

# Food idioms in English and their equivalents in Croatian

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Vukić, Sabina

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Sveučilište J.J. Strossmayera u Osijeku  
Filozofski fakultet  
Preddiplomski studij engleskog jezika i književnosti i pedagogije

Sabina Vukić

**Food idioms in English and their equivalents in Croatian**

Završni rad

Mentor: doc. dr. sc. Goran Schmidt

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## Abstract

This research is an analysis of phraseological units which contain food in the English language and their equivalents in Croatian. The research consists of three major parts. The first part focuses on the theoretical background of phraseology and phraseological units. The second part consists of the explanation of methodology used in order to construct the corpus. The third part consists of an analysis of 28 phraseological units from the corpus which was constructed with the use of 14 dictionaries.

The main part of the research is the analysis of the corpus, which focuses on identification of phraseological units in English and their equivalents in Croatian. The aim is to analyze the similarity of the two languages; that is, how many of the idioms are translatable (have their equivalents) in the other language. The three appendices represent an overview of data that was found in the dictionaries used the analysis. The first appendix is an overview of all the dictionaries along with the abbreviations used in the analysis. The second appendix shows the ratio of phraseological units based on the level of equivalence in the target and source language. Finally, the third appendix contains a list all the phraseological units used in this research: their version in the source language, their translation, and the type of equivalence.

*Keywords:* phraseology, phraseological units, food, English, Croatian

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Theoretical background.....	2
2.1. Phraseology and phraseological unit.....	2
2.2. The defining characteristics of phraseological units.....	2
2.2.1. Polylexemic structure.....	2
2.2.2. Stability.....	2
2.2.3. Lexicalization.....	3
2.2.4. Idiomaticity.....	3
2.2.5. Connotations.....	3
2.3. Translation of Phraseological Units.....	4
3. Research design and description of corpus.....	5
4. Corpus analysis.....	5
5. Conclusion.....	17
References.....	18
Appendices.....	20
Appendix 1: The list of the dictionaries used and their abbreviations.....	20
Appendix 2: The ratio of phraseological units with different types of equivalence.....	21
Appendix 3: Corpus of English idioms and Croatian equivalen.....	21

## 1. Introduction

This research deals with the analysis of phraseological units containing food in English and its equivalents and translation in Croatian. It is based on a corpus which contains a collection of 28 phraseological units from a total of 14 dictionaries. The research is divided into three main parts - theoretical background, methodology and corpus analysis. The paper begins with a brief theoretical overview in which phraseology as a discipline and phraseological units are explained. In the second part it is elaborated which dictionaries are used for identifying phraseological units used in this research paper and the process of building a corpus. The last part of the research focuses on an in-depth analysis of 28 phraseological units which consists of definitions in both English and Croatian, examples of the use of phraseological units in English and the translation in Croatian. The aim of this paper is to analyze and compare English idioms with food with their equivalents in Croatian. Since there are considerable differences between languages when it comes to the usage of phraseological units, in the research it will be clarified how translating phraseological units functions and what some of the problems concerning their translation from one language to another are.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Phraseology and phraseological unit

In her coursebook, *English Phraseology*, Sabine Fiedler indicates that the term phraseology can be used in two ways. Firstly, it can be used to name the field of study and, secondly, to denote the set of linguistic units that are investigated in this field. The analysed subject is called phraseological unit, which comprises the phrasicon, i.e. the block or inventory of idioms and phrases (Fiedler 2007: 15).

Phraseological units are used on an everyday basis and are often limited to a particular culture. Phraseological unit is "a lexicalized word-group which has syntactic and semantic stability and optionally an intensifying function in the text" (Gläser 1984: 125). The traditional term for a phraseological unit was "idiom" and those two expressions have been equalized, but the term "idiom" covers numerous kinds of conventional multi-word units (Fiedler 2007: 15). There are several criteria and characteristics that define a phraseological unit, which are defined later in the paper.

### 2.2. The defining characteristics of phraseological units

#### 2.2.1. *Polylexemic structure*

The criteria that defines phraseological units as polylexemic items, i.e. they consist of at least two independent words, is controversial and treated differently by scholars. The problem of choosing a correct size as a basis for separating phraseological units from non phraseological items can be exemplified by transforming a phraseological word group into a compound. An expression "to pull the wires" can be transformed into a compound "wire-puller", which illustrates the stated problem. Another difficulty is setting the upper limit for phraseological units since they can take on the form of sentences, for example, proverbs such as "A friend in need is a friend indeed" (Fiedler 2007: 17-18).

#### 2.2.2. *Stability*

Stability, as a key feature of phraseological units, separates it from a random combination of words because they exhibit a stable semantic and syntactic structure. Phraseological units can change their meaning only over long periods of time, but those cases are rare. In order to prove the stability of the structure of phraseological units, a substitution

test can be applied. For example, an expression "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" is meaningful and has its structure that cannot be changed into an expression "A bird in the hand is worth three in the bush", because with the changes in the structure, the original expression loses its meaning (Fiedler 2007: 19).

On the other hand, Gläser (1998: 129) points out that phraseological units may vary in their stability in cases when they can encompass constituents which allow variations within the constraints of the phraseological system. For example, expression "To tear to pieces" and "To tear to shreds" have different constituents but still carry the same meaning (Gläser 1998: 129).

### *2.2.3. Lexicalization*

The characteristic of lexicalization of phraseological units is firmly related to its stability. It describes how phraseological units are accepted in the language and are memorized holistically (as a whole) by the language users. The process of lexicalization of phraseological units starts when a new expression is coined by a speaker in need of a new word or phrase. Later it becomes gradually used by other speakers and is accepted as a lexeme. When a phraseological unit is fully lexicalized, it becomes entirely incorporated in the language (Fiedler 2007:21).

### *2.2.4. Idiomaticity*

Idiomaticity is considered to be a typical, but only optional characteristic of phraseological units. It is a term describing that the meaning of an expression can be difficult to derive from its constituents. This characteristic of phraseological units causes problems because language learners know the meanings of all the constituents in an expression, for example "to pull somebody's leg", but they are unable to presuppose the meaning of the entire expression. Furthermore, idiomaticity can be graded. On one hand, phraseological units can be fully opaque and are called real idioms, but on the other hand, they can be fully transparent and still be considered idioms because they are polylexemic, stable, and lexicalized (Fiedler 2007: 22).

### *2.2.5. Connotations*

Connotations are considered to be "additional semantic markers which are associated with the value judgments of a speech community or of an individual speaker or writer" (Gläser 1998: 127). They are usually used to either trigger an emotional reaction or to

accentuate something that has been written or said by the user of language. Gläser (1998) distinguishes three major types of connotations: expressive, stylistic and register connotations. Expressive connotations can be derogatory (e.g. "to breed like rabbits"), taboo (e.g. "get stuffed"), euphemistic (e.g. "to live in sin") or humorous (e.g. "to have a bun in the oven"). Stylistic connotations are usually used in conversations and can be informal (e.g. "green fingers"), slang ("to keep down"), formal (e.g. "under the aegis of"), literary (e.g. "alpha and omega"), archaic (e.g. "in days of yore"), or foreign (e.g. "sine qua non"). Finally, register markers, as a final type of connotations, usually appear in dictionaries as references to a specific field and can be related to astronomy, economics, medicinal etc. (Gläser 1998: 128).

### 2.3. Translation of Phraseological Units

Translation of phraseological units from one language to another can be very challenging because of their idiomacity. In the translation process, the phraseological unit of the source language does not always correspond with that of the target language. Because of those irregularities between different languages, content of the text remains the ultimate criterion of translation (Gläser 1984: 123). There are three types of lexical equivalence that can be differentiated when it comes to translation of phraseological units:

1. Complete equivalence - occurs when the target language offers the same constituents in the translated expression as those that can be found in the source language; e.g. "Apple of discord" = "Jabuka razdora"
2. Partial equivalence - occurs when only some of the constituents of the translated expression are the same in both target and source language; e.g. "buy a pig in a poke" = "kupiti mačka u vreći"
3. Zero equivalence - occurs when there are no identical or similar constituents that form an expression in the source or target language; e.g. "Johnny-come-lately" = "novajlija"

When talking about translation patterns, Sabine Fiedler (2007: 115) points out certain steps that should be followed when translating:

1. Identification of the PU in the source language
2. Analysis of the phraseological meaning (SL paraphrase)
3. Translation of the phraseological meaning (TL paraphrase)
4. Substitution by a PU in the target language



In some cases it is advisable not to carry out the final step and instead substitute the phraseological unit by expressing the content of the PU in a non-phraseological way. Also, in some cases, when it comes to the translation of modified units, some additional steps should be taken, such as an analysis of the SL techniques of modification and its effects on the text (Fiedler 2007: 12).

### 3. Research design and description of corpus

The aim of this research is to find phraseological units with food in the English language, and to see how they are translated in the target language, Croatian.

The corpus consists of 28 phraseological units which were selected and defined by usage of 7 dictionaries. First, an example sentence of the usage of a phraseological unit is provided. Secondly, a definition of phraseological unit is given. Next comes an appropriate counterpart in the target language. The last step of the analysis consists of determination of the type of equivalence according to Gläser, 1998 (complete, partial or zero equivalence).

The templates used for the corpus analysis were the coursebook *English Phraseology* by Sabine Fiedler and the article by Rosmarie Gläser “The Translation Aspect of Phraseological Units in English and German”.

## 4. Corpus analysis

### 1. The apple of someone's eye

- a) The cracks in Yugoslavia's facade were becoming more noticeable , despite Tito's ritualistic incantation: ' protect your brotherhood and unity like *the apple of your eye* (HEFR 306)
- b) Someone’s favorite person or thing; a boyfriend or a girlfriend.(DoAI 17)
- c) čuvati koga kao oko u glavi (CEDoI 537); kao zjenica oka (EHFR 103)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase originated from the metaphor that was used to describe the pupil of the eye by comparing it to an apple because of their similar shape. As one's eyesight is precious, so is the person described as the apple of one's eye. (DoI 5)

The phrase "the apple of someone's eye" is considered to be completely equivalent to the phrase "kao zjenica oka", since the target language has the same constituents in the expression as those in the source language. The constituents "apple of the eye" can be directly translated to the Croatian equivalents "zjenica oka".

## 2. Bring home the bacon

- a) Go out and get a job so you can *bring home the bacon*. (EID 50)
- b) supply material provision or support (OID 13)
- c) donositi kruh u kuću (CEDoI); uzdržavati obitelj (EHFR)
- d) partial equivalence

One of the possible explanations for the origin of this phrase suggests that, for centuries, catching a greased pig was a very popular sport at many country fairs. The winner was allowed to keep the pig as the prize, and brought home the bacon. (DoI 11)

The phrase "bring home the bacon" is partially equivalent to the phrase "donositi kruh u kuću", because only some constituents are the same in both languages. In this phrase, constituents "bring" equals "donositi" and "home" is directly translated to "kuća".

## 3) To spill the beans

- a) You can count on little Carol to spill the beans about the surprise. (TAHDoI 983)
- b) to indiscreetly reveal sensitive information (MS 57)
- c) izlanuti se (CEDoI); progovorio bi na lakat (HEFR 398)
- d) zero equivalence

The origin of this story dates from ancient Greek where a person who wanted to be a member of a secret society could to be accepted in only through voting. The voting system was devised whereby members walked by a jar and dropped a single bean into it (white meaning approval and black disapproval). Occasionally, someone's arm would catch the pot and the contents would spill out for all to see so the secret was known to everybody. (DoI 176)

The phrases "to spill the beans" and "izlanuti se", have zero equivalence, since there are no identical or even similar constituents in the source or target language.

#### 4) The greatest thing since sliced bread

- a) Joe thinks Sally is the *greatest thing since sliced bread*. You can tell just by the way he looks at her. (DoAI 272)
- b) An excellent new invention (TAHDoI 440)
- c) nešto najbolje na svijetu (my translation); bog bogova (HEFR 13)
- d) zero equivalence

It is not known when the phrase first became popular. It may have been during the early years of the product when it was a new invention and it caused quite a stir, or when sales started to boom in the 1950s.

The phrase "the greatest thing since sliced bread", just like the previous one, has zero equivalence with the phrase in the target language since there are no similar constituents.

#### 5) A piece of cake

- a) No, it won't be any trouble. It's *a piece of cake*. (EID 313)
- b) Something that is easy to do (DoAI 499)
- c) mačji kašalj (HEFR); kao od šale (my translation)
- d) zero equivalence

It is thought that this idiom originated in the 1870s when it was tradition to give cakes as prizes in competitions. In some parts of the USA at this time, slaves would participate in 'cake walks' where couples would perform a dance mocking the mannerisms of their masters. The most graceful couple would receive a cake as a prize. From this, the expression 'a piece of cake' started being used to describe something that was easy to achieve. (Bloomsbury International)

The phrase "a piece of cake" has zero equivalence with the translated phrases in Croatian. For this phrase to be partially or completely equivalent with the phrases in the target language, it would have to be translated with similar constituents which would be "komad torte", which is not the case since that phrase has no idiomatic meaning in Croatian.

### 6) The big cheese

- a) She loved being the *big cheese* of her company
- b) an important and influential person (OID 24)
- c) Bog i batina (EHFR); krupna riba (my translation)
- d) partial equivalence

The expression big cheese is of doubtful origin but is considered to be from Persian and Urdu *chiz* meaning "thing". The phrase seems to have originated in early 20-th century. (OID 24)

The phrase "the big cheese" is partially equivalent to the phrase "krupna riba", since they both have a similar constituent which is "big" = "krupna".

### 7) Two bites of the cherry

- a) He missed a medal in the 100 metres, but will get *a second bite of the cherry* in the 400 metres. (LDEI)
- b) two attempts or chances at doing something (LDEI)
- c) druga prilika (EHFR); imati pravo na popravni (EHFR)
- d) zero equivalence

As for the origin of the phrase, it derives from the imagery of eating fruit. In case of a cherry, typically one bite is all that is going to take to eat it. To get a second bite, would be a bonus, in effect one would get to eat it twice. (The phrase finder)

This phrase has zero equivalence to the translated phrases in Croatian. To have partial or complete equivalence, the phrase in Croatian would have to be similar to "dva zalogaja trešnje", but that would not have any idiomatic meaning.

### 8) That's the way the cookie crumbles

- a) I was planning to have fun on my vacation, but I've been sick the whole time. I guess *that's just the way the cookie crumbles*. (DoAI 690)
- b) That is the way matters have worked out and nothing can be done about it. (TAHDoI 1059)
- c) tako je pao grah (HEFR); treba se pomiriti sa sudbinom (my translation)

d) zero equivalence

The origin of this expression is unknown but it has been in use since at least the 1950s. It is a variant on the expression "such is life". (The phrase finder)

Just like the previous expression, "that's the way the cookie crumbles" has zero equivalence to the mentioned translations in Croatian. To be partially or completely equivalent, the phrases in Croatian would have to have constituents like "kolačić" ili "mrvi", which is not the case.

### 9) Cool as cucumber

- a) The politician kept *cool as a cucumber* throughout the interview with the aggressive journalist. ( EAID 44)
- b) perfectly cool or self possessed (OID 62)
- c) mrtav hladan (HEFR 4793); hladan kao krastavac (EHFR)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase is considered to have originated from the fact that even in hot weather, the inside of the cucumber is cooler than the outside air. The expression was first recorded in John Gay's Poems, New Song on New Similies, 1732: "I...cool as cucumber could see the rest of womankind" (THE PHRASE FINDER)

The phrase "cool as cucumber" is completely equivalent to the Croatian expression "hladan kao krastavac", since they have the same constituents "cool" meaning "hladan" and "as cucumber" meaning "kao krastavac".

### 10) Forbidden fruit

- a) Jim flirts with his sister-in-law only because she's *forbidden fruit*. (EID 125)
- b) something particularly desired just because it is not allowed (MS 129)
- c) Zabranjeno voće (EHFR 844); nešto nedopušteno (my translation)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase originates from the Genesis and it refers to the fruit that Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat in the Garden of Eden by God. (EID 125)

The expression "forbidden fruit" is completely equivalent to the translated expression "zabranjeno voće" because they also have the same constituents like "forbidden" which is equal to "zabranjeno", and "fruit" which is translated to "voće".

### 11) One man's meat is another man's poison

a) Fred: What do you mean you don't like French fries? They're the best food in the world!

Alan: *One man's meat is another man's poison.* (DoAI 473)

b) those things that are liked or enjoyed by one person are not necessarily liked by another person; different people like different things (LDEI)

c) Što jednom godi, drugom škodi (HEFR); sto ljudi, sto ćudi (HEFR)

d) partial equivalence

This phrase was originally used by the Latin writer Lucretius in the 1st Century BC. His statement translates to: "what is good for one man may be bitter poison to others". It was referred to in English in 1604 by the playwright Thomas Middleton, who modified to the phrase as English speakers know it today.

The expression "one man's meat is another man's poison" is partially equivalent to the phrase "što jednom godi, drugom škodi", since some constituents, like "one man's" = "jednom (čovjeku)" and "another man's" = "drugom (čovjeku)" are similar.

### 12) Eat humble pie

a) I think I'm right, but if I'm wrong, I'll *eat humble pie.*(EAID 58)

b) make a humble apology and accept humiliation. (OID 151)

c) gutati knedle (EHFR); ispričati se (EHFR)

d) partial equivalence

This expression originates from umble pye, which is a pie filled with "umbles", the offal and entrails of a deer and was a dish usually eaten by those of low estate. Because those who ate "umple pie" were of humble stock, confusion arose between "umple" and "humble", so that the phrase that is known today means to admit a wrong to the point of humiliation. ( DoI 80)

The expressions "eat humble pie" in English and "gutati knedle" in Croatian are partially similar since they have the same constituent in their structure, which is "eat" = "gutati/jesti".

### 13) Rub salt into someone's wound

- a) Bill is feeling miserable about losing his job and Bob is *rubbing salt into the wound* by saying how good his replacement is.(571 EFR)
- b) increase someone's feeling of injury or shame (LDEI)
- c) Trljati sol na ranu (EHFR 716); podsjećati koga na nešto bolno (EHFR 716)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase is a long standing belief, dating back to Cicero, Horace and Livy, that wounds will not heal unless re-opened and cleaned. The application of salt was one way of doing that, but at cost of extreme pain. Today it has no implication of healing, just the imposition of discomfort when added to the phrasal verb to rub in. (DoI165)

The expression "rub salt into someone's wound" is completely equivalent to the Croatian expression "trljati sol na ranu" because both phrases have the same constituents. In this case, the constituents are directly translated as follows: "rub" = "trljati", "salt" = "sol" "into someone's wound" = "na ranu".

### 14) A hard nut to crack

- a) It won't be easy getting her approval; she's *a hard nut to crack*. (TAHDoI 458)
- b) a difficult problem or person to deal with, or matter to decide (LDEI)
- c) Tvrdoglavac (EHFR); tvrd orah (EHRF)
- d) complete equivalence

This expression is considered to allude to hard-shelled nuts like walnuts that are hard to open. The firmness of the shells of walnuts is in the phrase "A hard nut to crack" refers to a person's character.

The phrase "a hard nut to crack" is completely equivalent to the phrase "tvrd orah", since they have the same constituents like "hard" = "tvrd" and "nut" = "orah".

### 15) Stew in one's own juice

- a) After John *stewed in his own juice* for a while, he decided to come back and apologize to us. (EID 377)
- b) suffer the unpleasant consequences of your own actions or temperament without the consoling intervention of others, (OID 276)
- c) Kuhati se u vlastitom sosu (my translation); kako siješ, tako ćeš i žnjeti (HEFR)
- d) complete equivalence (HEFR)

This phrase seemed to have evolved from the earlier phrase "Fry in one's own grease". Chaucer was the first to use the original phrase that later involved into an expression that is known today: "Stew in one's own juice".

The expressions "stew in one's own juice" and "kuhati se u vlastitom sosu" are completely equivalent since the constituents of both phrases, like "stew" meaning "kuhati se" and "in one's own juice" translated as "u vlastitom sosu" are the same when translated from English to the Croatian language.

### 16) Sell like hot cakes

- a) I'm sure this new line of coats will go like hot cakes (DoAI 624)
- b) Be a great commercial success; sell quickly (DoAI 625)
- c) Prodaje se kao halva (HEFR); velika potražnja (my translation)
- d) partial equivalence

This phrase did not appear until around 1840 and there is no evidence of great hotcake demand that might have led to its creation. Instead, etymologists are left to assume that, since hotcakes have been popular at events, they would often sell very fast.

The phrase "sell like hot cakes" is partially equivalent to the phrase in Croatian language "prodaje se kao halva" because only some constituent are the same when translated from one language to another. Those constituents are "sell like" which can be translated to "prodaje se kao". In order to be completely equivalent, the constituent "halva" in Croatian would have to



be replaced with "kao vrući kolači" to be the same as "hot cakes" which would result in the loss of the idiomatic meaning of the phrase in Croatian.

### **17) To look as if butter wouldn't melt in one's mouth**

- a) She looks as though butter wouldn't melt in her mouth but I've seen her fighting with the younger kids. (EFR)
- b) appear deceptively gentle or innocent. (LDEI)
- c) Glumiti nevinašce (HEFR); Glumiti pravednika (my translation)
- d) zero equivalence

The allusion in this expression is to people who are able to maintain a cool demeanor which would mean they would not even have the warmth to melt butter. The phrase is usually used in a derogatory sense, and in the past, was most often applied to women. Also, it was used to denote a meekness and sweetness of temper (Martin, The phrase finder).

The phrase "to look as if butter wouldn't melt in one's mouth" has no equivalence to the translated phrases "glumiti nevinašce" or "glumiti pravednika". The mentioned phrases have no similar constituents because in the Croatian phrases there is no mention of the translated version of the English constituents like "butter" which would have been translated to "maslac" or "mouth" which would be translated to "usta".

### **18) Earn brownie points**

- a) John earned a lot of brownie points for doing his boss's report for him. (EID 139)
- b) to do a person a favor with the likely result that the recipient will do a favor in return in due course (MS 73)
- c) Skupljati bodove (kod koga) (HEFR 64); dodvoravati se komu (HEFR 64)
- d) Partial equivalence

The origin of this phrase is connected to a popular marketing practice by many stores which included the distribution of stamps with each purchase. These stamps were collected by

customers and later redeemed for household gifts. The earliest of these stamps were brown in color and known as "brown points" or "brown stamps". (OID)

"Earn brownie points", as an expression in English, has partial equivalence to the phrase "skupljati bodove" in Croatian. The constituents that are the same are "earn points", which is the same as "skupljati bodove". Even though there is no mention of the Croatian equivalent of "brownie" which would be "čokoladni kolačići", the meaning of the phrases is still the same.

### **19) Small potatoes**

- a) This contract is small potatoes, but it keeps us in business till we get into the real money. (DoAI 618)
- b) something insignificant or unimportant.(LDEI)
- c) Šaka jada (EHFR)
- d) zero equivalence

This phrase comes from the Irish potato famine that is also known as the Great Famine. At that time potatoes were the main source of food in Ireland and all that people could afford to eat. The phrase is used to describe something small and insignificant because of the small potatoes people picked for survival.

The expression "small potatoes", meaning something insignificant, has zero equivalence to its Croatian equivalent "šaka jada". In the phrase in Croatian there are no constituents that match those in the English phrase like "mali" which would be the translation of the constituent "small" or "krumpiri", which would be the translation of "potatoes".

### **20) Like two peas in a pod**

- a) Very similar, bearing a close resemblance (TAHDoI 625)
- b) The twins are as alike as two peas in a pod. (EID 12)
- c) Sličiti kao jaje jajetu (EHFR); biti čista kopija koga (my translation)
- d) zero equivalence

This expression derives from the fact that two peas from the same pod are virtually indistinguishable. The phrase dates to the late 16th century; for example, John Lyly used the phrase in *Euphues and his England* in 1580: ""Wherin I am not unlike unto the unskilfull

Painter, who having drawn the Twinnes of Hippocrates, (who wer as lyke as one pease is to an other)." (Mrtin, The phrase finder)

The phrase "like two peas in a pod" has zero equivalence to its Croatian translation. In Croatian, there are no constituents that match those in the English phrase since there are no translations of the words "peas", that would be translated as "grašak" or "in a pod" that would have the equivalent "u ljusci".

### 21) Don't put all your eggs in one basket

- a) Keep your day job while you pursue your acting career at night, just in case the acting doesn't go so well. You know—don't put all your eggs in one basket.(DoAI 165)
- b) Don't risk everything on the success of one venture (LDEI)
- c) Ne stavljaj sva jaja u istu košaru (my translation); Ne stavljaj sve na istu kartu (HEFR)
- d) Complete equivalence

This phrase was considered to be first used in the novel Don Quixote, where it was written "It is the part of a wise man to keep himself today for tomorrow, and not venture all his eggs in one basket". Also, it is considered to be based on the idea that if all the eggs one gets from a chicken are in one basket, and one drops it, all your eggs would break.

The expressions "don't put all your eggs in one basket" and its Croatian translation "ne stavljaj sva jaja u istu košaru" are completely equivalent since they have the same constituents. For example, "all your eggs" is the same as "sva jaja" and "in one basket" is directly translated to "u istu košaru".

### 22) From soup to nuts

- a) In college I studied everything *from soup to nuts*. (DoAI 192)
- b) From beginning to end; completely (EFR)
- c) Od a do ž (EHFR); od igle do lokomotive (HEFR)
- d) zero equivalence

The origin of this expression comes from the traditional course of meals during dinner or lunch. Soup is often the first course and a dessert with nuts was served at many occasions, and it was saved for the end. The phrase was coined in the United States in the middle of the 20th century. (DoI)

The phrase "from soup to nuts" has zero equivalence to the translated phrases "od a do ž" and "od igle do lokomotive" because there are no similar constituents. For the phrases to be partially or completely equivalent, the Croatian phrases would have to consist of constituents like "juha" which is a match for the constituent in the English phrase "soup" or "orah" that is the equivalent to the constituent "nuts".

### 23) Couch potato

- a) All he ever does is watch TV. He's become a real *couch potato*. (EAID 57)
- b) Someone who watches a lot of television, eats junk food, and takes little or no physical exercise (LDEI)
- c) Lijena buba (HEFR)
- d) zero equivalence

The expression "couch potato" is a recent American phrase that has rapidly caught on in the UK. This is most likely because of the colorful metaphor of the stereotypical TV addict who leads a vegetable-like life in front of the TV, sitting on his couch ( DoI 62)

The expression "couch potato" has zero equivalence to the expression "lijena buba" since there are no constituents in the Croatian phrase that would match those in the English phrase like "kauč" = "couch" or "krumpir" = "potato".

### 24) Get egg on your face

- a) If you ask any more personal questions, you'll end up with *egg on your face*. (TAHDoI 303)
- b) appearing foolish or ridiculous, (OID 93)
- c) Ispasti budala (EHFR); osramotiti se (my translation)
- d) zero equivalence

This phrase originated in America in the 1960s and was spread rapidly, mainly in journalism. Throwing eggs at an opponent was not uncommon, especially on the political hustings. The idea seems to be that a politician with egg on his/hers face is made to look foolish

The expression "get eggs on your face", just like the previous one, has zero equivalence to its Croatian translation. There are no constituents that would qualify as similar or the same in both phrases.

### 25) Nutty as a fruitcake

- a) Whenever John goes to a party, he gets *as nutty as a fruitcake* (EID 19)
- b) completely crazy (LDEI)
- c) Lud sto gradi (HEFR); udaren mokrom krpom (CEDoI)
- d) zero equivalence

"The adjective nutty meaning "insane" was first recorded in 1821; the similarity to fruitcake, which literally contains nuts as well as fruit, was first recorded in 1935". (TAHDoI 728)

"Nutty as a fruitcake" is a phrase in English that has no equivalence to its translation in Croatian that is "udaren mokrom krpom". For the phrases to be completely or partially equivalent, the phrases in Croatian would have to contain some constituents that match those in the English expression like "voćna torta" = "fruitcake".

### 26) As different as chalk and cheese

- a) I don't have anything incommon with my brother. We're like *chalk and cheese*. (cid)
- b) fundamentally different or incompatible (LDEI)
- c) Kao bog i šeširdžija (CEDoI); kruške i jabuke (my translation)
- d) zero equivalence

This expression was first used in John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* in 1393: "And thus ful ofte chalk for cheese he changeth with ful littel cost". There is nothing in its history to suggest these two counties had anything in common or were both part of the same event/incident in history. The only similarity is that the surface of some cheeses, particularly unaged ones,

looks similar to chalk, meaning they are white and crumbling (World Wide Words, Michael Quinion).

The phrase "as different as chalk and cheese" has zero equivalence to its Croatian translations "kao bog i šeširdžija" and "kruške i jabuke" since there are no constituents in the Croatian phrases that would match those in the English phrase like "kreda" = "chalk" or "sir" = "cheese".

### **27) No use crying over spilled milk**

- a) He is always *crying over spilled milk*. He cannot accept reality (DoAI 135)
- b) lament or make a fuss about a misfortune that has happened and that cannot be changed or reversed (LDEI)
- c) Ne vrijedi plakati za prolivenim mlijekom (EHFR); bilo pa prošlo (my translation)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase, which is used to describe something that cannot be changed, is in reference to the inability to recover mil once it has been spilled. It was first mentioned as a proverb in James Howell's *Paroi miografia* in 1659. (TAHDoI 238)

The expression "no use crying over spilled milk" is completely equivalent to the Croatian phrase "ne vrijedi plakati za prolivenim mlijekom" since all of the constituents in both phrases are the same. For example: "no use crying" = "ne vrijedi plakati", "over spilled milk" = "za prolivenim mlijekom".

### **28) To walk on eggs (or eggshells)**

- a) The manager is very hard to deal with. You really have to walk on eggs.(EID 427)
- b) be extremely cautious about your words or actions.(EFR)
- c) hodati kao po jajima (CEDoI); biti jako oprezan (my translation)
- d) complete equivalence

This phrase originated in the first half of 1700s. It transfers walking on fragile eggs to discussing or investigating a dangerous subject. (TAHDoI)

The phrases "to walk on eggs" and "hodati po jajima" are completely equivalent since all of the constituents in both phrases match and could be directly translated. To exemplify: "to walk" = "hodati" and "on eggs" = "po jajima".

## 5. Conclusion

This research, which is based on the analysis of 28 phraseological units that contain food in English as the source language and Croatian as the target language, shows that only a small percentage of phraseological units in English and Croatian can be classified as completely equivalent units. In the corpus analysis of 28 phraseological units, there are 13 units in English language that can be labeled as having zero equivalence with the phraseological units in Croatian. The second most frequent category of equivalence was complete equivalence in which there are 9 phraseological units that have the same constituents in both source and target languages. It can be concluded that even though English and Croatian have a lot of phraseological units containing food that can be labelled as completely equivalent, there are more units that do not have the same constituents in both languages. The origin of phraseological units in the source language shows that they are mostly based on some historical events or beliefs and traditions. This analysis shows that there are many phraseological units containing food in English, while in Croatian, they are paraphrased in a way that leaves out the constituent that refers to the specific type of food and are replaced mostly with adjectives. For example, in the phraseological unit "Nutty as a fruitcake" the constituent referring to food, which is "nutty" is replaced with an adjective in Croatian that describes a person, which is, in this case, "udaren mokrom krpom". The analysis shows that the translation of phraseological units can be problematic when there is no complete equivalence and that the meaning can be altered. The etymology of phraseological units is also important because it shows how certain PU's came to be and how they can help us expand the knowledge of a certain culture by studying its language.

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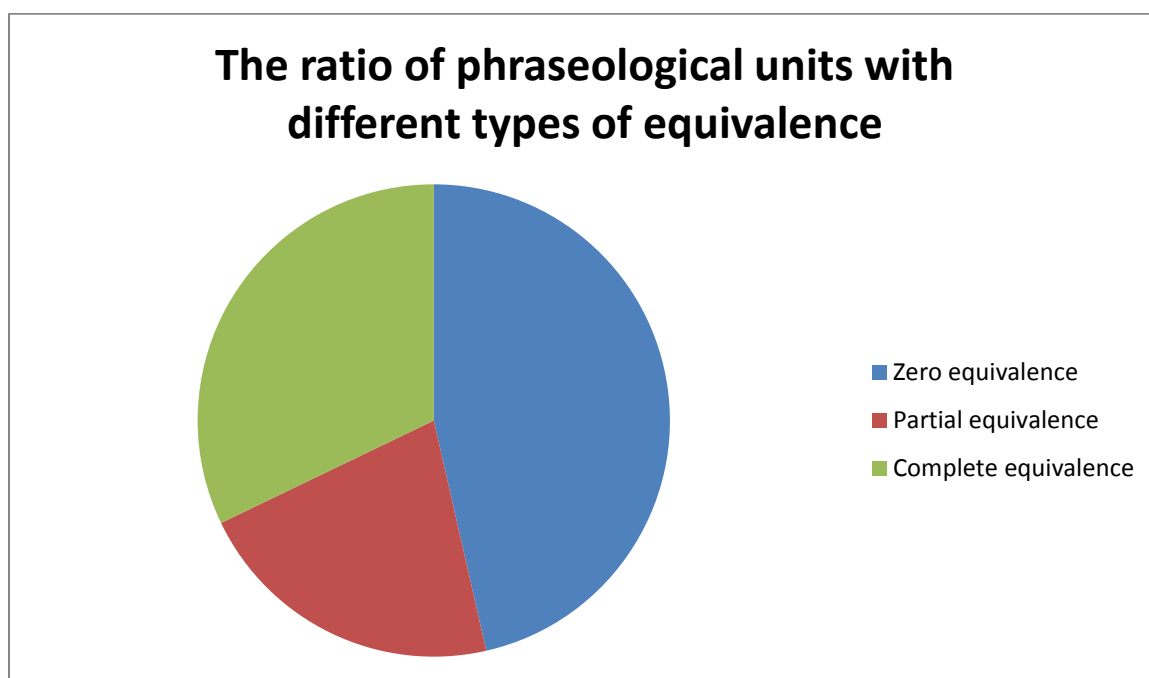
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## Appendices

### Appendix I: The list of the dictionaries used and their abbreviations

Dictionary	Abbreviation
Dictionary of Idioms and their Origins	DoI
Engleski frazeološki rječnik	EFR
Englesko-hrvatski frazeološki rječnik	EHFR
Hrvatsko-engleski frazeološki rječnik	HEFR
Hrvatsko-engleski frazeološki rječnik + kazalo engleskih i hrvatskih frazema. Croatian-English Dictionary of Idioms + index of English and Croatian Idioms	CEDoI
McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs	DoAI
Metaphorically Speaking: A Dictionary of 3,800 Picturesque Idiomatic Expressions	MS
NTC's English Idioms Dictionary	EID
Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Allusions	DoA
Oxford Idioms Dictionary for learners of English	OID
The American Heritage® Dictionary of Idioms	TAHDoI
Longman dictionary of english idioms	LDEI
McGraw-Hill' essential american idioms dictionary	EAID
Cambridge idioms dictionary	CID

## Appendix 2: The ratio of phraseological units with different types of equivalence



## Appendix 3: Corpus of English idioms and Croatian equivalents

Phraseological unit	Relation	Croatian equivalent
The apple of someone's eye	complete equivalence	kao zjenica oka
2. Bring home the bacon	partial equivalence	donositi kruh u kuću
To spill the beans	zero equivalence	izlanuti se
The greatest thing since sliced bread	zero equivalence	nešto najbolje na svijetu
A piece of cake	zero equivalence	mačji kašalj
The big cheese	partial equivalence	krupna riba

Two bites of the cherry	zero equivalence	imati pravo na popravni
That's the way the cookie crumbles	zero equivalence	tako je pao grah
Cool as cucumber	complete equivalence	hladan kao krastavac
Forbidden fruit	complete equivalence	zabranjeno voće
One man's meat is another man's poison	partial equivalence	što jednom godi, drugom škodi
Eat humble pie	partial equivalence	gutati knedle
Rub salt into someone's wound	complete equivalence	trljati sol na ranu
A hard nut to crack	complete equivalence	tvrd orah
Stew in one's own juice	complete equivalence	kuhati se u vlastitom sosu
Sell like hot cakes	partial equivalence	prodaje se kao halva
To look as if butter wouldn't melt in one's mouth	zero equivalence	glumiti nevinašce
Earn brownie points	partial equivalence	skupljati bodove (kod koga)
Small potatoes	zero equivalence	šaka jada
Like two peas in a pod	zero equivalence	sličiti kao jaje jajetu
Don't put all your eggs in one basket	complete equivalence	ne stavlaj sva jaja u istu košaru
From soup to nuts	zero equivalence	od a do ž
Couch potato	zero equivalence	lijena buba

Get egg on your face	zero equivalence	ispasti budala
Nutty as a fruitcake	zero equivalence	udaren mokrom krpom
As different as chalk and cheese	zero equivalence	kruške i jabuke
No use crying over spilled milk	complete equivalence	ne vrijedi plakati za prolivenim mlijekom
To walk on eggs (or eggshells)	complete equivalence	hodati kao po jajima