please, don't use the dictionary or the Internet.)

AGE:

NATIONALITY:

I.) Complete the sentences with the correct idioms from the list. Not all idioms will be used.

as white as chalk

give the green light

blue-eyed boy

strike me pink

brown as berries

a grey eminence

red rag to a bull

a little white lie

the black sheep of the family

on a silver platter

the silver screen

like a blue-arsed fly

blue blood

got green fingers

between the devil and the deep blue sea

1) “Debbie is, having left home at seventeen to live with her boyfriend.”

2) “I was taken to court to pay my husband's debts, which I was told I had to pay or else go to prison, so I was.....”

3) “Scott is trying to trace his ancestry. His mother told him that generations ago there wasin the family.”

4) “I don't want to go to Steve's party, so I'll tell him I won't be in town until late on that evening.is better than hurting his feelings.”

5) “Brian was always jealous of his younger brother, because he knew that Tim was their mother's.....”

- 6) “How quickly suntan disappears! You wouldn't think the twins wereonly a month ago.”
- 7) “Madge can get anything to grow – she's really.....!”
- 8) A person who is calledis in a fact “a background figure in government, administration etc who has considerable power in an influential, or advisory, capacity.”
- 9) “I ran around, packed two suitcases and a trunk, and left everything else.”
- 10) “He's got three children, all boys. – Well,.....! I didn't even know he was married. ”

How do you estimate your own success in completing the exercise as a percentage?

Your answer:%

Your comments:.....

II.) *Fill in the colour in the following idioms. You will need to use some words more than once but not all the provided colours are needed.*

black, blue, brown, green, grey, golden, pink, purple, red, silver, white,yellow

all cats are in the dark

the press

in and white

to see elephants

every cloud has a lining

a-collar worker/job

once in a moon

silence is

a elephant

to paint the town

How do you estimate your own success in completing the exercise as a percentage?

Your answer:%

Your comments:.....
.....
.....
.....
.....