

ANNA DĄBROWSKA

SYNTACTIC PATTERNS  
OF ENGLISH AND POLISH FIXED PHRASES  
WITH PROPER NAMES

1. INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that in all human communities there are certain regular idiom-creating events called naming since people are named, places are named, sometimes certain individual animals, spirits, or vehicles are named. There are several formally prescribed ceremonial activities with relevance to naming, the details of which are of interest to philosophers, logicians, anthropologists and psychologists, but only occasionally to linguists<sup>1</sup>. Thus, Van Langendonck, classifying the works by Mill<sup>2</sup>, Frege<sup>3</sup>, Russell<sup>4</sup>, Searle<sup>5</sup>, Kripke<sup>6</sup> and others as (language) philosophical works, not as linguistic works, highlights the necessity of a linguistic approach to the study of proper names (onomastics) because “both onomasticians and linguists should be aware of

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<sup>1</sup> Ch.F. HOCKETT, *A Course in Modern Linguistics*, New York 1965, pp. 311-313.

<sup>2</sup> J. MILL, *A System of Logic. Ratiocinative and Inductive*, New York, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> G. FREGE, *On sense and reference*, in: *Translations From the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. P. Geach and M. Black, Oxford 1952, pp. 56-78.

<sup>4</sup> B. RUSSELL, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, in: *Logic and Knowledge*, ed. R. Marsh, New York 1956, pp. 177-281.

<sup>5</sup> J. SEARLE, *Proper Names*, “Mind” 67(266)(1958), pp. 166-173.

<sup>6</sup> S. KRIPKE, *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge 1980.

the fact that proper names are words which deserve linguistic attention in the first place”<sup>7</sup>. What is more, proper names are a particularly challenging and dynamic part of language structure, as they can be regulated by linguistic rules, like all lexical units, and influenced – in terms of their motivation, propagation, and popularity – by “religious beliefs, cultural traditions, aesthetic taste, and the most prominent events in the country’s sociopolitical life during each historical period”<sup>8</sup>.

The paper deals with proper names in English and Polish fixed phrases. The purpose of Section 2 is to briefly define some terms applying to proper names from a linguistic viewpoint. Section 3 offers a short overview of theories that constitute a basis for any discussion related to proper names. Next, in Section 4 linguistic characteristics of proper names are provided. Section 5, in turn, focuses on proper names in fixed phrases and offers a broad list of English and Polish fixed phrases (idioms, clauses, similes, etc., with the exception of proverbs) that include personal and place names. The source, etymology and meaning of proper names, and especially the syntactic structures in which they appear are examined in order to find some similarities and differences between the two languages. Finally, Section 6 summarizes the essential points made in this paper and makes suggestions as to possible further analyses of this kind of fixed phrases.

## 2. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

To begin with, the field of *onomastics*, understood as the study of names, includes several larger fields, such as linguistics, ethnography, folklore, philology, history, geography, philosophy, and literary scholarship. Within the general category of names, linguists applying the word *name* refer mostly to *proper names*, within which two principal types can be distinguished: place names or *toponyms* and personal names, sometimes called *anthroponyms*. The discussion in this paper is limited to these two types.

Traditionally, Murray’s<sup>9</sup> distinction between two kinds of ‘name’, or ‘noun’ was treated as the basic one. But more recent traditional grammarians

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<sup>7</sup> W. VAN LANGENDONCK, *Theory and Typology of Proper Names*, Berlin 2007, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> T. KALKONOVA, *Sociology of proper names in Sofia since 1970*, “International Journal of the Sociology of Language” 135(1999), p. 83.

<sup>9</sup> L. MURRAY, *Abridgment of Murray’s English Grammar*, London 1829, pp. 17-18.

like Quirk *et al*<sup>10</sup>. and generative grammarians like Chomsky<sup>11</sup>, assuming that *nouns* must be divided into distinct subclasses, make one crucial distinction between *proper* and *common nouns*, which I will adopt for further analysis. Therefore, *proper nouns* are the names appropriated to individuals, such as people (George), places (London), months (April), events (Christmas), etc.; and *common nouns* can be subdivided into two classes: count and non-count nouns. In each subclass, a further semantic distinction is made, which results in concrete count/non-count and abstract count/non-count nouns<sup>12</sup>.

Interestingly, following van Langendonck<sup>13</sup>, van de Velde<sup>14</sup> makes a further distinction between *proprial lemmas* and *proper names*. *Proprial lemmas* as lexical units (e.g., *Nelson, Vicky or York*) normally denote proper names; while the term *proper name*, in contrast, is taken to refer to a semantic-pragmatic concept. Consequently, whether a word is a proper name or not is dependent on the way in which it is used in an utterance. Besides *proprial lemmas*, van Langendonck distinguishes *appellative lemmas*, i.e., lexical units usually assumed to be *common nouns* (e.g., *woman, city, car*), and *proprio-appellative lemmas*, i.e. lexical units that are treated as proper names or as common nouns equally (e.g., *Volvo, Zulu*). The proprial lemmas such as *Nelson* and *York* are used as proper names in (1a). They “denote a unique entity at the level of established linguistic convention to make them psychosocially salient within a given basic level category”<sup>15</sup>. In contrast, examples (1b) and (1c) show a relatively unusual common noun uses of the same proprial lemmas. *Nelson* and *York* are not used to signify unique entities here, but to refer to categories of entities marginally defined as ‘a man called *Nelson*’ and ‘a settlement called *York*.’ Presumably, this is reflected in the fact that they are used with restrictive modifiers, including articles<sup>16</sup>.

- (1) a) Nelson lives in York.  
 b) We’re clearly talking about different Nelsons. The Nelson I know lives in Warsaw.  
 c) Is there a York in Poland too?

<sup>10</sup> R.S. QUIRK, G. GREENBAUM LEECH and J. SVARTVIK, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, London 1985, pp. 245-252.

<sup>11</sup> N. CHOMSKY, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1965, pp. 79-85.

<sup>12</sup> R.S. QUIRK, *A Comprehensive Grammar...*, p. 247.

<sup>13</sup> W. VAN LANGENDONCK, *Theory...*, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> M. VAN DE VELDE, *Agreement as a grammatical criterion for proper name status in Kirundi*, “Onoma” 37(2010), pp. 127-139.

<sup>15</sup> W. VAN LANGENDONCK, *Theory...*, p. 87.

<sup>16</sup> M. VAN DE VELDE, *Agreement...*, p. 2.

Additionally, Lévi-Strauss defines naming as a classifying activity. He recognizes two extreme cases or name types: in the first “the name is an identifying mark which, by the application of a rule, establishes that the individual who is named is a member of a pre-ordained class”<sup>17</sup>. In the second, “the name is a free creation on the part of the individual who gives the name and expresses a transitory and subjective state of his own by means of the person he names”<sup>18</sup>. In both these cases, however, naming is an act of classifying.

### 3. THEORIES OF PROPER NAMES

In recent years, many theories have been proposed in relation to proper names, and the section below deals with the most significant ones.

The descriptive theory of proper names is a view of the nature of the meaning and reference of proper names generally recognized by G. Frege<sup>19</sup> and B. Russell<sup>20</sup>. In brief, the theory implies basically that the meanings (semantic contents) of names are identical to the descriptions associated with them by speakers, while their referents are determined to be the objects (the bearers of the name) that satisfy these descriptions<sup>21</sup>. The difficulty with the descriptive theory lies in determining what the description corresponds to. It must be some essential characteristic of the bearer, otherwise we could use the name to deny that the bearer had such a characteristic.

A type of simple descriptivism was originally formulated by Frege in reaction to problems that confronted the predominant theory of names of the 19th century due to John Stuart Mill<sup>22</sup>. Mill’s theory is often referred to as the “Fido”- Fido theory, because it suggests that the meaning of a proper name is simply its bearer in the external world (its direct referent, as we would say now). There are several significant problems with this proposal, however. First, it does not explain how and why names without bearers can still be meaningful, even though they have no reference. Furthermore, the objection raised against the descriptive theory of proper names, that appeared in the 1970s, is associated mostly with Saul Kripke, Hilary Putnam and others;

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<sup>17</sup> C. LÉVI-STRAUSS, *The savage Mind*, London 1966, p. 181.

<sup>18</sup> C. LÉVI-STRAUSS, *The savage...*, p. 180.

<sup>19</sup> G. FREGE, *On sense...*, pp. 56-78.

<sup>20</sup> B. RUSSELL, *The Philosophy...*, pp. 177-281.

<sup>21</sup> R.M. SAINSBURY, *Russell*, London 1979.

<sup>22</sup> J. MILL, *A System...*

although philosophers such as Bradley<sup>23</sup>, Locke<sup>24</sup> and Aristotle<sup>25</sup> had already noticed the problem<sup>26</sup>.

Charles Peirce's<sup>27</sup> theory of proper names is intimately connected with a number of central topics in contemporary philosophy of language and logic. Several papers have appeared in the past in which Peirce's theory of names has been recognised as a precursor of Kripke's causal-historical theory of reference. Peirce's pragmatic approach presents an alternative and at the same time a broader account of the non-descriptive denotation of proper names than that provided by the causal-historical theory.

The causal theory of names by Kripke<sup>28</sup> combines the referential view with the idea that the referent of the name is fixed by a baptismal act, as a result of which the name becomes a stiff designator of the referent. Subsequent uses of the name succeed in referring to the referent by being linked by a causal chain to that original baptismal act. In lectures later published as *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke provided a rough outline of his causal theory of reference for names. Although he refused to explicitly endorse such a theory, he specified that such an approach was far more promising than the then-popular descriptive theory of names introduced by Russell, according to which names are in fact disguised definite descriptions. DeRosset characterises Kripke's Causal-Historical Theory of Reference in the following statement:

It does not matter what you think: Once you have the name in your vocabulary, the information you have about the relevant individual is irrelevant to answering the question of the semantic bond. What's in your past is what's relevant; what is in your mind is irrelevant<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Francis Herbert Bradley (30 January 1846-18 September 1924) was a British idealist philosopher. His most important work was *Appearance and Reality* (1893), as referred by R.W. Clark, *The Life of Bertrand Russell*. London 1975.

<sup>24</sup> J. Locke, cf. the entry by William Uzgalis in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, retrieved on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanford\\_Encyclopedia\\_of\\_Philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanford_Encyclopedia_of_Philosophy)

<sup>25</sup> T.H. IRWIN, *Aristotle's First Principles*. Oxford 1988.

<sup>26</sup> D. BRAUN, *Katz on names without bearers*, "The Philosophical Review" 104(4)(1995), pp. 553-576.

<sup>27</sup> A.-V. PIETARINEN, *Peirce's Pragmatic Theory of Proper Names*, "Transactions of the Charles" 46(3)(2010), pp. 341-363.

<sup>28</sup> S. KRIPKE, *Naming and Necessity*, Boston 1980.

<sup>29</sup> L. DEROSSET, *The Causal-Historical Theory of Reference*, Spring 2011. Accessed May 4, 2014. [http://www.uvm.edu/~lderosse/courses/nnn/caus\\_the\\_or.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~lderosse/courses/nnn/caus_the_or.pdf)

Kripke<sup>30</sup> argues that in order to use a name successfully to refer to something, you do not have to be acquainted with a uniquely identifying description of that thing. Rather, your use of the name should only be caused by the naming of that thing.

In recent years, there has been a kind of renewal in descriptivist theories of proper names. Metalinguistic description theories, adopted by such contemporary theorists as Kent Bach<sup>31</sup> and Jerrold Katz,<sup>32</sup> explain the sense of proper nouns – not common nouns – in terms of a relation between the noun and the objects that bear its name. Katz's theory is based on the fundamental idea that sense should not have to be defined in terms of referential or extensional properties but that it should be described in terms of, and determined by, all and only the intensional properties of names.

Finally, another recent approach is two-dimensional semantics, exemplified by the theories of Robert Stalnaker<sup>33</sup> and David Chalmers,<sup>34</sup> among others. It is a theory of how to determine the sense and reference of a word and the truth-value of a sentence. Two-dimensionalism brings an analysis of the semantics of words and sentences. Any given sentence, e.g., 'Water is H<sub>2</sub>O' is taken to express two distinct suggestions, often referred to as a primary intension and a secondary intension, which together constitute its meaning. The primary intension of a word or sentence is its sense, the idea or method by which we find its referent (for 'water' it is 'the watery stuff'), while the secondary intension of a word is whatever is associated with it (e.g., whatever thing 'water' happens to pick out in this world).

#### 4. LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPER NAMES

Among the main linguistic features of proper names (PNs) in English, van Langendonck<sup>35</sup> and Anderson<sup>36</sup> point out initial-capitalisation in writing as

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<sup>30</sup> S. KRIPKE, *Naming ...*

<sup>31</sup> K. BACH, *What's in a name?*, "Australasian Journal of Philosophy" 59(1981), pp. 371-386.

<sup>32</sup> J.J. KATZ, *Names without bearers*, "Philosophical Review" 103(1)(1994), pp. 1-39.

<sup>33</sup> R. STALNAKER, *Assertion*, in: *Syntax and Semantics*, vol. IX: *Pragmatics*, ed. P. Cole, New York 1978, pp. 315-332.

<sup>34</sup> D. CHALMERS, *Two-dimensional semantics*, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Language*, ed. E. Lepore and B. Smith, Oxford 2006, pp. 574-606.

<sup>35</sup> W. VAN LANGENDONCK, *Theory...*, pp. 93-106, 119-182.

<sup>36</sup> J.M. ANDERSON, *The Grammar of Names*, Oxford 2007.

their first characteristic. This feature – also applied to personal and place nouns in Polish, except for months, weekdays, languages, and adjectives derived from proper nouns – lets us distinguish in most cases a proper name from a common noun (e.g., EN: *Old Town* vs. This is an old town; PL: *Starówka/Stare Miasto* [old-town] vs. To jest bardzo stare miasto [This-is-very-old-town]). Secondly, proper names are subject to some word formation processes: for example, hypocorisms can be formed from full first names, using various mechanisms<sup>37</sup>, as exemplified in (2):

(2) Full form	Hypocorism	
EN: John/ PL: Jan	EN: Johnny / PL: Janek	(suffixation)
EN: Joanne / PL: Joanna	EN: Jo / PL: Asia	(shortening)
EN: Robert/ PL: George	EN: Bob / PL: Jurek	(shortening and modification)

The internal structure of names<sup>38</sup> deserves some comment, since they can be mono- or poly-lexemic, sometimes with the article inserted (in case of English, but no article is used in Polish) (e.g. *London, John Smith, The Dead Sea*); personal names can be preceded by a title (e.g. *Mr Smith / Pan Kowalski*). Additionally, analysing different uses of names, especially when forming fixed phrases, proper names can be associated with nominal categories representing an NP or a DP, as in (3a–b), but can also function as vocatives, as in (3c), and occur in close appositional structures, as in (3d)<sup>39</sup>:

- (3) a) EN: John likes Monica.  
 PL: Jan lubi Monikę.  
 John-likes-Monica
- b) EN: We went to Warsaw.  
 PL: Pojechaliśmy do Warszawy.  
 We-went- to- Warsaw
- c) EN: She saw it, Mark/  
 PL: [Marku,] ona widziała to, [Marku].  
 [Mark (voc)] -she- saw -it, [Mark (voc)]
- d) EN: The painter Jan Matejko died early.  
 PL: Malarz Jan Matejko umarł wcześniej.  
 Painter-Jan Matejko (nom) -died- early

<sup>37</sup> J.M. ANDERSON, *On the structure of names*, “Folia Linguistica” 37(2003), pp. 347-398.

<sup>38</sup> J.M. ANDERSON, *A Notional Theory of Syntactic Categories*. Cambridge 1997; J.M. ANDERSON, *On the structure...*; J.M. ANDERSON, *The Grammar...*

<sup>39</sup> Cf. P. PIERINI, *Opening a Pandora's box: proper names in English phraseology*, “Linguistik online” 36(4)(2008), Accessed April 27, 2014. [http://www.linguistik-online.de/36\\_08/pierini.html](http://www.linguistik-online.de/36_08/pierini.html)

Occasionally, names can take on the semantic value ‘entity called X’, and can take plural forms, as in (4):

- (4) EN: There are some Peters in my school.  
 PL: W mojej szkole jest kilku Piotrów.  
 In-my- school-is- some-Peters

Furthermore, proper names are semantically definite and primarily used without articles,<sup>40</sup> but they may occur with determiners:<sup>41</sup> the article *the* or *a/an*, in English (not in Polish) as in (5a-b); quantifiers, as in (5c-d); possessives, as in (5e); demonstratives, as in (5f):

- (5) a) EN: The Smiths visited me yesterday.  
 PL: /∅ article/ Państwo Kowalscy odwiedzili mnie wczoraj.  
 Mr and Mrs- Smith-visited- me- yesterday
- b) EN: A Darby and Joan Club is designed for senior citizens.  
 PL: /∅ article/ Klub Złotej Jesieni jest przeznaczony dla osób w podeszłym wieku.  
 Club-Golden-Autumn-is- designed- for- people-elderly
- c) EN: He’s never known any Angelica.  
 PL: On nigdy nie znał żadnej Angeliki.  
 He-never-not-knew-none/any-Anelica
- d) EN: She knows five Mark Browns.  
 PL: Ona zna pięciu Marków Brown’ów.  
 She-knows-five- Marks-Browns
- e) EN: My Richard got the prize.  
 PL: Mój Ryszard otrzymał nagrodę.  
 My- Richard- got- -prize
- f) EN: This Paul brought you a letter.  
 PL: Ten Paweł przyniósł ci list.  
 This-Paul- brought- you-letter

Additionally, as noted by Pierini<sup>42</sup>, proper names can be modified by adjectives, restrictive relative clauses or PPs, as in (6), (7), (8), respectively:

- (6) EN: She is the talented Kate.  
 PL: Ona jest /∅ article/ ta utalentowaną Kasią.  
 She- is- this- talented- Kate

<sup>40</sup> W. VAN LANGENDONCK, *Theory...*

<sup>41</sup> G. LONGOBARDI, *Reference and proper names: A Theory of N-Movement in syntax and logical*, “Linguistic Inquiry” 25(4)(1994), pp. 609-665.

<sup>42</sup> P. PIERINI, *Opening...*



- (7) EN: This is the Sandomierz I want to remember.  
 PL: To jest/ø article/ ten Sandomierz, który chcę zapamiętać.  
 That-is- this-Sandomierz- which-I-want-remember
- (8) EN: The Lublin of my university years was different.  
 PL: /ø article/ [Ten] Lublin z moich lat studenckich był inny.  
 [This]-Lublin-from-my-years-university- was-different

What is more, the semantic characteristics of proper names have been discussed from Mill<sup>43</sup> onwards. For some researchers it is obvious that “proper nouns designating persons and places are given a semantic interpretation based on phonetic correspondences”<sup>44</sup>. Name ‘meanings’ can have a considerable cultural significance in literate societies; though the system of nomination may be intended to offer maximum diversity. Leyew<sup>45</sup> clarifies that the discussion on whether proper names have meaning transparency or not, and whether they are arbitrary, dates back to Plato’s<sup>46</sup> *Cratylus*. Yet, the general hypothesis among linguists until today is that proper names are entirely arbitrary. On the other hand, Coates<sup>47</sup> states that ‘becoming proper means <losing sense>.’ Katz sustains that “proper nouns have no meaning at all”<sup>48</sup>, and that the meaninglessness of names means that one cannot establish a semantic distinction between names and (common) nouns. But then again lack vs. presence of meaning is precisely the appropriate semantic distinction<sup>49</sup>. Thrane points out that “proper names are non-categorical signs, which means that they do not in any way indicate what *kind* of thing they are being used to refer to on a given occasion”<sup>50</sup>. Bing<sup>51</sup> confirms that personal names, unlike common nouns, have no meaning.

<sup>43</sup> J. MILL, *A System...*

<sup>44</sup> H. MARKS, *Biblical naming and poetic etymology*, “Journal of Biblical Literature” 114(1) (1995), p. 21.

<sup>45</sup> Z. LEYEW, *Amharic personal nomenclature: a grammar and sociolinguistic insight*. “Journal of African Cultural Studies” 16(2)(2003), pp. 181-211.

<sup>46</sup> PLATO, *Cratylus*. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-cratylus/>

<sup>47</sup> R. COATES, *Properhood*, “Language” 82.2 (2006), p. 368.

<sup>48</sup> J.J. KATZ, *Semantic Theory*, New York 1972, p. 381.

<sup>49</sup> J.J. KATZ, *Semantic...*, p. 381-382.

<sup>50</sup> T. THRANE, *Referential-Semantic Analysis: Aspects of a Theory of Linguistic Reference*, Cambridge 1980, p. 214.

<sup>51</sup> J. BING, *Names and honorific pronouns in Gborbo Grahm*, “Current Issues in Linguistic Theory” 100(1993), pp. 119-130.

Nevertheless, a considerable number of research results have proven the appearance of connotative meanings and denotative or associative meanings<sup>52</sup> in names. Lieberson<sup>53</sup> adds that first names generate certain stereotypical pictures; pictures which in turn mark the choices that parents make in naming their child. Hence, “a Mary would be ‘quiet’, an Edward ‘friendly’, a Richard ‘good-looking’, a Joan ‘young and good-looking’, a Barbara ‘charming’ and an Adrian ‘artistic’”<sup>54</sup>. In addition, Pierini<sup>55</sup> notices that personal names, and rarer place names, are used figuratively as metaphors, similes, hyperboles and antonomasias, either in a creative way (e.g. *He is a new Hemingway*) or as lexicalised items. In these uses, proper nouns (PNs) have a descriptive function, since they specify some salient attribute or property of the referent of the name. They function as nouns, taking on both a denotative and a connotative meaning initiated in a selection of salient bits of information extracted from encyclopaedic knowledge about a referent. The metaphorical use of PNs reflects cultural variables<sup>56</sup>.

In a nutshell, although the primary purpose of personal names is to identify their bearers, they also have a semantic content and a referential meaning strongly associated with socio-economic and political situations<sup>57</sup>. Proper names are diachronically motivated, and a meaningful etymon is found in most cases, for instance family names derive from elements of common vocabulary referring to occupation (EN: *smith* > *Smith* / PL: *kowal* > *Kowalski*). The meaningfulness of proper names/nouns will be also emphasised in the subsequent section, where it will be demonstrated that the fixed phrases, both in English and Polish, including proper names express a certain connotation, of the biblical, mythological, literary, historical or cultural origin, that is still relevant today.

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<sup>52</sup> J.M. CARROLL, *Toward a Functional Theory of Names and naming*, “Linguistics” 21(1983), pp. 341-371.

<sup>53</sup> S. LIEBERSON, *What’s in a name?... some sociolinguistic possibilities*, “International Journal of the Sociology of Language” 45(1984), pp. 77-87.

<sup>54</sup> L.A. DUNKLING, *First Names First*, Ontario: General Publishing 1977, p. 12.

<sup>55</sup> P. PIERINI, *Opening...*

<sup>56</sup> L. WEE, *Proper names and the Theory of Metaphor*, “Journal of Linguistics” 42(2)(2006), pp. 355-371.

<sup>57</sup> A.S.S. MARMARIDOU, *Proper names in communication*, “Journal of Linguistics” 25(1989), pp. 355-356.

## 5. SYNTACTIC PATTERNS OF ENGLISH AND POLISH FIXED PHRASES WITH PROPER NAMES

Understanding and producing language involves not only dealing with individual words, but also with a large number of formulaic utterances, or fixed expressions, such as: collocations, phrasal verbs, proverbs, idioms, slogans, common quotations, or sayings<sup>58</sup>. These multi-word lexical (phraseological) units are often referred to as phrasemes, in which the component parts of the expression take on a meaning not predictable from the sum of their meanings when used separately. Phraseology as a scholarly approach to language had a turning point in the 20th century owing to Ferdinand de Saussure<sup>59</sup>, Charles Bally<sup>60</sup>, Albert Sechehaye, Albert Reidlinger, Viktor Vladimirovich Vinogradov<sup>61</sup>, Stanisław Bąba<sup>62</sup> and Jarosław Liberek<sup>63</sup>. The earliest English adaptations of phraseology are by Weinreich<sup>64</sup>, while on the Polish ground Stanisław Skorupka<sup>65</sup> is the chief pioneer, followed by Lipka<sup>66</sup>, Müldner-Nieckowski<sup>67</sup>, and Latusek<sup>68</sup>.

Furthermore, although phraseological units have received various definitions and types of classification, my working definition is the one proposed by Gläser since her definition of 'phraseological units' appears to be the most suitable one, as it comprises all the possible notions, characteristics and entities that should be encompassed with the term. Thus,

A 'phraseological unit' is a lexicalized, reproducible billexemic or polylexemic word group in common use, which has relative syntactic and semantic stability, may be idio-

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<sup>58</sup> A. CIEŚLICKA, *Formulaic language in L2: storage, retrieval and production of idioms by second language learners*, in: *Cognitive Processing in Second Language Acquisition: Inside the Learner's Mind*, eds. M. Pütz and L. Sicola, Amsterdam–Philadelphia 2010, pp. 149-168.

<sup>59</sup> F. DE SAUSSURE, *Course in General Linguistics*, eds. Ch. Bally and A. Sechehaye, in collaboration with A. Reidlinger, trans. R. Harris, La Salle (Ill.) 1983.

<sup>60</sup> Ch. BALLY, *Traité de stylistique française*, Genève 1909 [1951].

<sup>61</sup> L.T. LAWRENCE and V.V. VINOGRADOV, *The history of the Russian literary language from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth*, 1938, Madison (Wisc.) 1969.

<sup>62</sup> S. BĄBA, *Innowacje frazeologiczne współczesnej polszczyzny*, Poznań 1989.

<sup>63</sup> S. BĄBA and J. LIBEREK, *Słownik frazeologiczny współczesnej polszczyzny*, Warszawa 2001.

<sup>64</sup> U. WEINREICH, *Problems in the Analysis of Idioms*, in: *Substance and Structure of Language*, ed. J. Puhvel, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1969, pp. 23-81.

<sup>65</sup> S. SKORUPKA, *Słownik frazeologiczny języka polskiego*, t. I-II, Warszawa 1967.

<sup>66</sup> L. LIPKA, *An Outline of English Lexicology*, Tübingen 1992.

<sup>67</sup> P. MÜLDNER-NIECKOWSKI, *Wielki słownik frazeologiczny języka polskiego*, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>68</sup> A. LATUSEK (red.), *Wielki słownik frazeologiczny*, Kraków 2009.

matized, may carry connotations, and may have an emphatic or intensifying function in a text<sup>69</sup>.

Besides, phraseological expressions often carry connotations not existing in their non-idiomatic synonyms, and can have various functions in discourse: the informational, the evaluative, the situational, the moralising and organisational one<sup>70</sup>. Finally, Gläser's<sup>71</sup> distinction between word-like and sentence-like expressions is crucial here in order to undertake the classification of fixed phrases. Word-like units designate a phenomenon, an object, an action, a process or state, a property in the real world; they embrace idioms and non-idioms (i.e. restricted collocations), functioning as nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs. Sentence-like units, such as proverbs, maxims and formulae, designate a whole state of affairs in the real world. The transition area between the two groups is occupied by units such as irreversible binomials<sup>72</sup>, stereotyped similes, and fragments of proverbs. In addition, a phraseological unit having a proper name incorporated in its structure becomes, to some extent, 'a fixed phrase', since its parts are fixed in a certain order, even if the phrase could be changed without altering its literal meaning. This is because a set phrase is a culturally established phrase, although it does not have to imply any literal meaning in and of itself. Fixed phrases may function as idioms, e.g. *Jack in office*, or as words with a unique referent, e.g. *for God's sake*, and there is no clear division between a commonly used phrase, compound words and a fixed phrase<sup>73</sup>.

The aim of this section is to present a comparative view of English and Polish fixed phrases. For the sake of this paper, these fixed phrases would be restricted to idioms, short clauses and similes containing personal and place names, except for weekdays and nationality/language adjectives. In particular, the study examines the syntactic structure of these multiword expressions. Besides, their semantic connotations, associated with the meanings as well as derivational and etymological sources, have been studied as well. The overview of the personal and place names involved in fixed expressions, gathered in Tables I-V

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<sup>69</sup> R. GLÄSER, *The stylistic potential of phraseological units in the light of genre analysis*, in: *Phraseology*, ed. A. P. Cowie, Oxford 1998, p. 125.

<sup>70</sup> R. MOON, *Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English. A Corpus-Based Approach*, Oxford 1998, pp. 217-240.

<sup>71</sup> R. GLÄSER, *The stylistic potential...*, pp. 126-127.

<sup>72</sup> R. GLÄSER, *The stylistic potential...*, p. 126.

<sup>73</sup> T. MCARTHUR, *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, Oxford 1992, p. 314.

below, follows five syntactic patterns (phrases with (1) NPs, (2) VPs, (3) PPs, (4) clauses, and (5) similes, and shows biblical, literary, classical, cultural and historical/real life references and origins.

The material has been selected from the well-known and easily accessible English and Polish dictionaries, with a wide range of the phraseological entries. The choice of such dictionaries is to be justified below, with the help of a brief description, provided for each of the dictionaries, respectively:

(i) *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*:

The dictionary, with a definite British-English tone, and British spelling, includes more than 5,000 definitions of idioms. The idioms are arranged by keyword with a concise definition and sometimes the origin;

(ii) *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English*:

It is a part of a two-volume set which contains 8,000 expressions and provides a systematic analysis of idiomatic English. Beneficial to every teacher and advanced student of English, it complements the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*;

(iii) *Three Books of English Idioms*:

These three books present a collection of the most frequently used English idioms;

(iv) *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (the 4<sup>th</sup> ed):

The AHD broke ground among dictionaries by using corpus linguistics for compiling word-frequencies and other information. It took the innovative step of combining prescriptive information (how language should be used) and descriptive information (how it actually is used). The descriptive information was derived from actual texts. Citations were based on a million-word, three-line citation database. The fourth edition (2000) added Semitic language materials, such as an analogous appendix of roots;

(v) *Idioms, Collocations and Word Formations*:

Apart from idioms proper, Colin Philips has also included collocations, which provide a broader context to understand the meaning of a particular idiom.

The five most popular Polish dictionaries, used to find idiomatic entries with proper names, included:

APSIZ – P. BORKOWSKI, *Angielsko-polski słownik idiomów i zwrotów [An English-Polish dictionary of idioms and phrases]*, (1988) – with mostly British idioms and a narrower range of American ones;

IPA – D. WOLFRAM-ROMANOWSKA; P. KASZUBSKI, and M. PARKER, *Idiomy polsko-angielskie [Polish-English Idioms]*, (2013) – with an updated list of English idioms and their Polish equivalents;

SFO – *Słownik frazeologiczny [The Dictionary of Phraseological Units]* (online). Accessed on May 2, 2015. <http://frazologia.pl/index.php> – with exemplary sentences that illustrate the use of the idioms;

WMSAP-PA – *Wielki multimedialny słownik angielsko-polski i polsko-angielski. [Great Multimedia English-Polish and Polish-English Dictionary]*, (2005) – providing:

a) *A high quality vocabulary*, as it is the most comprehensive bilingual dictionary, which appeared in Poland over the last thirty years. It is also an example of a new generation of dictionaries based on data taken from real language and not – as it used to be – with other dictionaries. The present set of entries and their contents were taken directly from the language corpora. For English it is Oxford Corpus, and for Polish – Polish PWN Corpus;

b) *Huge vocabulary resources*: the dictionary contains more than a million English and Polish lexical items, i.e., words, their meanings, assemblies, frequent collocations, used in common grammatical constructions and phraseology, presented in an accessible and transparent way;

c) *A convenient form of presented data* – the dictionary in the electronic form makes it easy to reach and intuitively search words and phrases, and it provides more sophisticated search tools;

WSFJP – Müldner-Nieckowski, *Wielki słownik frazeologiczny języka polskiego. [The Great Dictionary of Polish Phraseological Units]*, (2003) – it contains 200 000 Polish expressions, phrases and idioms, reflecting the latest changes of this language. It gives concise and accurate definitions, eliminating the inappropriate use of commonly applied phrases.

In brief, although these aforementioned dictionaries altogether include American and British variants, they obviously cannot cover all English-speaking countries in depth. All Australian expressions are therefore excluded, and many British expressions are given which may not be used either in the USA, or by the younger generation in the USA or the UK. These are obviously dictionaries explicitly for idioms and phraseological units. They have been the fundamental sources of information, supported with online language corpora (*COCA = Corpus of Contemporary American English*; *NKJP = Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego*, and *BNC = The British National Corpus*) to check Polish / English equivalents and the meanings. Indeed, all of the source material put together have made a perfectly wide range of phraseological units, including those under scrutiny, i.e., idioms with proper names.

Accordingly, the material has been browsed from cover to cover in the search for all the fixed phrases with proper names. Thus, I have col-

lected a total of 257 fixed phrases containing personal and place names, having omitted all Australian units. These include: 157 idioms/phrases with NP, 51 idioms with VP, 19 with PP, 18 units working as clauses, and 12 used as similes. Therefore, these idioms, extracted from the long list of phraseological units, are to be the representative samples that accurately reflect characteristics and qualities of fixed phrases with proper names, in general.

However, due to the fact that the aim of my analysis was to classify the idioms in question in accordance with their syntactic structure, all the collected 257 fixed phrases with proper names have been examined carefully and segregated into groups. Hence, in the study below, I could observe such syntactic patterns, which I classified into five groups both for English and Polish fixed phrases<sup>74</sup>: phrases with (1) NPs, (2) VPs, (3) PPs, (4) clauses, and (5) similes. Each syntactic pattern has been presented independently, and all the idiomatic units have been put into five separate tables, *Tables I-V* respectively. These tables not only classify the list of English and Polish data according to their phraseological type, and syntactic structure, but they also indicate the etymological source of each entry.

#### Group I:

Fixed phrases with Noun Phrases – i.e., idiomatic noun phrases with proper nouns (PN) forming such six subcategories as follows:

(a) A single proper noun: (Det) + PN: *an Adonis*; (Det) PN + N: *a Judas kiss*; or (Det/Q) N + PN: *every man Jack*

(b) Proper nouns with titles: (Det) + title + PN: *Uncle Tom Cobley and all*

(c) Binomials /trinomials: (Det) PN + PN (+PN): *Jekyll and Hyde / Tom, Dick and Harry*

(d) Proper nouns in possessive structures: (Det) PN's + PN: *a Frankenstein's monster* or (Det) NP1 of NP2 (the name can be in NP1 or NP2): *a sword of Damocles*

(e) Proper nouns with adjectives: (Det) adj + PN: *a/the plain Jane*

(f) Proper nouns with prepositions: NP1 + preposition + NP2 (the name can be in NP1 or NP2): *a sop to Cerberus*.

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<sup>74</sup> Cf. P. PIERINI, *Opening...*

Table Ia: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish

(a) A single proper noun: (Det) (N) + PN (+N)

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	an Adonis	a very attractive man (after the Greek character of that name).	mythological
	Adonis		
2	a Mecca	a place of immense value for someone.	historical /cultural
	Mekka /Rzym		
3	the Almighty	God	Bible
	Wszchemogący <sup>75</sup>		
4	The Antichrist, Satan	villain, devil	biblical
	Antychryst <sup>76</sup>		
5	Eden	an ideal place	biblical
	(ogród) Eden		
6	a Barbie doll	a perfect-looking girl/woman	cultural
	laleczka Barbi		

Typical English single proper nouns with no Polish equivalents:

- the Matthew principle – the rule that more will be given for those who are provided for (biblical source)
- The Midas touch – the ability to make money out of anything (literary source)
- Tommy (Atkins) – an average soldier (cultural source)
- every man Jack – each and every person (cultural source)
- Nosey-Parker – a nosy person (cultural source)
- Black Maria – a prison van (historical/ cultural source)
- a Potemkin village – a sham, unreal thing (historical source)
- a New York minute – a very short time (historical source)

<sup>75</sup> WMSAP-PA offers a big number of phrases related to God, which are mostly equivalent both in English and Polish. For the sake of the paper they are omitted, and only single examples of each syntactic pattern are analysed. Among the phrases the dictionary lists, e.g., *w o l a b o s k a* – God's will, the hand of God; *k a r a b o s k a* – divine punishment, the hand of God; *j a k B o z i e k o c h a m!* coll. – I swear (to God), *j a k u P a n a B o g a z a p i e c e m* – (as) snug as a bug in a rug coll.; *m i ł y B o z e o r n a m i ł y B ó g o r j a k m i B ó g m i ł y* (amazement, surprise) – good God!, my God!; (indignation) for God's / heaven's sake!, for the love of God!

<sup>76</sup> WMSAP-PA also offers a big number of phrases related to Devil, which are mostly equivalent both in English and Polish. For the sake of the paper they are omitted, and only single examples of each syntactic pattern are analysed. Among the phrases the dictionary lists, e.g., *c z o r | t / d i a b e ł / B e l z e b u b* coll. – (the) devil, evil spirit; *b a ć s i e c z o r t ó w* – to be afraid of evil spirits; *b r z y d k i j a k c z o r t* – as ugly as the devil.



- the Queensberry Rules – standard rule of polite and acceptable behaviour (historical source)
- a Fabian policy – a strategy using slow and cautious tactics to tire the opposition (historical source)
- a Freudian slip – a speaker's unintentional mistake revealing his true thoughts (historical source)

Typical Polish single proper nouns with no English equivalents:

- Golgota – via dolorosa (biblical source)
- maciek/ maciuś – belly (cultural source).

Table Ib: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish  
(b) Proper nouns with titles: (Det) + title + PN:

No	English fix phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	A Don Juan Don Juan	a heartbreaker	literary

Typical English proper nouns with titles and no Polish equivalents:

- Mrs Grundy – a person with very conventional standards (literary source)
- Colonel Blimp – a nationalist (cultural source)
- Aunt Sally – a person or thing that is subject to abuse and criticism (cultural source)
- Uncle Tom – a black too polite for white people (historical source)
- Uncle Tom Cobley (Cobleigh) and all – a long list of people (historical source)
- Uncle Sam – a national personification of the American government (historical source)
- all Sir Garnet – highly satisfactory (historical source)
- an Admirable Crichton – universal human (historical source)

Typical Polish proper nouns with titles and no English equivalents:

- Pan Bóg – God Almighty (biblical source)
- Pan Twardowski – a person who parleys with the devil (literary source).

Table 1c: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish  
(c) Binomials /trinomials: (Det) PN + PN (+PN)

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	Alpha and Omega	the beginning and the end	biblical
	alfa i omega		
2	Oxford and Cambridge	two famous British universities	real / geographical
	Oxford i Cambridge		

Typical English binomials /trinomials with no Polish equivalents:

- Jack Frost – an old man who brings frost (mythological source)
- Jekyll and Hyde – with good and bad personalities at the same time (literary source)
- A Peter Pan – someone who behaves in a childish way (literary source)
- Beauty and the Beast – a beautiful woman and an ugly man (literary source)
- Rip Van Winkle – a benighted person (literary source)
- Hop-o'-My-Thumb/ Tom Thumb – a person of very small physical stature (literary source)
- A Darby and Joan – an old married couple (cultural source)
- Mickey Finn – a drugged drink (cultural source)
- A Walter Mitty – someone who fantasises a lot (cultural source)
- John Bull/Doe – an average citizen (cultural source)
- John Blunt – honestly speaking (cultural source)
- John Trot – an uncultured person (cultural source)
- Paul Pry – a nosy person (cultural source)
- Johnny Newcome (Raw) – a newcomer (cultural source)
- Jack-the-lad – a young con man (cultural source)
- Union Jack – the national flag of the United Kingdom (cultural source)
- Shipshape and Bristol fashion – tidy (cultural source)
- (any) Tom, Dick and Harry – ordinary people, anyone (historical source)
- Damon and Pythias – two faithful friends (historical source)
- Gordon Bennett! – a general term of exasperation or disbelief used when someone is either irritated or surprised by something (historical source)

Typical Polish binomial(s) with no English equivalents:

- Baba Jaga – a witch (literary source).

Table Id: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish  
 (d) Proper nouns in possessive structures: (Det) PN's + PN or (Det) NP1 of NP2 (the name can be in NP1 or NP2):

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	the judgement of Solomon	a wise decision	biblical
	Salomonowy wyrok		
2	Adam's apple	a bulge on the front side of the neck, special for men	biblical
	jabłko Adama, grdyka		
3	God's blood!	as an exclamation that sth bad has just happened	biblical
	rany boskie		
4	the scourge of God	(God's) punishment	biblical
	bicz Boży		
5	the fear of God	being frightened	biblical
	bojaźń Boża		
6	the mark of Cain	a stigma of a murderer	biblical
	Znamię Kaina/kainowe		
7	the law of Medes and Persians	sth which cannot be altered	biblical
	Prawo Medów i Persów		
8	plagues of Egypt	a scourge	biblical
	plagi egipskie		
9	the sword of Damocles	a powerful tool	biblical
	miecz Damoklesa		
10	a Judas kiss	a treacherous kiss, smile, look	biblical
	judaszow[y], judaszowski pocałunek [knowania]		
11	Day of the Lord	The judgement day	biblical
	Dzień Pański		
12	Janus-faced / the face of Janus	two-faced, double-faced	mythological
	Janusowe oblicze		
13	Oedipus' complex	subconscious sexual clinging of a son to his mother	mythological
	kompleks Edypa		
14	Cupid's arrows / darts	filling with uncontrolled desire	mythological
	strzały Kupidyna		
15	the torments of Tantalus	persistent suffering caused by coincidence, an unfavourable situation	mythological
	męki Tantalą		
16	Apollo's Muses	some inspiration, the source of knowledge	mythological
	Muzy Apollina		
17	Adonis Garden / a garden of Adonis	something decaying easily and fast transient	mythological
	ogródek Adonisa		
18	an Achilles' heel / tendon	one's weakness	mythological
	pięta / ścięgno Achillesa or achillesowe		
19	a labour of Hercules	enormous work	mythological
	Herkulesowa praca		
20	Pandora's box	causing problems	mythological
	puszka Pandory		
21	Ariadne's thread	solving of a problem with multiple apparent means of proceeding	mythological
	nić Ariadny		
22	an Aladdin's lamp	a talisman	literary
	lampa Aladyna		

23	the hanging gardens of Babylon ogrody Semiramidy	very fine and blooming gardens	historical
24	Murphy's law Prawo Murfiego	if anything can go wrong it will	historical
25	Occam's razor brzytwa Ockhama	without unnecessary assumptions	historical
26	the Maid of Orleans Dziewica Orleańska	as brave as St. Joanna d'Arc	historical
27	the last (of the) Mohican(s) ostatni Mohikanin	a dying breed	historical

Typical English proper nouns with possessive structures and no Polish equivalents:

- a Benjamin's portion /mess – the largest share or portion (biblical source)
- God's (own) gift to – the ideal person/thing (biblical source)
- a Job's comforter – a person who aggravates distress under the guise of comforter (biblical source)
- the patience of Job – huge patience (biblical source)
- act of God – an instance of uncontrollable natural forces in operation (biblical source)
- Adam's ale (wine) – pure water (biblical source)
- God's acre! – cemetery (biblical source)
- an Indian / St. Martin's summer – a name for a period of hot weather that sometimes occur, in Poland and Britain in late September or October (biblical / cultural source)
- an Aladdin's cave – a place full of valuable objects (literary source)
- Davy Jones's Locker – seabed (a seaman's grave) (literary source)
- Frankenstein's monster – destructive or terrifying thing for its maker (literary source)
- Tom Tiddler's ground – a place where money is made (cultural source)
- Buggins's turn – appointment in rotation (cultural source)
- Shanks's mare/pony – one's own two legs (cultural source)
- Caesar's wife – somebody without suspicion (historical source)
- Hobson's choice – no choice at all (historical source)
- Morton's fork – two choices with unpleasant results (historical source)
- the life of Riley /Reilly – a luxurious existence (historical source)

Typical Polish proper nouns with possessive structures and no English equivalents:

- córa Koryntu – lady of the night (biblical / literary source)
- jajko Kolumba – to define a simple solution of a seemingly difficult problem (historical source)

- pokolenie Kolumbów – representatives of the young Polish intelligentsia at the time of the Nazi occupation (historical source)
- prawem Kaduka – illegally, unlawfully (historical source).

Table Ie: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish  
(e) Proper nouns with adjectives: (Det) adj + PN (+PN):

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	doubting Thomas niewierny Tomasz	a sceptic	biblical
2	good God dobry Boże	a phrase used to show sb.'s surprise or fear	biblical
3	the old Adam stary Adam	unregenerate human nature	biblical
4	a good Samaritan dobry/ miłosierny samarytanin	a good, helpful and sensitive person	biblical
5	a Pyrrhic victory pyrusowe zwycięstwo	a victory gained at too great a cost	mythological
6	a Procrustean bed prokrusteńskie/ dragońskie łóże	something designed to create conformity by violent means	mythological
7	the Trojan Horse koń trojański	a dangerous gift bringing destruction	mythological
8	Herculean task herkulesowa praca	enormous work	mythological
9	Draconian methods / measures / laws drakońskie metody, środki, prawa	raw, absolute	mythological
10	Olympian calm olimpijski spokój	divine peace	mythological
11	Argus-eyed look argusowe oczy	an alert, watchful, suspicious look	mythological
12	narcissistic tendencies narcystyczne skłonności	a self-admirable behaviour	mythological
13	a Rubenesque figure rubensowskie kształty	plump, generous, full shapes especially of women	cultural
14	Dadaist manifesto manifest dadaistyczny	anti-war, avant-garde movement	historical
15	the Delphic oracle wyrocznia delficka	the oracle with clear answers and good defence	historical
16	Siamese twins bliźnięta syjamskie	inseparable friends	historical
17	Platonic love/ relationship miłość, związek platoniczny	pure, ideal relationship	historical

Typical English proper nouns with adjectives and no Polish equivalents:

- a new Jerusalem – an ideal place (biblical source)
- even Stephens /Stevens – an even chance (literary source)
- the real Simon Pure – the real/genuine person (literary source)
- a plain Jane – an unattractive girl/woman (cultural source)
- the real McCoy – the real thing (cultural source)
- peeping Tom – somebody who peeps (cultural source)
- the jolly Roger – the black flag bearing the skull and crossbones, flown by pirate ships (cultural source)
- a silly Billy – a fool (often said playfully, in a non-serious way) (cultural source)
- a proper Charlie – a complete fool (cultural source)
- jingling Johnny – a percussion instrument (cultural source)
- an admirable Crichton – a person noted for supreme competence (historical source)
- a quick Bill – an impulsive person (historical source)
- a smart Aleck – a con man (historical source)
- the Old Bailey – the criminal court in London where important trials are held (historical source).

Typical Polish proper nouns with adjectives and no English equivalents:

- Chrystusowy wiek / Chrystusowe lata – the age of 33 (when Christ died on the Cross) (biblical source)
- egipskie ciemności – pitch-darkness (biblical source)
- jowiszowe oblicze, gniew, spojrzenie – a stern face, anger, look (mythological source)
- sceny dantejskie – (absolute) pandemonium (literary source)
- osioł dardanelski – a complete ass (cultural source)
- głupi jaś – premedication (cultural source)
- spotkanie derbowe – a match (historical source)
- dziewica norymberska – an iron maiden (historical source)
- rymy częstochowskie – Doggerel, of weak quality (historical source)
- wersalska grzeczność – courtliness (historical source)
- madejowe łoże – uncomfortable bed (of tortures) (historical source)
- krakowskim targiem – as a compromise, by way of compromise (historical source)
- brodacz monachijski – giant schnauzer (historical source).

Table If: Group I – English expressions with Nouns Phrases and their equivalents in Polish  
(f) Proper nouns with prepositions: NP1 + preposition + NP2 (the name can be in NP1 or NP2):

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	corn in Egypt zboże w Egipcie	a plentiful supply	biblical

Typical English proper nouns with prepositions and no Polish equivalents:

- a sop to Cerberus – something to console somebody (mythological source)
- Hamlet without a prince – a performance without the main actor (literary source)
- a Roland for an Oliver<sup>77</sup> – an effective response, tit for tat (literary source)
- Jack of all trades – skilful but a master at none (cultural source)
- Jack in office – a conceited, swollen-headed clerk (cultural source)
- The man on the Clapham omnibus – an average citizen (cultural source)
- castles in Spain – illusions of imaginary riches (cultural source)
- all Lombard Street to a China orange – in the context of making a bet, either explicitly or implicitly (historical source)

Typical Polish proper nouns with prepositions and no English equivalents:

- sto lat za Murzynami – primitive, in the Stone Age (cultural source)
- mądry Polak po szkodzie – a sadder and wiser man (historical source)
- cud nad Wisłą – the Miracle of the Vistula (when Piłsudski against all odds repulsed the Soviet Army at Radzymin in August 1920) (historical source).

## Group II:

Fixed phrases with Verb Phrases – i.e. idiomatic verb phrases with proper nouns (PN) that function as object NPs e.g., *to tempt Providence* or as prepositional complement, e.g., *not to know sb. from Adam*.

Table II: Group II – English fixed phrases with Verb Phrases and their equivalents in Polish

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	tempt Providence kusić Opatrzność	take unnecessary and dangerous risks	biblical
2	find God odnaleźć Boga w sercu	experience a religious conversion	biblical

<sup>77</sup> There is a Polish equivalent for that phrase but with different proper names: “jak Kuba Bogu, tak Bóg Kubie” [as Cuba to God, so God Cuba] that works as a proverb in Polish.

3	play Judas;	betray someone	biblical
	postąpić po judaszowsku		
4	be between Scylla and Charybdis	be between two dangers	mythological
	znaleźć się między Scyllą i Charybdą		
5	treat sb. like a Cinderella	humiliate sb. in front of their friends	literary
	traktować kogoś jak kopciuszka		
6	be holier than the Pope	behave/ think of oneself as the best and the only authority	cultural
	być bardziej papieskim niż sam papież/być świętszym od papieża		
7	appeal to Caesar	appeal to the highest possible authority	historical
	odwoływać się do samego Cezara/Papieża		
8	cross the Rubicon	take a decisive step	historical
	przekroczyć Rubikon		
9	cut the Gordian knot	to solve a difficult problem	historical
	przeziąć węzeł gordyjski		

Typical English fixed phrases with VP with no Polish equivalents – derived from the Bible:

- not to know someone from Adam – fail to recognise somebody
- bow down in the house of Rimmon – sacrifice your principles for the sake of conformity
- raise Cain – get angry, cause trouble
- rob Peter to pay Paul – to take from one to give another
- go over to Rome – to convert to Catholicism
- not know someone from Adam – have no recollection of someone/not recognize someone
- fiddle while Rome burns – do trivial things when something serious happens;
- derived from the Greek / Roman mythology:
- beware of Greeks bearing gifts – be careful
- pile /heap Pelion on Ossa – Add an extra difficult task to the one already hard
- work like a Trojan – work extremely hard; derived from literature:
- grin like a Cheshire cat – smile widely
- go to Davy Jones’s Locker – be drowned at sea
- play the devil (Old Harry) with – damage; derived from the cultural sources:
- go/be gone for a Burton – to be unsuccessful/to fail/to be broken
- make a Horlicks of something – make a mess
- be in Queer Street – have financial problems
- take the Mickey out of someone – to poke fun at someone



- astonish the Browns – shock the city inhabitants
- make a Virginia fence – walk crookedly because of being drunk;  
derived from the historical sources:
- appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober – ask sb to reconsider
- carry coals to Newcastle – bring sth to a place where it is already plentiful
- catch a Tartar<sup>78</sup> – encounter an adversary who is too strong for you
- send somebody to Coventry – refuse to speak or ignore somebody
- fight as Kilkenny cats – fight fiercely
- put on the Ritz – make a show of luxury
- meet your Waterloo – be defeated
- be a smart Aleck- pretend being wise
- never set the Thames on fire – do something brilliant
- lead the life of Riley – lead a life of comfort and ease
- put Yorkshire on somebody – deceive someone
- dine with Duke Humphrey – be left without any dinner
- take a child to Banbury Cross – swing a baby on one's leg.

Typical Polish fixed phrases with VP and no English equivalents derived from the Bible:

- chodzić/być odsyłanym od Annasza do Kajfasza – to go/ be driven from pillar to post;
- przenieść się na łono Abrahama – to go to meet one's Maker
- pójść do Abrahama na piwo – to pass through the Pearly Gates
- być w stroju Ewy – to be naked; derived from the literary sources:
- pójść do Canossy – to eat humble pie
- czekać na Godota – to wait till doomsday
- wyrwać się / wyskoczyć jak filip z konopi – to stop the conversation dead / to throw sb for a loop/ to put one's foot in it
- pojechać do Rygi – to throw up.

Typical Polish fixed phrases with VP and no English equivalents derived from the historical sources:

- wychodzić na 'czymś' jak Zabłocki na mydle – lose the benefit from something
- odkrywać Amerykę – to reinvent the wheel.

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<sup>78</sup> There is a Polish equivalent for that phrase that functions as a proverb: złapać Kozaka/ Tatarzyna (a Tatarzyn za łeb trzyma) – catch a Tartar (and the Tartar's holding the head).

## Group III:

Fixed phrases with Prepositional Phrases – i.e. idiomatic prepositional phrases with proper nouns (PN) in a NP: prep + NP, e.g., *in the Land of Nod*.

Table III: Group III – English fixed phrases with Prepositional Phrases and their equivalents in Polish

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	in Abraham's bosom	in heaven	biblical
	na łonie Abrahama		
2	from the loins of Abraham	derived from the faith (Abraham's faith)	biblical
	z łądzwi Abrahama		
3	for God's sake	a phrase used when someone is shocked, angry or irritated	biblical
	na litość boską		
4	in the Arms of Morpheus / in the Land of Nod	a state of sleep	mythological
	w objęciach Morfeusza		
5	for Africa	in abundance, in large numbers	cultural
	dla Afryki		
6	not for all the tea in China	not at all	cultural
	nawet za Chiny Ludowe		

Typical English fixed phrases with PP and no Polish equivalents, derived from literature:

- according to Hoyle – according to the plan/rules
- round Robin Hood's barn – by a circuitous route
- derived from the culture:
- by George!<sup>79</sup> – to show surprise
- from China to Peru<sup>80</sup> – from one side of the world to the other
- on your Jack<sup>81</sup> – on your own
- for the love of Mike!<sup>82</sup> – to express one's surprise/anger
- not on your Nelly! – (an emphatic way of saying) no/never!
- not for all the gold in Arabia – not at all

<sup>79</sup> The Polish equivalent for that phrase but with a different proper name sounds: "Na Boga!" [Oh my God!] that works as a PP exclamation in Polish.

<sup>80</sup> The Polish equivalent for that phrase but with a different proper name sounds: "Od Bałtyku po gór szczyty" [From the Baltic Sea to the mountains' tops] that works as a PP in Polish.

<sup>81</sup> „Zosia samosia” [Sopie on her own] is a Polish equivalent for the English phrase but with a different proper name. Its structure is an NP + NP in Polish.

<sup>82</sup> „Na miłość Boską!” [For the love of God!] is a Polish equivalent for the English phrase but with a different proper name. It has a PP structure in Polish.

- by the Lord Harry / arch – go to hell!
- from John O’Groat’s to Land’s End – as Britain extends, from Shetland to Cornwall (cultural/ historical source).

Typical Polish fixed phrases with PP and no English equivalents:

- od Adama i Ewy – the world began (biblical origin)
- w stroju Adama / adamowym – in one’s birthday suit (biblical source)
- dookoła Wojtek – over and over (again), all over again (literary source)
- za dawnych czasów, za czasów Króla Świeczka<sup>83</sup> – a very long time ago (hist. source).

#### Group IV:

Fixed phrases as clauses – i.e. proper nouns (PN) appear in:

- (a) subordinate clauses: (*if*) *God (is) willing*;
- (b) main (Subject-Verb) clauses: *God knows*.

Table IVa: Group IV – English fixed phrases including clauses and their equivalents in Polish  
(a) subordinate clauses:

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase’s meaning	source
1	God willing jeśli Bóg pozwoli	It is will be real/possible	biblical

Typical English fixed phrases as subordinate clauses with no Polish equivalents:

- before you could say Jack Robinson – very quickly (historical source)
- When Queen Anne was alive – a very long time ago (historical source).

Table IVb: Group IV – English fixed phrases as clauses and their equivalents in Polish  
(b) main (Subject-Verb) clauses:

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase’s meaning	source
1	God knows Bóg wie/ Bóg raczy wiedzieć	something is unknown	biblical
2	God forbid! uchowaj Boże!	a phrase used to express sb’s fear	biblical
3	that’s John all over to typowe dla Jana	it is typical of somebody	cultural

<sup>83</sup> “When Queen Anne was alive” is an English equivalent for the Polish phrase but with a different proper name. The phrase appears a subordinate clause in English and within a PP in Polish.

- Typical English fixed phrases as main clauses with no Polish equivalents:
- God speed! – Have a safe trip! (biblical origin)
  - Greek meets Greek – similarities attract each other (mythological source)
  - beware Greeks bearing gifts – a phrase used to warn one to beware of accepting gifts from former enemies or people who have previously let you down somehow (imperative of mythological origin)
  - even Homer nods – a horse has four legs and can stumble (mythological source)
  - all shall be well, Jack shall have Jill – all ended happily (literary source)
  - Bob's your uncle – everything is fine (cultural origin)
  - I'm not just whistling Dixie – I'm not joking (cultural origin)
  - let George do it<sup>84</sup> – let sb else do the work (cultural origin)
  - and Bob's your uncle! – a phrase used in effect to say that someone now has what they want! (cultural origin)
  - Sod you Jack, I'm all right! – a phrase that may be said of/by someone who is very self-centered and only interested in their own welfare (cultural origin)
  - Queen Anne is dead<sup>85</sup> – someone important has just died (historical source)
  - the Dutch have taken Holland – to reinvent the wheel (historical source).

#### Group V:

Fixed phrases including similes – i.e. proper nouns appear in structures with 'like' and 'as': *meek as Moses*.

Table V: Group V – English fixed phrases including similes and their equivalents in Polish

No	English fixed phrases with their Polish equivalents	The phrase's meaning	source
1	as wise as Salomon mądry jak Salomon	able to solve very hard problems	biblical
2	as poor as Lazarus ubogi jak Łazarz	extremely poor	biblical
3	as proud as Lucifer pyszny jak Lucyfer/Diabeł	a haughty person	biblical
4	as rich as Croesus bogaty jak Krezus	extremely wealthy	historical

<sup>84</sup> There is a Polish equivalent for that phrase but with a different proper name: “Znaleźć /zrobić sobie głupiego Jasia z kogoś” that works as a VP [V + adj + proper name].

<sup>85</sup> There is a Polish equivalent for that phrase but with a different proper name: “Królowa Bona umarła” that works as a main clause.

Typical English similes with no Polish equivalents:

- meek as Moses – very meek (biblical source)
- happy as Larry – extremely happy (cultural source)
- like Darby and Joan – jak dwa gołąbki (cultural source)
- as dead as Queen Anne – obsolete things (historical source).

Typical Polish similes with no English equivalents:

- jak Dawid przy Goliacie – as dissimilar as chalk and cheese (biblical source)
- jak Piłat w credo – out of place, like a hole in the head (biblical source)
- silny jak Herkules – very strong (mythological source)
- czarny jak Cygan/ Cyganicha – (as) dark as a gypsy (historical source).

All in all, having analysed the data above referring to the names in phraseological fixed units, we can note a predominance of personal over place names. In the source evidence, there are 257 phraseological fixed elements analysed in total, with 138 typical English ones, and 44 typical Polish ones; while 75 of them are common for the two languages. Thus, English proves to be a more idiomatic language in comparison to Polish. In both languages the most common are units with biblical and mythological sources (e.g., *in Abraham's bosom, a Benjamin's portion /mess, act of God, not to know sb. from Adam, the old Adam, doubting Thomas, the mark of Cain, the law of Medes and Persians, a labour of Hercules, Pandora's box*). The least common are expressions with historical and literary backgrounds, as these aspects are unique for each country and nationality (e.g., *Damon and Pythias, fight as Kilkenny cats*). Yet, with regard to phraseological types, the most numerous group of expressions is constituted by idiomatic noun phrases (157 units), then verb phrases (51 units), and prepositional phrases (which constitute 19 units). 12 units work as similes, 15 units as main clauses, and 3 as subordinate clauses. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below:

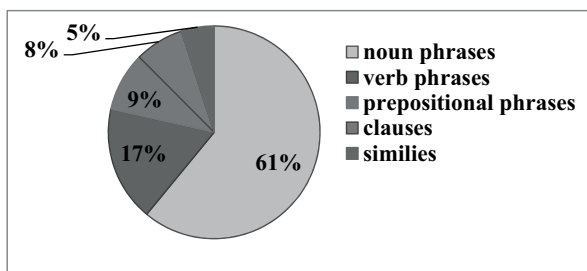


Figure 1. *Categories of phraseological units with proper names in the data collected*

Furthermore, with regard to the meaning of fixed phrases including proper personal and place names, the data analysed show that the units do convey information, recall connotations that arose some time ago on the biblical, mythological, literary, cultural, and historical backgrounds, and are still relevant today. These fixed phrases also express evaluation, in many cases it is a negative assessment of people's character, disapproval, or criticism.

In short, as concluded by Pierini (2008), proper names belong to a class of linguistic items sharing features with both nouns and deictics. Formally, PNs share some grammatical characteristics with common nouns, but vary from them in numerous aspects. Both PNs and deictics lack lexical meaning and have a referential function. The interpretation of deictics depends on the situational context; whereas, the interpretation of PNs is based on the linguistic context and encyclopaedic data. Lastly, PNs refer to a 'fixed' referent, while deictics to a referent that can differ according to the situational context.

## 6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The process of naming is crucially linked with cultural history, social context, and individual experience<sup>86</sup>. In the case of proper names, Sørensen states that their function is noticeably the same in all languages<sup>87</sup>. Only the forms that names have, their shapes, and the manner in which they fit syntactically into a larger context, are undoubtedly different in these structural aspects. Marmaridou specifies that a proper noun is allocated to a given referent by some social convention, and encyclopaedic information is associated with it in long-term memory<sup>88</sup>. However, especially personal names may be ascribed to more than one referent; thus, to understand which referent the encoder is referring to, both a competence of the name system and some encyclopaedic knowledge associated with a name are required.

What is more, Seidl and McMordie remind us that English is very rich in phraseological units<sup>89</sup>. In fact, it is difficult to speak or write English without

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<sup>86</sup> B. RYMES, *Naming as social practice: the case of little creeper from Diamond Street*, "Language in Society" 25(2)(1996), pp. 237-260.

<sup>87</sup> H. S. SØRENSEN, *The Meaning of Proper Names*, Copenhagen 1963, p. 671.

<sup>88</sup> A.S.S. MARMARIDOU, *Proper names...*, pp. 355-356.

<sup>89</sup> J. SEIDL and W. MCMORDIE, *English Idioms and How to Use Them*, fourth ed., Oxford 1978, p. 48.

using idiomatic expressions. Some units have been fixed by long usage, and bring spontaneously specific connotations both to the speaker and listener.

The paper has focused on proper personal and place names in English and Polish phraseology. Proper names in fixed phraseological units are of great significance in communication, where they may be the signs of cultural, linguistic, geographical, ethnic, and social identity. They can also offer an insight into the interplay between culture and language in phraseology<sup>90</sup>. Accordingly, some points that emerged from the analysis have proved that idioms with the structure of noun phrases constitute the vast majority of the phraseological units. Furthermore, the personal and place names within such expressions originate in the Bible, mythology, literature, historical events, and cultural background. Besides, there are far more personal than place names, first names than surnames. Finally, a considerable number of units express evaluation (often disapproval or criticism).

To conclude, undoubtedly, further research is necessary to find some regularities amongst proverbs, sayings and phrases with proper names of weekdays, months, seasons, animals, plants, nationalities, languages, etc. Besides, in this paper the starting point of the survey has been anchored in English/Polish idiom and phrase dictionaries to check if the fixed phrases with the proper names exist at all; whereas the frequency and context of their appearance have not been examined yet. In addition, there are a few well-prepared books on English and Polish proverbs that would be worth having a deeper look at, such as *A Dictionary of Proverbs* by J. Speake; *101 American English Proverbs: Understanding Language and Culture Through Commonly Used Sayings* by Harry Collis; *Nowa księga przysłów i wyrażeń przysłowiowych polskich* by J. Krzyżanowski; or A. Weryha-Darowski's *Przysłowia polskie odnoszące się do nazwisk szlacheckich i miejscowości [Polish proverbs related to the names of the nobility and towns]*<sup>91</sup>, all of which include also proper names within proverbs and sayings. Truly then, the field of phraseological units is challenging, inspiring, and unquestionably fertile to be continuously exploited.

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<sup>90</sup> J.R. TAYLOR, *Cognitive Grammar*, Oxford 2002, p. 20.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. K. JARZĄBEK, *Poles and Poland in Polish proverbs*.

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SYNTACTIC PATTERNS  
OF ENGLISH AND POLISH FIXED PHRASES  
WITH PROPER NAMES

Summary

This paper focuses on English and Polish fixed phrases involving personal and place names. First, the definition of a *name* and the distinction between *proper* and *common nouns* or *proprrial lemmas* and *proper names* are provided, following a short overview of theories that constitute the basis for any discussion related to proper names. Next, subcategories and sources of names, together with their linguistic characteristics are presented, followed by the working definition of phraseological fixed units. Afterwards, the study is undertaken of personal and place names in fixed phraseological units, surveying a broad list of English and Polish fixed entities that are classified according to five syntactic patterns: phrases with (1) NPs, (2) VPs, (3) PPs, (4) clauses, and (5) similes. Additionally, the biblical, literary, classical, cultural and historical origins of these expressions are pointed out. Finally, in the light of the examined data, the predominance of personal over place names is noticeable, while the items with NPs constitute the vast majority of the phraseological units. Investigating corpus and dictionary evidence, fixed elements typical either of English or only of Polish, or those common to both English and Polish are listed. The most frequent are the units from biblical and mythological sources, while the least popular are the expressions with historical and literary background, as these aspects are unique for each country. With regard to the meaning of the fixed phrases containing proper personal and place names, the data reveal that the units do convey information, recall connotations that arose some time ago in relation to the biblical, mythological, literary, cultural, and historical background, and are still relevant today.

**Key words:** phraseological fixed phrases, personal names, place names, etymology, syntactic patterns.

STRUKTURY SKŁADNIOWE  
W ANGIELSKICH I POLSKICH ZWIĄZKACH FRAZEOLÓGICZNYCH  
Z NAZWAMI WŁASNYMI

Streszczenie

Przedmiotem artykułu jest analiza angielskich i polskich związków frazeologicznych, które zawierają nazwy osobowe i nazwy geograficzne miejsca. Przedstawienie definicji nazw własnych w odróżnieniu od rzeczowników pospolitych było wyjściowym etapem studium, a zaprezentowana definicja robocza związków frazeologicznych według Gläsera stanowiła punkt odniesienia do niniejszych badań. Na podstawie danych ze słowników angielskich oraz polskich, opierając się na korpusach językowych, przeanalizowano związki frazeologiczne, jeśli tylko zawierały w swojej strukturze nazwy osobowe lub miejsca, z wykluczeniem przysłów. Materiał poddano wieloaspektowej analizie ze względu na występujące struktury składniowe badanych

jednostek frazeologicznych oraz etymologię i znaczenie nazw własnych występujących we frazach. Wyróżniono, zarówno we frazeologizmach angielskich, jak i polskich, pięć wzorów syntaktycznych: (1) wyrażenia rzeczownikowe, (2) zwroty czasownikowe, (3) wyrażenia przyimkowe, (4) zdania główne i podrzędne, (5) porównania. Związki frazeologiczne poddane zestawieniu wywodziły się z różnorodnych źródeł: jedne miały korzenie biblijne, inne literackie lub/i mitologiczne, kulturowe czy/ oraz historyczne. Ponadto w świetle przeanalizowanych danych zaobserwowano przewagę nazw osobowych nad nazwami miejscowymi, oraz wyrażen rzeczownikowych nad innymi strukturami składniowymi. Najczęściej frazeologizmy z nazwami własnymi pochodzą ze źródeł biblijnych i mitologicznych, a najmniej popularne są wyrażenia o tle historycznym i literackim, gdyż te aspekty określają specyfikę typową dla danego kraju, nie zawsze rozumianą dla innych kultur. Istniejące we frazeologizmach konotacje biblijne, mitologiczne, literackie, kulturowe czy historyczne przeżywały swoje natężenie znaczeniowe w danej przestrzeni czasowej, niemniej jednak, prawie we wszystkich wypadkach, odniesienia te są nadal aktualne i rozumiane przez ogół społeczeństwa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** zwroty frazeologiczne, osobowe nazwy własne, nazwy miejscowości, etymologia, struktury składniowe.