

A Cross-linguistic
and Cross-cultural
Analysis of English and
Slovene Onomastic
Phraseological Units

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By

Alenka Urbinc

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCDI2	<i>Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Idioms</i> , 2 nd edition
CID2	<i>Cambridge Idioms Dictionary</i> , 2 nd edition
DITO	<i>Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins</i>
ICOS	International Council of Onomastic Sciences
L1	first language
L2	second language
LID	<i>Longman Idioms Dictionary</i>
ODI	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Idioms</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OIDLE2	<i>Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English</i> , 2 nd edition
PU	phraseological unit
RHWUD2	<i>Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary</i> . 2 nd edition
sb	somebody
SL	source language
sth	something
TL	target language

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PREFACE

Phraseology has been a focus of interest and research for ethnologists and folklorists since the time of pre-Romanticism and Romanticism and began to be investigated by linguists as late as the 20th century. It is a rich source of many theoretical and practical linguistic studies dealing with various aspects of fixed expressions in a particular language, such as meaning, whether literal or figurative, structure, use and etymology. To date, most phraseological research has been done with relatively few languages, at first with Russian and German, which is understandable as Russian (e.g., Vinogradov 1946; Amosova 1963; Chernysheva 1970; Kunin 1970) and German (e.g., Rothkegel 1973; Häusermann 1977; Koller 1977) linguists were among the first to study phraseology. Phraseology was also the subject of research in French, Finnish, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak and Polish, as well as fairly recently in Romanian, Bulgarian, Slovene, Spanish, Dutch, Icelandic and Danish, whereas phraseological research is in its infancy in Greek, Italian, Lithuanian and Latvian (Piiirainen 2005: 54–55; Piiirainen 2008: 220–221; Colson 2008: 192–193). However, for more than 80% of the languages spoken in Europe, no phraseological research has been conducted and no phraseological data are available (Piiirainen 2005: 55).

One of the most interesting and fascinating topics is cross-linguistic research in which the phraseology of two or more languages is compared and analysed from a contrastive point of view. Dobrovol'skij and Piiirainen (2005a: 58) point out that the term “contrastive” may, in fact, be used as a synonym for “cross-linguistic” if it is used in reference to any kind of comparison of phraseological units from different languages (e.g., linguistic typology, language universals research, translation analysis or cross-cultural aspects of comparison of phraseological units). However, “contrastive” can also be a hyponym of “cross-linguistic” if contrastive analysis of phraseological units is a special type of language comparison differing from all other kinds of linguistic research. The third reading of the term “contrastive” (ibid.: 59) is its interpretation as a hyponym of the term “confrontative”, which is actually a hyponym of the term “cross-linguistic”. From this point of view, contrastive analysis of phraseological units focuses only on the identification and description of cross-linguistic differences. Cross-linguistic research is generally not separated from cross-cultural research, since language and culture are closely intertwined; therefore, the influence of culture on language deserves more careful investigation. In

systematic contrastive studies of at least two languages, the richness and diversity of language is revealed and possible similarities and differences between the languages can be established and discussed. The reasons for these similarities and differences can be sought in the linguistic, cultural-historical, historical, literary, ethnographic and intercultural background of fixed idiomatic expressions. In the analysis of the languages belonging to the common European cultural heritage, common sources of fixed expressions reveal similarities between languages, and the ways of borrowing from one language to the next may become visible. Studying phraseology across languages can also tell us a lot about the origins of various linguistic as well as cultural habits observed in individual languages. Last but not least, a close study of language peculiarities can be an interesting topic of research in phraseology. However, studying phraseology from a cross-linguistic perspective is multi-disciplinary and involves many fields, such as contrastive lexicology, syntax, pragmatics, semantics, semiotics and translation theory (Colson 2008: 202).

Even though Slovene was not among the first languages to be fully described from the point of view of phraseology, phraseological research focusing on the investigation of different types of fixed (idiomatic) expressions began in the mid-1980s, with the in-depth and comprehensive studies carried out by Erika Kržišnik. Erika Kržišnik was also the first to complete MA and PhD in Slovene phraseology. In the 1980s, Janez Keber, who authored the only monolingual dictionary of Slovene idioms entitled *Slovar slovenskih frazemov* (Dictionary of Slovene Idioms, 2011), published his first articles about the origin of individual idioms from an ethnolinguistic point of view. In the 1990s, research into various topics from Slovene phraseology continued (Irena Stramljič Breznik, e.g., addressed the issue of communication idioms); after 2000, many younger researchers treated various phraseological issues (e.g., Nataša Jakop dealt with pragmatic phraseology). The corpus approach in Slovene phraseology was first used by Apolonija Gantar in her PhD dissertation, *The Phraseme and its Textual Environment* (2004). For more detailed coverage of phraseological research areas and phraseological literature in Slovenia, see Kržišnik 2014: 118.

In Slovene phraseological research, the 1990s saw the beginnings of phraseological studies focusing on cross-linguistic and cross-cultural aspects. These studies have continued ever since and concentrate mostly on Slovene and English (e.g., Marjeta Vrbinc, Alenka Vrbinc and Primož Jurko) and Slovene and German (e.g., Niko Hudelja, Helena Kuster, Urška Valenčič Arh and Vida Jesenšek). Vida Jesenšek worked on multilingual phraseological issues; together with her co-workers Jesenšek prepared a

multilingual phraseological database, as well as paremiological multilingual material. The aim of these studies was to find and discuss both cross-linguistic similarities and equivalences and differences between Slovene and foreign language phraseological units.

This book also fits into this type of research and should be considered a contribution to bilingual cross-linguistic and cross-cultural research into phraseological units. It attempts to systematically analyse phraseological units across two languages, i.e., English and Slovene, focusing on phraseological units containing proper names, which constitute a subgroup of phraseological units “deeply rooted in the cultural tradition of a language community” (Fiedler 2007: 59) and thus particularly interesting from a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspective. Several aspects and issues are addressed, which can be summarized as follows:

Chapter 1 focuses on different definitions and classifications of proper names. Apart from that, basic onomastic terms are explained and the use of different generic terms for multi-word lexical items, which is often confusing and problematic, is discussed. At the end, features typical of phraseological units are dealt with.

Chapter 2 explains the criteria for the selection of the phraseological units with proper names that are included in the English and Slovene databases used in our study. The sources for the compilation of both databases are listed and the structure of the databases is explained.

Chapter 3 presents an analysis of proper names in English and Slovene phraseological units, paying special attention to groups of anthroponyms, toponyms and their derivatives. Classifications of English and Slovene phraseological units are provided by a common theme or source domain.

Chapter 4 gives a detailed overview of the etymological sources of onomastic phraseological units in English and Slovene. The role of etymological information provided in phraseological dictionaries is addressed in terms of its importance in the comprehension and retention of phraseological units and in terms of the lack of informativeness of etymological information.

Chapter 5 provides an insight into the correlation between language and culture and discusses the universality and cultural specificity of phraseological units. Special attention is paid to culture-bound phraseological units with anthroponymic and toponymic components in English and Slovene.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the stereotypical use of ethnonyms in phraseological units. It provides an overview of differing approaches to the definition of ‘stereotype’ and a theoretical framework. This is followed by a more detailed description of ethnic stereotypes in English and Slovene

phraseology, and possible reasons for the formation of stereotypes are set out.

Chapter 7 discusses the cross-linguistic translation of English and Slovene phraseological units. It deals with the issue of equivalence and non-equivalence in cross-linguistic comparison and provides a detailed analysis of equivalents for the English and Slovene onomastic phraseological units.

The book is aimed at a broad audience. It can be a useful source of valuable information for learners at different levels of education, including university students, as well as at various institutions of (English or Slovene) language teaching. It could also be used by teachers at various levels of instruction, not only those who teach courses in phraseology, but also those who find it necessary to make their students aware of the problems and complexities of phraseology and to raise their awareness of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural differences and peculiarities. It can also be a source used by phraseologists researching various aspects of phraseological units, or for scholars of Slavonic and other languages interested in or investigating phraseology of Slavonic languages, especially in contrast to other languages, including English. It can be recognized as a rich source of information for everyone interested in issues regarding onomastic phraseological units, such as anthroponyms and toponyms used in phraseological units, etymology, cultural specificity, equivalence and stereotypical use of ethnonyms in phraseological units. It could also serve the needs of bilingual lexicographers as well as those of translators.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Marjeta Vrbinc, who read the manuscript, made comments and corrections and suggested numerous improvements. I also wish to thank Michelle Gadapaille for her skilled and careful language editing. Last but not least, I would like to thank the reviewer for critically reading the manuscript and suggesting improvements which helped to improve and clarify the text.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study described and discussed in this book focuses on a cross-linguistic comparison and analysis of phraseological units (PUs) in English and Slovene whose constituent element is a proper name. Since there are different views about the notion of proper name and consequently different classifications of proper names, this issue is addressed more thoroughly in the introductory chapter. Apart from that, basic terms used in onomastic research are briefly explained, and the problematic and sometimes confusing terminology in the field of phraseology, especially as regards generic terms, is critically presented. Basic characteristics of PUs as understood by different researchers are also enumerated and discussed.

In order to be able to study onomastic PUs, two databases were created: a database containing English PUs with a proper name and the database containing Slovene PUs with a proper name. The sources used in building up the databases were monolingual phraseological dictionaries, and both databases were structured according to the same principles.

1.1 Definition and classification of proper names

The word *onomastics* originates from the Greek word *onomastikós* meaning 'of or belonging to naming', from *ónoma* meaning 'name'. Onomastics is the study of the origin, history and use of proper names. Proper names, also called onyms, are an indispensable part of our daily lives: we all have a name and a family name, come from a particular town or city and live in a particular street and country. Proper names should be distinguished from proper nouns. A proper noun – a grammatical noun subclass – is a noun denoting a particular person, a tame animal, country, town, star, planet or thing, and in English, it is not normally preceded by an article or other limiting modifier. In many languages including English and Slovene, proper nouns are spelt with a capital letter. A proper noun, which is a single word, should be distinguished from a proper name, which may or may not consist of more than one word, its only function being to pick out an individual person, place or thing (Trask 1997: 177), and to individuate, not to classify

(Hanks 2013: 34). Like other grammatical categories, the class of proper nouns has unclear boundaries. For example, a number of common nouns with unique denotation are close to proper nouns and are sometimes spelt with a capital letter (e.g., Fate, Nature) (Quirk et al. 1985: 288). On the other hand, a proper name can take on a metaphorical meaning and become a common noun: e.g., proper names originating from a person's or place name (*boycott* > from the English landlord Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott; *dahlia* > from the Swedish botanist Anders Dahl; *volt* from the Italian physicist Count Alessandro Volta; *champagne* > from Champagne, a province of France) or literary, biblical or mythological sources (*malapropism* > from the name of the character Mrs Malaprop in Sheridan's play *The Rivals*; *(as) old as Methuselah* > from Methuselah, a man in the Bible who is supposed to have lived for 969 years; *aphrodisiac* > from the Greek goddess of love and beauty Aphrodite).

A proper name can be defined more precisely as “the institutionalized name of some specific person, place, organization, etc. – institutionalized by some formal act of naming and/or registration” (Huddleston 1988: 96) or as “a word or group of words recognized as indicating or tending to indicate the object or objects to which it refers by virtue of its distinctive sound alone, without regard to any meaning possessed by that sound from the start, or acquired by it through association with the said object or objects” (Gardiner 1957: 43). Indeed, it is difficult to say that proper names have a meaning proper, as they are labels whose purpose is to identify their bearers (Svensén 2009: 73). Zgusta (2002: 733) defines a name as “a word or group of words used to refer to an individual entity (real or imaginary); the name singles out this entity by directly pointing to it, not by specifying it as a member of a class”, and he also points to the distinction between names and common nouns. He refers to common nouns as appellatives and says that “names are used in individual reference, appellatives can be used in reference to all members of a class or to any number of them” (ibid.).

As can be seen, a precise and unambiguous definition of a proper name is difficult to provide, given the different approaches taken by different scholars. In this context, the approach taken by Kobeleva (2008: 21–33) is worth mentioning. In her view, personal, deity and animal names belong to the group of core proper names for three main reasons (ibid.: 26–27):

- the extent to which they manifest general anthropocentricity of human language;
- the frequency of occurrence;
- the ability to fulfil the greatest number of characteristic proper name functions.

As regards place names, Kobeleva (2008: 22) believes that because place names are less people-oriented, they do not belong to the core proper names. In terms of frequency, they occupy second place following personal names (cf. Tse (2000: 494), who carried out a study on a 65,000-word sample of proper names from a daily British newspaper and found that personal names, place names and names of organizations make up the majority of items). Since place names are not as frequent as personal names, they are institutionalized rather than lexicalized. Kobeleva (2008: 30–31) therefore sets place names between the core (personal names, names of deities and animals/pets) and the periphery (names of events (i.e., geological epochs; historical eras; wars, military campaigns; battles; historical events; major speeches; space missions; hurricanes, typhoons, major floods, etc.; major earthquakes and fires; tournaments, races, major sporting events; festivals, special celebrations, conferences) and artefacts (i.e., vehicles: ships and boats; trains; aircraft and spacecraft; expressive works: books and periodicals; articles and chapters; poems and songs; orations and sermons; musical compositions, albums and CDs; paintings and sculpture; films, radio and TV shows; brand names)). Kobeleva (*ibid.*: 32) lists five reasons why names of events and artefacts belong to the periphery:

- 1) They are often descriptive;
- 2) They are sometimes only partially institutionalized;
- 3) As a rule, they consist of several words and can be of considerable length;
- 4) They are of low frequency compared to other proper names;
- 5) Instead of individualizing the referent, they represent it as a member of a class of similar objects, which is a function not typical of proper names.

It is evident from the attempts of researchers investigating the field of proper names that even proposing a definition of the term proper name poses problems due to a lack of agreement on what can be understood by a proper name. The same holds true for the various taxonomies that have been developed. These taxonomies clearly show that types of names are diverse and that numerous expressions can be considered proper names. To gain insight into the varied aspects addressed by different scholars when classifying proper names, some taxonomies are presented below.

The sociolinguistic perspective is the starting point for Allerton's classification of proper names (1987: 73–74). He distinguishes five main groups of proper names:

- human beings (the category also includes pets and racehorses);
- vessels, vehicles and machines;
- geographical locations (including natural and artificial ones);
- social organizations;
- publications and works of art.

In addition to the main groups, Allerton (*ibid.*) lists two other groups:

- languages and dialects;
- periods of time (days, months, seasons, years and festivals).

Another classification of proper names proposed by Valentine et al. (1996) is based on the principles underpinning cognitive psychology. Their taxonomy partly overlaps with that of Allerton and consists of eight groups of proper names:

- personal names (surnames, first names, nicknames and pseudonyms);
- geographical names (names of cities, countries, mountains, lakes, rivers and islands);
- names of unique objects (buildings, monuments, ships and other unique objects);
- names of unique animals;
- names of institutions and facilities (museums, libraries and hospitals);
- names of newspapers and magazines;
- titles of books, musical pieces, paintings or sculpture;
- names of single events.

According to Valentine et al., a brand name defined as “a unique object that is simply replicated in a number of identical exemplars” (1996: 5) is considered a borderline case.

The two taxonomies of proper names dealt with so far are relatively short and simple if compared with some very comprehensive taxonomies proposed by other researchers, one of them being the American onomastic scholar Wilbur Zelinsky. Zelinsky’s aim is to set forth a comprehensive taxonomy of the entire universe of names; therefore, his classification (2002: 249) consists of as many as 130 name-types arranged around eight chief divisions (i.e., deities, biota, places, events, social entities, enterprises, artefacts and unclassified), with further subgroupings and draws attention to the many name-types that have been neglected, as opposed to the considerable attention devoted to personal names and place names.

In Slovene onomastic research, a classification of proper names – one that coincides with the above-mentioned classifications to a great extent – can be found in different editions of *Slovenski pravopis* (Slovene orthography), i.e., the editions published in 1950, 1962, 1990 and 2001, in the section explaining the use of capital letters. This classification served as a basis for the classification presented in Šivic Dular (2002: 22–23):

- personal names: they are further subdivided into first names, family names, epithets, pseudonyms, house names, names of mythic beings, theonyms, names of nationalities and ethnic groups, demonyms and inhabitant names;
- geographical names: names of cities, towns, villages, settlements, hamlets and parts of settlements, oronyms, hydronyms, names of lands, names of meadows, fields, woods and buildings;
- chrematonyms: titles of books, proceedings, literary works and other texts, compositions, statues, paintings; names of societies, organizations, institutions and companies.

1.2 Onomastic terminology

Onomastic terminology is characterized by a wide range of terms, which can be interpreted differently; some terms are sometimes used incorrectly or not precisely enough and some are at times regarded as insufficient (e.g., if trying to make an exact reference to certain anthroponymic or toponymic data, cf. Vuković 2007). Since many onomastic terms are of Greek origin, they are standardized across different languages; however, they undergo some language-specific adaptations, such as phonological or orthographic adaptation. In terminology, neoclassical derivatives and compounds are more frequent than in language for general purposes, especially in the natural sciences. Terminology standards at the international level explicitly recommend the use of neoclassical stems and affixes when coining new terms, in order to encourage the international nature of designations (Cabré 1999: 89). Languages can also form terms made up of native elements which exist alongside international terms. To settle terminological problems, the *International Council of Onomastic Sciences* (ICOS) established the *Terminology Group*, which has compiled a list of terms together with definitions of terms and notes on the use of terms. The onomastic terminology presented and explained in this chapter and used throughout this book is therefore based mainly on the *List of Key Onomastic Terms*

compiled by the *Terminology Group* and published on the ICOS website¹ and partly also on the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* compiled by the *United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names*² and *Types of Names* published on the *American Name Society* website³.

Proper names can identify a person, a group of persons, a place, an animal or an object (e.g., ship, train, etc.). Consequently, a distinction is made between anthroponomastics and toponomastics. Anthroponomastics is a branch of onomastics studying anthroponyms (or personal names), i.e., proper names of a person or a group of persons. Toponomastics, on the other hand, refers to a branch of onomastics studying toponyms (or place names), i.e., proper names of places. Another term can be used as a hyponymous expression of the term toponym, i.e., the term geographical name. Geographical name is used if reference is made to a place on planet Earth. Both principal branches of onomastics can be further subdivided into various subgroups on the basis of a specific type of name. Anthroponyms fall into the following subgroups:

Allonym – the name of another person which has been assumed by the actual author of a work; (more generally) any name assumed by someone; a pseudonym, an alias (OED)

Charactonym – proper name of a (literary) character

Eponym – proper name of a person or group of persons, forming the basis of the name of another person, family, place, object, etc. (e.g., personal name *George Vancouver* – toponym *Vancouver*). Among the Greeks, these proper names were often the names of the heroes who were looked upon as ancestors or founders of tribes or cities (OED).

Ethnonym – proper name of an ethnic group (e.g., a tribe, a folk or a clan), or a member of this group (e.g., *American(s)*, *Slovene(s)*)

Family name or *last name* or *surname* – hereditary name of a family or a member of a family with such a name

¹ <http://icosweb.net/drupal/terminology/>; retrieved on 7 October 2016

² http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/pdf/Glossary_of_terms_revised.pdf; retrieved on 20 October 2016

³ <http://www.americannamesociety.org/names/>; retrieved on 25 October 2016

First name or *Christian name* or *forename* or *given name* – name given to a person at birth, baptism or at some other significant moment in life

Hagionym – name of a saint

Hypocorism – pet name

Inhabitant name – proper name of an inhabitant of a certain region, country, town, etc.

Metronym – personal or family name originating from the mother's name

Necronym – name used to refer to one who has died. In some cultures, it is common to name a child after a deceased relative as a sign of respect and honour.

Nickname – additional – usually characterizing – informal proper name of a person

Patronym – name derived from that of a father or male ancestor, esp. by addition of an affix indicating such descent; a family name (OED)

Pseudonym – fictitious name of a person used as an alternative to their legal name

Tekonym – name of a human being making reference to that person's child. A tekonym may change several times during one's life (e.g., Father/Grandfather of + the child's name, Mother/Grandmother of + the child's name).

Theonym – proper name of a god, a goddess or a divinity

Zoonym or *animal name* – proper name of an animal

Toponyms can also be subdivided into several subgroups such as the following:

Astronym – proper name of a star or, more loosely, of a constellation or other heavenly body

Choronym – proper name of a major geographical or administrative unit of land

Endonym – proper name of a geographical feature in an official or well-established language occurring in that area where the feature is situated (e.g., *Roma* in Italian (not *Rome*), *Köln* in German (not *Cologne*))

Epotonym – toponym that constitutes the basis or origin of a common noun (e.g., *Jerez* for sherry from the Spanish city of Jerez)

Exonym or *conventional name* – name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language is widely spoken, and differing in its form from the name used in the area where the geographical feature is situated (e.g., German *Laibach* for *Ljubljana*, Slovene *Benetke* or English *Venice* for *Venezia*, English *Vienna* for *Wien*)

Hodonym or *odonym* – route name (i.e., proper name of a street, square, bridge, etc.)

Hydronym – name of a body of water (i.e., name of a sea, lake, river, waterfall, etc.)

Macrotoponym – proper name of a large inhabited area

Microtoponym or *minor name* – name referring to smaller objects like fields, marshes, ditches, etc., and in general used locally by only a limited group of people

Nesonym – proper name of an island

Oikonym or *settlement name* – proper name of all kinds of human settlements (i.e., cities, towns, villages, houses, etc.)

Oronym – proper name of an elevated formation of the terrain (i.e., name of a mountain, mountain range, hill, etc.). The term oronym is sometimes used in a broader sense and also includes proper names of valleys, lowlands, etc.

Street name – proper name of a thoroughfare in a city, town or village. Street names are a subcategory of honyms.

Apart from these terms, onomastic terms also comprise *brand names* (proper names of brands), *product names* (proper names of products), *ergonyms* (sometimes used for the name of an institution or commercial firm), *by-names* (informal, additional names of a person, a place, an object, etc.), *cryptonyms* (secret names used for the protection of their bearers),

chrematonyms (proper names of a politico-economic, commercial or cultural institution or thing), *weather names* (proper names given to a meteorological entity or event (e.g., storms, tornados, winds, earthquakes, floods, etc.)).

1.3 Generic terms for multi-word lexical items

Terminology in phraseology is a difficult matter, especially because of the lack of agreed terms, the inconsistency observed in the use of phraseological terms and unclear boundaries between types of terms. Researchers use a range of terms to refer to a string of two or more words functioning as a whole, or they use a single term in reference to different phenomena (Moon 1998a: 2). Granger and Meunier (2008: xix) attribute the lack of standardized terminology to the fact that phraseology has only relatively recently become established as a discipline in its own right⁴. Therefore, a comprehensive overview of terms used in phraseological research to refer generically to multi-word lexical items is presented below.

Idiom is certainly a term that is widely used, especially in English-speaking research, in which it was the traditional term not only used in reference to a specific subgroup of multi-word lexical items but also serving as a hypernym to cover many kinds of multi-word lexical items (Fiedler 2007: 15; Piirainen 2012: 33). It is the term most monolingual English dictionaries use (besides the term phrases) to introduce a section listing multi-word lexical items, whether semantically opaque or not, although they make no further typological classification. Idiom is also the term used in the titles of phraseological dictionaries published in English (e.g., *Dictionary of Idioms and Their Origins*, *Oxford Idioms Dictionary for Learners of English*, *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Idioms*) as well as in the titles of works dealing with the topic (e.g., *Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond* by Elisabeth Piirainen, *Idiom Structure in English* by Adam

⁴ It should be pointed out that Charles Bally (1865–1947), a Swiss linguist from the Geneva School, whose studies on phraseology and classification of fixed expressions are often regarded as the beginning of modern linguistic research into phraseology (Piirainen 2012: 22), did not consider it necessary to study phraseology as a separate discipline; instead, he included it in the structure of lexicology science. The first linguist to advocate the need for phraseology to become an independent linguistic discipline was Aleksandr Vladimirovich Kunin (1909–1996) in the late 1960s. He was followed by many Russian and East European linguists, particularly in East Germany. In Western European countries, including Great Britain, phraseology became the object of pure and applied research in the 1980s (Cowie 1998: 1–2; Naciscione 2010: 20).

Makkai, *On Idiom: Critical Views and Perspectives* by Chitra Fernando and Roger H. Flavell). However, idiom should be regarded as an ambiguous term having many different (linguistic and non-linguistic) senses, which is clearly evident from the senses included in the entry for idiom in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED):

- I. Senses relating to language.**
- 1.** The specific character or individuality of a language; the manner of expression considered natural to or distinctive of a language; a language's distinctive phraseology. Now *rare*.
 - 2. a.** A language, especially a person or people's own language; the distinctive form of speech of a particular people or country. **b.** In narrower sense: a dialect or variety of a language; a form of a language limited to or distinctive of a particular area, category of people, period of time, or context.
 - 3.** A form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase, etc., used in a distinctive way in a particular language, dialect, or language variety, *spec.* a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from the meanings of the individual words.
- II. Non-linguistic senses.**
- 4.** A specific form, manifestation, nature, or property of something, now chiefly as *fig.* use of branch I.; (*Theol.*) a property of Christ as either human or divine. Cf. sense 5.
 - 5.** A distinctive style or convention in music, art, architecture, writing, etc.; the characteristic mode of expression of a composer, artist, author, etc.

Figure 1-1: Senses of idiom in the OED.

We can regard the two non-linguistic senses as being irrelevant for our discussion of phraseology and phraseological terminology, but we should pay careful attention to the senses relating to language. Sense one describes the characteristic of every language, i.e., the form and use of sentences typical of native speakers, which means that the whole language can be regarded as idiomatic. Sense two, which is subdivided into subsenses a and b, shows that idiom can be used in reference to an idiolect, sociolect or dialect, thus reflecting a more general use. It is sense three that defines idiom from the point of view of phraseological research.

Nunberg et al. (1994: 493) make reference to two senses of the word idiom: it may denote a certain kind of fixed phrase, or it may refer to a variety of a language that conforms to the rules of grammar as well as to

ordinary, conversational usage of native speakers. They, however, believe that the two senses of the word are connected. Makkai's use of the term idiom, however, differs from the interpretation of Nunberg et al. in that idiom in his view covers non-compositional polymorphemic words such as *blackbird* and collocations and constructions that are not freely formed (Makkai 1972: 191). Hockett (1958: 171 ff), on the other hand, includes every linguistic item – from the single morpheme to complete texts – as long as its meaning cannot be deduced from its structure. Lipka (1974, cited in Lipka 2002: 112), who defines idioms as formally complex linguistic expressions whose meaning cannot be derived from that of their constituents, also considers idioms as a broad category embracing relatively simple compounds such as *callgirl* and *holiday*, fixed collocations such as *red herring* or *black market*, or complex expressions such as *kick the bucket*. Moon (1998a: 3–5; 2015: 121) uses idiom only occasionally to refer loosely to semi-transparent and opaque metaphorical expressions or, in other words, to refer to multi-word items that are potentially ambiguous, often figurative and also often evaluative or connotative. She therefore prefers the term fixed expressions and idioms, which covers various kinds of phrasal lexemes, phraseological units, or multi-word lexical items (i.e., frozen collocations, grammatically ill-formed collocations, proverbs, routine formulae, sayings and similes) (Moon 1998a: 2). Gläser (1998: 125), on the other hand, defines idiom as a dominant subtype within the all-embracing category of the phraseological unit, saying that an idiom is “a lexicalized, reproducible word group in common use, which has syntactic and semantic stability, and may carry connotations, but whose meaning cannot be derived from the meanings of its constituents”.

Phraseme is also used as a superordinate term (e.g., Mel'čuk 1995; Dobrovol'skij 2006; but also in Slovene phraseological research, e.g., Kržišnik 2010), though not in the Anglo-American tradition. Following the tradition of phraseology research in European linguistics, phrasemes, which are conventional multi-word expressions, can be classified into classes, i.e., idioms, proverbs, restricted collocations, routine formulae, the central and the most irregular group of phrasemes being that of idioms (Dobrovol'skij 2006: 515; Piirainen 2012: 32).

Phraseological unit is another term that is increasingly used in phraseological research to denote a stable combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning (Kunin 1970: 210) or “a lexicalized, reproducible billexemic or polylexemic word group in common use, which has relative syntactic and semantic stability, may be idiomatized, may carry connotations, and may have an emphatic or intensifying function in a text” (Gläser 1998: 125). Phraseological unit is used in some Slavonic and

German linguistic traditions as a superordinate term for multi-word lexical items (Gläser 1984: 348). Other terms also encountered in the phraseological literature are multi-word lexical unit (Cowie 1992), fixed expression (Moon 1992a; Svensson 2008), fixed phrase (Verstraten 1992) and phrasal lexeme (Lyons 1977: 23; Moon 1998b: 79). To avoid confusion regarding the many hypernymic expressions used to refer generically to multi-word lexical items, the term phraseological unit (PU) is used in this book⁵ as a general, generic term for a multi-word lexical item whose syntax and lexis are fixed and which is conventionalized and semantically stable.

1.4 Characteristic features of phraseological units

As phraseology deals with the study of PUs that are subdivided into various subtypes, it is necessary to concentrate on features typical of PUs. It can be noticed that the approaches taken by different researchers are based on distinct criteria; consequently, different researchers focus on differing characteristics of PUs, but at the same time, similarities can be observed. However, it should be stressed that the criteria are variables, which makes the identification of different categories of PUs very difficult (cf. Moon 1998a: 9; Moon 2015: 122; Nunberg et al. 1994: 492). According to the European tradition, PUs are characterized by the following three characteristics: polylexicality, stability and idiomaticity. These three characteristics are briefly described below:

- **Polylexicality:** As the word suggests, polylexicality means that a PU consists of more than one word. When discussing polylexicality as one of the features of a PU, Fiedler (2007: 18) questions the criterion of length or the orthographic structure and gives two reasons: firstly, a PU can be transformed into a compound, and secondly, there may be discrepancies between languages, since a multi-word expression can be a PU in one language, while its equivalent is a compound in another language. However, she concludes that a string of two or more words is normally recognized as the lower limit for a PU, whereas a whole sentence (e.g., a proverb) is the upper limit (ibid.: 18).
- **Stability (or reproducibility):** Stability refers to the more or less fixed form and meaning of a PU. Dobrovol'skij (2006: 514) explains the stability of PUs by saying that “as soon as an expression has become conventionalized, it will be reproduced in discourse as a

⁵ Terms such as idiom or phraseme are used only when citing or quoting other researchers or sources.

prefabricated unit of language”. However, not all PUs are completely fixed, since many allow variations within the constraints of the lexicological/phraseological system and are systemic variations of idioms and phrases (Gläser 1998: 129), which means that stability should refer to all kinds of variants of a PU in so far as they are lexicalized or conventionalized (Piirainen 2012: 33). Since our databases of onomastic PUs were compiled using the existing phraseological dictionaries, lexicalization or conventionalization is a characteristic that should be explicitly emphasized, since one of the criteria for the inclusion of a certain PU in a phraseological dictionary is its conventionalization as regards content and structure. Systematic variations of PUs are therefore normally included in phraseological dictionaries as opposed to creative modifications of PUs, which do not become established in the language, since they are only made by a speaker and writer to achieve a particular stylistic effect.

- **Idiomacity:** Idiomacity is a universal phenomenon in natural languages (Moon 1998a: 6), but it should be stressed that it is “a phenomenon too complex to be defined in terms of a single property. Idiomacity is best defined by multiple criteria, each criterion representing a single property” (Fernando, Flavell 1981: 19). According to Piirainen (2012: 34), “idiomacity means that idioms are, in most cases, semantically irregular”. Semantic irregularity is why the meaning of a PU is difficult to comprehend, since familiarity with the meanings of all constituent elements of the PU in question does not contribute to the understanding of the PU. PUs can be characterized by various degrees of idiomacity. On the one hand, PUs are fully opaque expressions and on the other hand, PUs may be fully transparent (Fiedler 2007: 22). Piirainen (2012: 34) agrees that the interpretation of (prototypical or figurative) PUs is possible on two levels, i.e., on a primary level (literal meaning) and on a secondary level (lexicalized or figurative meaning), whereas the image component⁶, which can be considered an additional conceptual level, is a semantic bridge between these two levels.

In the definition of a PU mentioned above, Gläser (1998: 125, 127) enumerates the following obligatory features of a PU:

⁶ Piirainen (2012: 34) explains the use of the term image component by saying that it is used in reference to “linguistically relevant traces of an image that are comprehensible for the majority of speakers”.

- lexicalization: It can be defined as “a gradual, historical process, involving phonological and semantic changes and the loss of motivation” (Lipka 2002: 113); consequently, a PU is retained in the collective memory of a language community (Fiedler 2007: 21),
- common usage,
- reproducibility,
- syntactic and semantic stability.

Gläser (1998: 127) identifies three additional characteristics of a PU, which are considered optional:

- idiomaticity,
- connotations (i.e., expressive connotations that provide additional information about a speaker’s attitude towards the person or state of affairs; stylistic connotations, which refer to the communicative situations in which a PU can be used and to the relationship between a speaker and hearer in them (Fiedler 2007: 25); register markers, which are used in reference to a particular field or province of discourse (Gläser 1998: 129), and
- expressive, emphatic or intensifying functions in a text.

Gläser (1998: 126) distinguishes between word-like and sentence-like PUs. Word-like PUs are nominations which represent the centre of the phraseological system and include idioms and non-idioms. Among non-idioms, she lists technical terms, clichés, paraphrasal verbs, other set expressions as well as onymic entities, which are of special interest to us, since the object of our research is PUs with proper names. Sentence-like PUs (ibid.: 126–127), i.e., proverbs, commonplaces, routine formulae, slogans, commandments and maxims, quotations and winged words, are propositions consisting of a nomination and a predication; propositions form the periphery of the phraseological system.

The characteristics of PUs discussed by Moon (1998a: 6–8; 2015: 122) overlap to a great extent with those dealt with by Piirainen and Gläser, the main difference being terminology used. The three principal factors Moon takes into consideration when proposing the criteria for a PU are as follows:

- Institutionalization (cf. Gläser’s lexicalization above): Institutionalization is defined by Bauer (1983: 48, cited in Moon 1998a: 7) as the process by which a string of words becomes recognized and accepted as a lexical item.

- Lexicogrammatical fixedness (cf. Gläser's syntactic and semantic stability above): Lexicogrammatical fixedness involves some degree of lexicogrammatical restrictiveness, such as lexical fixedness (the substitution of a semantically similar word for any of its constituents does not preserve its original meaning) and syntactic fixedness (the PU cannot undergo syntactic variation and retain its original interpretation) (Fazly, Stevenson 2007: 10).
- Non-compositionality (cf. partial overlap with Gläser's idiomaticity above): Non-compositionality means that the meaning of a string of words deviates from the meaning arising from a word-by-word interpretation of it; in other words, the meaning of a string of words is not simply a sum of the meaning of component words.

Apart from that, Moon (1998a: 8–9) lists other criteria such as orthography (referred to as polylexicality by Piirainen), syntactic integrity (PUs form syntactic or grammatical units in their own right, such as adjuncts, complements, nominal groups, sentence adverbials) and a phonological criterion (phonology and intonation of PUs).

Similar to Moon, Nunberg et al. (1994: 492–493) use different terminology to address the issue of the properties on the basis of which it is possible to identify a PU:

- Conventionality: The meaning or use of PUs cannot be (entirely) predicted on the basis of knowledge of the independent conventions that determine the use of their constituents when they appear in isolation from one another.
- Inflexibility: PUs typically appear only in a limited number of syntactic frames or constructions.
- Figuration: PUs typically involve metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole or other kinds of figuration. Although the precise motive for the figure involved cannot always be perceived by the speakers, they generally perceive the figuration, which means that they can at least assign a literal meaning to the idiom.
- Proverbiality: PUs typically describe recurrent situations of particular social interest in virtue of their relation to a scenario involving homey, concrete things and relations.
- Informality: PUs are typically associated with relatively informal or colloquial registers and with popular speech and oral culture.
- Affect: PUs typically imply a certain evaluation or affective stance toward the things they denote.

According to Nunberg et al. (*ibid.*: 493), these features do not always apply to all PUs, the only exception being conventionality. One of the important observations they make (*ibid.*: 531) is that “the meanings of most idioms have identifiable parts, which are associated with the constituents of the idioms”.

Jackson and Zé Amvela (2007: 78) summarize the typical features of PUs under two main headings, i.e., ambiguity and syntactic peculiarities. Ambiguity is due to the fact that PUs may have either a literal or an idiomatic meaning. Apart from that, a PU may exhibit different syntactic properties when used in the literal sense if compared to its use in the idiomatic sense. Fiedler (2007: 26) also draws attention to the syntactic behaviour of PUs, or more precisely, to their transformational defects, which cause PUs to resist syntactic transformations such as passivization or topicalization (cf. Moon 2015: 127). Apart from transformational defectiveness, Fiedler (2007: 27–28) identifies two additional types of anomalies which can be observed in a marginal set of PUs, i.e., grammatical ill-formedness (e.g., the omission of the definite article with singular countable nouns) and the occurrence of unique constituents (i.e., fossilized constituents dating from earlier periods and obsolete in modern English) (cf. Moon 2015: 135–136).

To sum up, most phraseologists agree that it is necessary to pay attention to semantics, syntax, compositionality, lexical restrictions and institutionalization when trying to determine the properties that characterize PUs.