

Idiomatic Language in British and American Political Speeches

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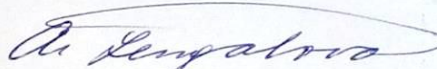
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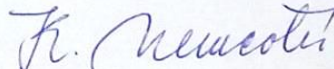
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ABSTRAKT

Táto bakalárska práca dokazuje, že politické prejavy, tak jako aj idiomy v nich obsiahnuté sú ovplyvnené kultúrnym prostredím, tak jako aj časovým obdobím a sociálno-politickým kontextom.

Kľúčové slova: Jazyk, Idiomy, Politické Prejavy, Kultúrne Prostredie, Historický Aspekt

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis proves that political speeches and consequently also the choice of the idioms employed in them are predetermined by the cultural conventions, as well as time period and socio-political context.

Keywords: Language, Idioms, Political Speeches, Cultural Background, Historical Background,

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1 INTRODUCTION

The world is your oyster, but don't count your chickens before they're hatched. Idioms like these are part of everyday life. They enrich almost every type of language in the world. They have been subject of studies carried out by many linguists and each of them defines the idioms in different way. The first part of this bachelor thesis provides at least some of the definitions of idioms and their divisions from different points of view. It describes also language and its functions, since idioms help to fulfil one of the functions.

The theoretical part is dedicated also to political speeches and their distinctive features as they are the subject to analyses. It provides more information not only about the structure of the political speeches but also about means of persuasion and persuasive devices which are an essential part of them. At the end of the theoretical part are stated essential facts about the authors of the analysed speeches and about the speeches themselves.

In the practical part of the bachelor thesis will be analysed eight speeches given by four British and American authors. Historical and cultural background of the speeches differ, therefore can be compared the influence of these factors on the speeches, especially on the idioms used in the speeches. The idioms will be compared from semantic, pragmatic and syntactical point of view. Subject of the analyses will be the level of formality of idioms, as well as level of transparency. Occurrence of the phrasal verbs in the texts will be examined as well. Regarding the fact that that personality of the speaker influences the choice of the idioms, this aspect will be also analysed.

The practical part can be divided into five parts. Firstly, will be analysed the inaugural speeches of the contemporary British and American politicians. Secondly, will be compared the speeches delivered at the same occasion but during the different time period. Another four speeches delivered by the same politicians will be examined in the same way, however, these speeches differ from the previously mentioned speeches. They were given on the different occasion, therefore they were also intended for different audience. The purpose of the fifth section of the practical part is to point out the differences between the all analysed speeches and to summarize the results of analyses. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how cultural conventions, time period, socio-political context and also personality of the speaker influence the usage of the idioms in the chosen political speeches.

I. THEORETICAL PART

2 IDIOMATIC LANGUAGE

2.1 Language

In order to explain what idioms are, it is essential to define the term language, since idioms are integral part of it. The Cambridge dictionary defines a language as a “system of communication consisting of sounds, words, and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work”. (Cambridge Dictionary Online)

2.2 Factors and functions of language

According to Roman Jakobson language consists of six factors: context, addresser, addressee, contact, contact code and message. The addressee receives a message from the addresser. In order to be functional, the message requires a context which should be comprehensible by the addressee. The message has to contain also the code at least partially mutual to the addresser and addressee who are also called encoder and decoder. The last factor necessary for communication is a contact. Jakobson defines contact as a physical or psychological connection between addresser and addressee. Each of previously mentioned factors is connected with one of six functions of language. First function connected with context, the most visible one, is called referential function. This function is also known as denotative or cognitive function. Emotive function is connected with the addresser. Focuses on an author's expression of feelings, emotions or attitudes toward what he or she is speaking about. The conative function serve as the function oriented toward the addressee and is expressed in vocative or imperative. Phatic function focuses on contact and helps addresser to attract attention of the addressee or to see if the communication channel works. In that case an author can use established formulas. Metalingual function is visible if the addressee tries to find out whether both, addresser and addressee use the same code. The last function of language focused on the message as such is called poetic function. Jakobson defines this function as the function which focuses on the message “for its own sake”. (Jakobson 1960, 3-7) Idioms help to fulfil the communicative function of language. (Langlotz 2006, 7)

2.3 Idioms

As McMordie and Seidl claims, “the language is a living thing”. In other words, it is changing and growing continuously as new developments need to be named and labelled. Since the

idioms are not a separate part of a language, they are expanding and changing as well. (McMordie and Seidl 1978, 3) The usage of the idioms is not limited to only one area of the language, therefore they may appear for instance in formal style, poetry, or slang. (McMordie and Seidl 1978, 4) It is difficult to recognize idioms, as every linguist interprets them differently. Kvetko defines idioms as combinations of lexical items consisting of at least two words. He claims that they are relatively fixed institutionalized expressions with figurative meaning. Idioms can be seen also as “complex symbols with specific formal, semantic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic characteristics” (Langlotz 2006, 7).

As Mona Baker argues, in the idiomatic expressions cannot be changed word order, as well as another word cannot be added to the expression. In addition to that, a word cannot be deleted from an idiom neither. Idioms do not allow also a change of its grammatical structure and replacing of words. (Baker 1991, 67) New idioms are generally arise from free word groups and fixed word combinations. This process is called *idiomatisation*. Idioms can originate from already existing idioms. It might be caused by shortening and extension, as well as, conversion and analogous formation (Miššíková 2003, 30)

2.3.1 Function of Idioms

Idioms can be used in almost every situation and in almost every type of language. They may be used in order to describe a situation, name actions and processes or express feelings and so forth. Kvetko suggests following division of the functions which will be also applied in the analytical part:

- Idioms with nominative function- this kind of the idioms occurs frequently in all kinds of texts. They are usually employed to express actions, processes or qualities. (*pull somebody's leg*)
- Idioms with communicative function- this kind of idiom generally refers to situations or they help to express statements. They may have a form of a sentence (*the coast is clear*)

Idioms with both, nominative and communicative function- this group of idioms covers the idioms with mixed function, which allow variation in form (*close the door- the door is closed*).

Idioms without any nominative or communicative function- to this group of idioms generally belong idioms that have cohesive function in the text, interjections or modal idioms (*by the way*)

2.3.2 Degree of Transparency

Idioms can be classified according to various criteria. One of the essential features of idiom is their level of transparency, in other words degree of agreement between the literal and figurative meaning (Cain, Oakhill and Lemmon, 2004, 3). Taking into account that each of the authors defines levels of transparency in different way, the examined texts will be analyzed in accordance to the following division:

- **Transparent Idioms**

Figurative meaning can be derived from particular items. Since the figurative meaning of transparent idioms is often similar to its literal meaning, they can be easily understood also by non-native speakers or people without special knowledge. (Kvetko 2009, 32)

- **Semi-Transparent Idioms**

Idioms of this kind usually contain at least one word with literal meaning and one with the figurative one. Understanding of semi-transparent idioms may be more difficult, however, the literal meaning can be still derived from the particular lexemes (*horse sense*). (Kvetko 2009, 31)

- **Opaque (Pure) Idioms**

Figurative meaning of opaque idioms which are also called pure idioms cannot be derived from the literal meaning of particular items. The literal meaning of individual items is not connected with figurative meaning of whole expression, therefore can be often misunderstood by non-native speakers or by people with insufficient knowledge (*Kick the bucket*). (Kvetko 2009, 31)

2.3.3 Other Forms of Non-Literal Language

Considering common or different criteria some of the linguists distinguish special independent separate groups of idioms. (Kvetko 2009, 107) The idioms belonging to the following categories may share degree of conventionalization of meaning however at the same time they may differ syntactically and semantically. (Cacciary and Tabossi 1993, 27)

- *Proverbs* are a special category of fixed expressions which form and meaning cannot be changed. They express cultural wisdom or general truth. They are usually influenced by their origin and culture-specific. As they are usually well known by the majority of the people, in some cases the speaker does not have to say the whole proverb in order to send a message to the addressee. For instance, in some situation it may be enough of the speaker says *do not count your chickens...* instead of *do not count your chickens before they have hatched*. (Leah 2014, 2)
- *Similes* represent the idioms which are describing things through comparison. As a result they are often called comparative idioms. (Kvetko 2009, 107)
- *Phrasal verbs* are the broadest group of idioms. They often carry figurative meanings which cannot be understood from their form unless the expression is already known, therefore they can be considered idioms. Phrasal verbs generally consist of a verb and adverb or preposition. (Leah 2014, 4)
- *Social formulae* represent the idiom used in everyday life for example to express politeness. This group of idioms include such expressions as *how do you do?* or *long time no see*. (Kvetko 2009, 107)
- *Binominals and trinominals* can be described as combinations of two or three words, which are somehow similar or related such as *here and there* or *now and then*. (Kvetko 2009, 108)

2.4 Formal vs. Informal Idioms

Mc Mordy and Seidl deal in their book claim, that especially non-native speaker may have a problem to recognize when it is appropriate to use an idiom. For instance, non-native speaker may not know whether the idiom is formal or informal as many idioms have its formal and also informal form. The majority of idioms can be used in the most of the situations because they are neutral. The authors refer to them as to unmarked idioms. Idioms occur in formal form more frequently in the written texts. The usage of formal idioms might suggest that the relationship between the speaker and the audience is distant. Informal idioms are generally applied in the speeches that are delivered to large audience. On the contrary, idioms which are informal are usually used in spoken language. Speakers generally employ them in everyday

language or personal letters. Some of the idioms are unmarked, therefore can be used in both, formal and also informal situations. (McMordy and Seidl 1978, 8)

2.5 Variation in Form

Some of the idioms allow variation in form, however, some of them do not allow any change among the idiom as it would change its special meaning. Majority of the idioms are lexically fixed. This feature of idioms is closely connected with a level of idiomacy. If the level of idiomacy is low, expressions can be usually changed. (Fazly and Stevenson 2006, 2) The following part provides more information about lexical and syntactical variation, as well as about variation in time. This section cannot cover all possible variations in form as every idiom is specific and can or cannot undergo many various changes.

Lexical Variation

Most of the idioms are grammatical and substantive, in other words they are lexically filled (kick the bucket). The rest of the idioms are extra-grammatical, in other words they are lexically open (*the x, the y*). These idioms allow the speaker to fill the slot with the variable lexemes. Another pattern that appears often is *let alone construction* which is a kind of connective and which is considered negative polarity item. This group of idioms include such expressions as *never mind* or *not to mention*. (Fernando 1996, 20-21)

2.5.1 Syntactical Variation

As Fernando claims, idioms generally adapt to the grammatical rules of the language. The pattern that occurs the most common is semi-clausal pattern V + Det + N (*spill the beans*). The common pattern Adj + N appears often as well (*white elephant*). On the contrary, pattern Prep + N + Prep (*by the way*) does not occur frequently. The pattern that can be often found in conventionalized multi-word expressions is pattern Prep + Adj... Prep + Adj (*At best... At worst*). Some of the expressions do not fit any of previously mentioned patterns. This might be caused by deletion (*guess what?*) or *illogicality* (*beside oneself*). In some cases may be pattern changed because of figurative use (*white lie*) or a specialized subsense (*foot the bill*). (Fernando 1996, 34)

2.5.2 Variation in Tense

Idioms allow tense variation frequently as it usually reflects the time frame of the discourse. (*smells a rat* vs. *smelt a rat*). On the other hand, some of the idioms express general truths and they do not allow even minimal variation in form (*a watched pot never boils*). This rule, however, does not apply to proverbs which are word plays. (Fernando 1996, 44)

3 POLITICAL SPEECHES

The political speeches have been essential part of history of human kind for a long period of time. The spoken word has served as tool of politicians to emphasize benefits arising from their leadership. On the contrary, it can be used in order to highlight opponent's weaknesses. Speaker can give the impression. Thank to political speeches can representatives persuade the audience and give the impression that they are responsible and competent persons.

Political speeches can influence considerably the political situation and consequently also history as decisions made by voters are based on judgement of politician's character and skills. Politicians create their own style of leadership with the cumulative effect of characteristics which they can control. As a result usage of persuasive devices rises in proportion to the growth of media. Audience without the knowledge of techniques used by the speakers have often no idea how the spoken word can influence their judgement and decisions.

Spoken strategies include many methods, such as humour or metaphors. One of the most important tools is telling the myth which is closely connected with the metaphors. Speaker's choice of metaphors can be highly persuasive as it can help to create a subliminal message. On the other hand, it is essential to state that spoken language by itself does not have to be always enough persuasive. (Charteris-Black 2011, 1) There are some other factors which influence an audience such as appearance, paralanguage or media. (Carver and Jernej Pikalo)

3.1 Arrangement of Speeches

One of the most important factors which make the speech favourable is its arrangement. One does not have to be an expert to assume that every speech needs a beginning, middle and an end. The following section provides more specific classification of parts of speeches.

The speech starts with exordium. This expression names the part of the speech in which the speaker introduces himself and tries to attract attention of the audience. In this section is often applied ethos (Leith, 82). Strategies as such as flattery or an appeal to goodwill are often employed in this part as well. (Charteris-Black 2011, 8). In narratio the speaker sets the scene. (Leith 2011, 82) This section generally contains the outline of the argument. (Charteris-Black, p 9) Division refer to a section in which the speaker explains in what points he or she agree or disagree with the opponent. The addresser may confirm the arguments by using examples, precedents or analogies. (Charteris-Black 2011, 9) The following part is called confirmation.

In this sections of the text is generally logos mentioned for the first time as the speaker states why is right. In refutation is usually disproved opponent's argument and the speaker offers counter-arguments. As a result, persuasion through logic and arguments appear more frequently. What follows is called *Conclusio*. As can be deducted from the name of the section, this part is a kind of conclusion. The speaker summarizes the points mentioned in preceding parts. As Sam Leith claims, "If you have flourishes, prepare to flourish them now, and if you have tears, prepare to shed them." In other words, at the end of the speech are speakers likely to use pathos and persuade the audience through emotions. In order to make the speech valuable and persuasive, the structure described in this paragraph shall not be changed. (Leith 2011, 83).

3.2 Means of persuasion

As Aristotle claims in *The Rhetoric*, in order to be persuasive, a speech has to consist of three elements: ethos, pathos and logos. In other words, he reasons that political speech should contain both, rational and also non-rational part. Logos, persuasion through words and logical arguments represents rational part whereas pathos and logos focuses on non-rational part. Pathos appeals to emotions of audience an ethos emphasize speaker's or writers character.

3.2.1 Ethos

Ethos is a mean of persuasion which appears usually at the beginning of the speech. It is an tool through which a speakers present himself or herself. It generally creates a connection or relationship between the speaker and listener, which may influence significantly how the speech will be perceived. As it appears at the beginning of the speech, the whole speech is built on this connection and on the belief that the speaker is trustworthy and competent to speak. In the most cases the speaker tries to persuade the audience that he or she is a one of the crowd. (Leith 2011, 56,)

3.2.2 Logos

As was already mentioned in previous paragraph, ethos appears at the beginning of the speeches and the rest of the speech stands on it. Speakers generally continue with pathos-persuasion through words in order to show that their arguments are based on logical premises. Ethos is closely connected to logic. The speaker who is using logos usually employs analogy

and generalisation. Unlike the philosophy, the logos does not work much with knowledge, it refers more to belief. (Leith 2011, 61)

3.2.3 Pathos

Pathos represents a persuasion through emotions. The emotions which appear in the political speeches frequently are for example fear, love or patriotism. Politicians create emotions in order to influence listener's opinion. Humour is very often part of pathos as arise emotions (Leith 2011, 66)

3.3 Persuasive devices

Persuasive devices have been known for a long time. As Aristoteles claimed, the basic goal of a rhetorician is to "discover the best available means of persuasion". Nowadays persuasive devices are not used only by politicians or broadcasters. Thanks to the information that can be easily found and accessed, persuasive devices may be used by almost everyone. The following part provides definitions of some persuasive devices which are uses the most often. 18

3.3.1 Repetition

It is one of the most common persuasive devices used by politicians for ideological and functional reasons. They are used in order to motivate the audience or influence the addressee's opinion. (Iqbal 2015, 5)

3.3.2 Alliteration

Alliteration is a persuasive device commonly used not only in politics but also in advertising. It is based on the repetition of the sounds within the expression. In connection with politics can be alliteration often found for instance in slogans. (Leith 2011, 263)

3.3.3 Inclusive "We"

Author creates the idea of sharing the interest between the speakers and the audience. On the other hand, the speaker may use this toll in order to avoid the responsibility. (Leith 2011, 264)

3.3.4 Humour

Humour and jokes can be very influential and persuasive tool. It is closely connected with pathos as it affects audience's emotions and also with ethos. The speaker's sense of humour

may suggest what kind of person he/she is. On the other hand, if the speaker tries to create a humorous situation and he/she does not succeed, it might create a negative connotation. (Leith 2011, 264)

3.4 Winston Churchill

This paragraph is dedicated to one of the greatest wartime leaders of the history who led Britain during the Second World War. W. Churchill is considered one of the greatest speakers of history as well. What is more, Churchill received the Nobel Prize in literature. He became British Prime minister in 1940. During his career of Prime Minister he delivered many speeches and some of them are quoted even nowadays. One of the most popular sentences said by W. Churchill comes from his first political speech as a Prime Minister. "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." This sentence became extremely popular, however, there is one expression which not only British people favour even more. When he visited Harrow School in 1941, he said his most famous sentence "Never give in". (Churchill 1941, 20-31)

3.5 Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The second speaker whose speeches will be examined in the analytical part is Franklin D. Roosevelt He was 32nd elected American president. He encouraged the American nation during the great depression also through a spoken word, for instance when he said that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." As well as Churchill, also Roosevelt led the country during the World War II. The fact that he was elected president four times shows that he was an exceptional politician. (Whitehouse.gov)

3.6 David Cameron

David Cameron became a Prime Minister in 2010 as leader of conservative party. He was a member of parliament since 2000 and later in 2005 he became the leader of conservative party. He was elected the youngest prime minister in almost 200 years. (Telegraph.co.uk) Unlike W. Churchill or Obama he is not considered an extraordinary speaker, however also some of his speeches are memorable, such as his speech at conservative party conference delivered in 2013. (Gov.uk)

3.7 Barack Obama

Barack Obama was elected as the 44th American president in 2008 and re-elected again in 2012. One of his most famous speeches is his inaugural speech which is well known by general public as “Yes, we can Speech”. This expression was also used as a slogan during his campaign and thank to media and social networks it became extremely popular. (Whitehouse.gov)

ANALYZES

4 INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSES

The aim of the practical part is to compare distinctive features of idioms present in eight political speeches from lexical, semantic and pragmatic point of view. Since they are more visible in contrast, a cultural and also historical background of speeches is different. The cultural background influences political speeches in many ways, it especially affects their length. As a result the texts will be analysed with respect to total amount of words. In order to recognize idioms the Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs and Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms were used.

The first feature compared will be the frequency of idiomatic expressions in the texts. Further the level of formality of idioms will be analysed, as well as level of transparency. The meaning of the idioms will be subject to analysis as well. As phrasal words are also considered idioms their presence in the speeches will be also analysed. The last feature compared will be the category of the expressions.

The first part of the analysis consists of comparison of contemporary American and British political speeches. Firstly, the inaugural address of Barack Obama and first speech of David Cameron will be compared. Secondly, their speeches given on different occasions will be analysed. The second part of the analysis contains comparative analysis of historical political speeches. In this part there will be examined the first speech given by Winston Churchill as a prime minister and inaugural address of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Similarly to the previous case, also in this part there will be compared historical speeches given on different occasions. As a result, it will be possible to compare distinctive features of idioms used in particular speeches. Within the process of analysis the influence of cultural and historical background will become apparent too.

4.1 Comparative Analysis of Inaugural Speeches Given by Contemporary Politicians

The following part contains the analysis of the inaugural speeches of the contemporary British and American politicians. The first speech analysed was given in 2012 as the second inaugural address of Barack Obama. Second examined speech was delivered by British Prime Minister David Cameron on arrival in front of 10 Downing Street in 2010.

	B. Obama	D. Cameron
Words in Total	2159	638
Words that are Part of an Idiom	110	50
Idioms	47	22
Phrasal Verbs	14	7

A Comparison of these two speeches confirms the hypothesis that inaugural speeches of presidents and first speeches of Prime Ministers are influenced in the choice and use of idiomatic language. There is a slight difference in frequency of the idioms. Cameron uses idiomatic expressions more often since 7, 84 % of all words used in his speech are part of an idiom and the speech of Barack Obama contains only 5, 09% of words that are part of an idiom. We believe the length of speeches is predetermined by the given cultural convention and socio-political context.

From lexical point of view these two speeches differ only partially. Most of the idioms used in the both texts have verbal form or form of prepositional phrase, however, in the inaugural address of Barack Obama can be found also a noun idiom (...*door to door*.).

Level of transparency	Obama	Cameron
Transparent	29	11
Semi-Opaque	18	9
Opaque	0	0

The table above shows that the level of transparency of the idioms does not differ significantly. Both, Obama and Cameron employ mostly transparent or semi-opaque idioms and they avoid using opaque idiomatic expressions in order to make speech easily understandable. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the opaque idioms are often misunderstood by non- native speakers or by people without a necessary knowledge.

Function	Obama	Cameron
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Nominative	43	17
Communicative	1	2
Without any Distinctive Function	3	2

The table demonstrates that in each of two examined texts are present mostly idiomatic expressions with nominative function which describe any kind of action or process. Small part of examined idiomatic expressions has communicative function. Few of the expressions do not have any distinctive function and they are used in order to organize the text.

A study of the texts shows that they differ slightly in the level of formality. Cameron employs formal style and speaks seriously all the time, whereas Obama uses idiomatic expressions also to create humorous situations. This element helps him to use means of persuasion. The informal idioms occur in the text when he is using ethos- persuasion through personality. He tries to give the impression that he is not only a strong president but also a loving husband and a father who have a sense of humour.

Example:

Whether you voted for the very first time or waited in line for a very long time. By the way, we have to fix that.

Michelle, I have never loved you more. I have never been prouder to watch the rest of America fall in love with you, too, as our nation's first lady.

From the semantic point of view Obama uses various kinds of idioms, however, several topics occur in the text more often. The expressions that he uses the most often are *to move forward* and *to fight for* or *fight back*. Both of these idioms are present in the text 5 times. As Obama uses the idioms containing word *move*, he probably wants to give the idea of the country making a progress. He might use idiomatic expressions containing word *fight* in order to make audience feel that the country is able to combat and defend itself. The idea of fighting and battle is supported also by the idiomatic expression *triumph over* which is present in the speech as well. As a result the audience may consider the president determined and strong representative.

Example:

In the weeks ahead, I also look forward to sitting down with Governor Romney to talk about where we can work together to move this country forward.

America, I believe we can build on the progress we've made and continue to fight for new jobs and new opportunity and new security for the middle class...

It moves forward because you reaffirmed the spirit that has triumphed over war and depression, the spirit that has lifted this country from the depths of despair to the great heights of

Not many idiomatic expressions are repeated in the Speech of David Cameron. The only idiom that occurs in the speech more times is *to make sure*. Cameron uses this idiomatic expression in his speech twice, as he probably wants to give the feeling that he is the firm and decisive Prime Minister. Even though the idioms do not consist of the same words, some of them refer to the same theme, for instance idioms *care about* and *look after*. Using these idiomatic expressions Cameron portrays himself as a thoughtful and solicitous man. He also portrays himself and government as a kind of guide to whom people can look up.

Example:

We must take everyone through with us on some of the difficult decisions we have ahead.

And I want a political system that people can trust and look up to once again hope...

As majority of political speeches, also these two speeches contain persuasive devices. Some of the idioms examined are part of them. In the speech of American president can be for instance found alliteration (*go through tough times*), repetition (*...the task of perfecting our union moves forward. It moves forward because of you. It moves forward because you...*) or a metaphor (*built on the promise*). In the speech of David Cameron are the idioms parts of the persuasive devices as well. He employs for example metaphor (*government that is built on some clear values*) or repetition (*pulls together, comes together, works together*) when he is emphasizing the idea of unity and cooperation.

4.2 Comparative Analysis of historical Inaugural Speeches

The first speech analysed in the following part was given by Winston Churchill in 1940. It is also called "Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat Speech". The second inaugural address analysed in this part was given by American president Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933

	Roosevelt	Churchill
Words in Total	1935	726
Words that are Part of an Idiom	76	29
Idioms	33	15
Phrasal Verbs	5	3

Even though the length of these two speeches differs the frequency of the idioms is almost the same. Overall, 3, 92% of the words used in the speech given by president Roosevelt are part of an idiom whereas in the speech of W. Churchill 3, 99 % of the words are part of an idiom.

The idioms found in the speeches do not differ significantly on lexical level. Alike in the contemporary texts, also idioms that occur in the historical speeches are mostly verbal or they have a form of prepositional phrase. The only difference visible is that Roosevelt employs two idioms with form of noun phrase, whereas Churchill does not use any idiom of this kind.

Level of transparency	Roosevelt	Churchill
Transparent	27	10
Semi-Opaque	6	5
Opaque	0	0

The table above demonstrates that, as well as contemporary politicians also Churchill and Roosevelt avoid using opaque idioms. One of the reasons why they evade them might

be the fact that speeches are given in formal manner and opaque idioms might disrupt the formal form of the text. The investigated expressions are mostly transparent and some of them are semi-opaque.

The table below shows that in the both texts are present idioms with mostly nominative function. Only small part of the idioms does not refer to an action or process and have communicative function. Alike in the previous analysis, the rest of the idioms do not have any distinctive function and they are used in order to organize the text and link the ideas present in the text.

Function	Roosevelt	Churchill
Nominative	24	8
Communicative	2	4
Without any Distinctive Function	7	3

From semantic point of view the speeches differ significantly, however, some of the observed idioms refer to the similar topic. Roosevelt focuses on idioms that refer to several themes. The whole speech gives the impression that everything must be done in logical order, one after another, since he employs idiomatic expressions as *first of all* or *first things first*. He emphasizes this idea when he says “*we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order*.” as well. Roosevelt also gives the idea of cooperation and unity when he uses idiom *hand in hand* twice. It is vital to mention that the theme of cooperation appears also in the first speech of David Cameron despite the fact that the time period and nationality of speakers differ.

What is more, Roosevelt suggests also a kind of progress and movement when he uses idiom *go forward*. As noted in the analysis of contemporary inaugural speeches Barack Obama refers to this topic as well.

In the text is present also idea of building or creating something as he employs idiom *build out*. Another topic that the idioms refer to is the future. Roosevelt suggests that many things awaits the American nation, for instance when he starts the sentence with words *plenty*

is *at our doorstep*. He supports this idea also when he mentions that *we face the arduous days that lie before us*.

Churchill employs idiomatic expressions related to various themes, however, one topic is repeated more times. He refers to some kind of progress or movement forward. To the similar theme refers also one idiomatic expression that expresses action. All previously mentioned expressions support the idea that Britain is a country that is not passive, however, it is progressive and active. It is essential to emphasize the fact that the theme of movement is repeated again. From the analysis can be therefore asserted that even though the historical and cultural background of the speeches is different, the topics present in the speeches do not change with time.

Example:

Let that be realized: no survival for the British Empire; no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages, that mankind will move forward towards its goal.

Come then, let us go forward together with our united strength.

...it must be remembered that we are in the preliminary stage of one of the greatest battles in history that we are in action at many other points...

Alike in previously analysed speeches also in the historical speeches are idiomatic expressions parts of persuasive devices and figures of speech, for instance the idiomatic expression *make allowance* which may be found in the speech of American president is part of the repetition and the alliteration at the same time.

Example:

I hope that any of my friends and colleagues, or former colleagues, who are affected by the political reconstruction, will make allowance, all allowance, for any lack of ceremony with which it has been necessary to act.

Churchill employs in his speech repetition as well.

Example:

The measure of that restoration lies in the extent... Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement...)

4.3 Comparative Analysis of Contemporary Speeches of Barack Obama and David Cameron

The following part contains the analyses of two contemporary speeches given at universities in other countries. The first speech analysed was delivered at Brisbane University by Barack Obama in 2014. The second speech that is subject to following analysis was given at Moscow University in 2011.

	Obama	Cameron
Words in total	2691	2455
Words that are part of an idiom	117	146
Idioms	50	58
Phrasal verbs	19	14

The table above shows that the length of the speeches is similar, however, frequency of the idioms is higher in the British speech. Almost 6% of the words in the text of Prime Minister are part of an idiom, whereas only 4, 34% of all words are a part of an idiom in the Obama's speech. In comparison with the inaugural addresses, these two speeches are less formal. The situation does not require very formal style, since the speeches are intended for different audience. The speeches examined in this part are intended mostly for students and young people whereas the inaugural speeches are delivered to wider audience that consists of various groups of people. The speakers are applying rather informal style not only because the situation does not require it, but they are also trying to create a closer relationship with the audience. The politicians might do so in order to persuade the listeners through personality. Obama for instance, uses at the beginning of his speech the idiomatic expression *not bad* which is considered informal when he speaks about himself using Twitter. Cameron tries to give the similar impression when he is talking about his journey to Russia as a student. In this part of the speech he uses mostly phrasal verbs (*turned up, take me out...*)

Level of transparency	Obama	Cameron
Transparent	38	43
Semi-Opaque	10	10
Opaque	2	5

As demonstrates the table above, these two speeches differ from inaugural speeches in level of transparency as well. In inaugural speeches were present mostly transparent idioms used in order to organize the text whereas in the speeches analysed in this part are present also semi-opaque and opaque idiomatic expressions.

Obama employs opaque idioms when he emphasizes the fact that American and Australian nation have the same origin (*cut from the same cloth*) and when he suggests that young people should not look only at the pleasant parts of things (*rose-tinted glasses*). The rest of the idioms present in the speech are either semi-opaque (*make the headlines*) or transparent (*paying my respects*)

In speech of David Cameron can be found only one opaque idiom (*put the cards on the table*). The text contains more semi-opaque idioms for instance, the expression *in the long run*. Most of the idioms, however, are transparent.

Even though the speakers are applying the similar style, idioms that they use refer to different topics. Cameron emphasizes the importance of Russia and Britain cooperating and not working against each other as well. For that purpose he might use expression *work together*. This idiom appears in the speech 6 times. Cameron may consider the theme of cooperation important as he employs the same idiom in his first speech as a prime minister. He gives the idea of collaboration when he says that Russia and Britain should *unite against* the threat of terrorism. Related to this topic is also idiomatic expression *work against* and *compete against*.

Example:

So how Britain and Russia work together really matters for the prosperity of all our people

We can settle for the status quo, where in too many areas we are still in danger of working against each other and therefore both losing out.

We need to co-operate to ensure they make us all safer not compete against each other in another arms race.

Unlike Cameron, Obama employs idiomatic expression connected to unity only once when he says that Australian and American people are *cut from the same clothes*. Both politicians emphasize the idea of unity of two countries probably because the speeches are delivered abroad. In this case the idioms used may give the impression that there is no difference between the speaker and the audience.

An analysis shows that Obama may employ the idioms in order to motivate and encourage young people to defend themselves and defend their rights. It seems that he is trying to motivate them to change the world. For this purpose he uses mostly idiom *stand up for* which can be found in the text 6 times. He refers to this theme also through the idiomatic expressions *step in*, *step up* and *speak out* and he is also encouraging the audience to *raise their voices*. One of the themes that occur in the Obama's speech more times is also theme of faith as the idiom *believe in* is used in the speech twice.

Example:

We will stand up for freedom of religion – the right of every person to practice their faith as they choose – because we are all children of God, and we are all fallible.

So, yes, we'll speak out on behalf of human rights, but we are also going to invest in the agriculture that allows farmers to feed their families and boost their incomes.

And that's why it's so important for the next generation to be able to step in and say, no, it doesn't have to be this way.

American president refers through the idioms to more topics than David Cameron. In addition to the theme mentioned above, he refers also to a progress using idiom *move towards* which is present in the text twice. For the similar purpose he might use the expression *working toward* as well. The example below shows that some of the expressions are part of

the persuasive devices used by Obama. In this case is the idiomatic expression a part of repetition and also rhetoric questions which are used to maintain listener's attention.

Example:

Do we move towards further integration, more justice, more peace? Or do we move towards disorder and conflict?

4.4 Comparative analysis of Historical Speeches Given at Universities

This section deals with another two speeches given by W. Churchill and F. D. Roosevelt. The first of them was given in 1941 by Prime Minister at Harrow School. The second address examined in the following part was delivered by the American president at the University of Virginia in 1940.

	Roosevelt	Churchill
Words in total	1961	740
Words that Are Part of an Idiom	91	22
Idioms	37	10
Phrasal Verbs	5	8

From the table can be also asserted that especially the speech of Prime minister contains many phrasal verbs. We believe that the author did it in order to adopt the style of the speech to the language of students.

Level of transparency	Roosevelt	Churchill
Transparent	28	9
Semi-Opaque	9	1
Opaque	0	0

As shown in the table, the speakers employ mostly transparent idiomatic expressions. Alike in the case of inaugural speeches, also these texts do not contain any opaque idiom. This might be caused by the high level of formality that the situations require. The speakers refer mostly to the serious topic of war, therefore they use only expressions with clear meaning and they avoid using the expressions with ambiguous or humorous meaning. In this case using too many opaque idioms might give the impression that the speakers do not take the situation seriously. Both speakers chose also the idiomatic expressions that help them organize the text and also link the ideas mentioned in the text.

As mentioned earlier, in this case the choice of the idiomatic expressions is significantly influenced by the war. The majority of the idioms present in the texts are associated with this theme, however, each of the politicians refers to it in different way. Roosevelt uses the idioms which help him to encourage American people to recover quickly after the war. In order to emphasize the idea he is using the idiom *speed up*. Additionally, he says that American nation should not *slow down*.

Example:

We will harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves in the Americas may have equipment and training equal to the task of any emergency and every defence.

We will not slow down or detour.

Another idiomatic expression which helps him to encourage the audience is the idiom call for. He employs this expression twice at the end of his speech when he is asking the nation for effort, devotion and fast recovery, since the future of the America is still hanging in the balance.

Example:

I call for effort, courage, sacrifice, devotion.

Signs and signals call for speed-full speed ahead.

Once more the future of the nation and of the American people is at stake.

Roosevelt also emphasizes the fact that even though the machines can benefit the mankind, they can be dangerous *in the hands of* conquerors. In this section he creates the idea that if machines are *in the hands of* mankind they are good servants, however if they are used by the individuals in a war the mankind can become a victim. Idiomatic expression *in the hands of* is present in the text three times.

Example:

Where control of machines has been retained in the hands of mankind as a whole, untold benefits have accrued to mankind.

But in this new system of force the mastery of the machine is not in the hands of mankind.

The machine in hands of irresponsible conquerors becomes the master; mankind is not only the servant; it is the victim, too.

As well as Roosevelt, also Churchill mentions the war in his speech. At the beginning of his address he speaks about the events which took place in the world recently as about *ups and downs*. There are many phrasal verbs present in the Churchill's speech. It is vital to mention at least one of them- *give in* since the whole speech is known as "*The Never Give in Speech*" The idiomatic expression cannot be unnoticed as it appears in the text 4 times. In this part of the text Churchill suggests that a lesson can be taken from the war and that even though an enemy seems to be stronger, it is important to *never give in*. On one hand Churchill is referring to the war, on the other he might be referring to real life as well. Since the audience consists of mainly young people he is probably trying to give them an advice and encourage them. As previously examined speeches also this speech contains persuasive devices. The example below shows that the phrasal verb *give in* is part of the repetition and alliteration.

Example:

Surely from this period of ten months this is the lesson: never give in, never give in, never, never, never-in nothing, great or small, large or petty - never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense.

There was no flinching and no thought of giving in...

As stated earlier, also Obama tries to encourage the audience. This fact support the hypothesis that the themes which appear in the political speeches do not change significantly with time and that from pragmatic point of view idiomatic expressions used in the political speeches from different period do not always differ. What makes the speech different from the rest of the examined texts is that at the end of the speech Churchill employs the idiom *thank God*. Despite the fact that each of the politicians refers to this theme, none of them employs any idiomatic expression containing the word God.

5 RESULTS OF ANALYSES

In order to contrast and compare the frequency and distinctive features of idiomatic expressions used in political speeches eight samples were analysed. Even though the speeches differ in many aspects, the analyses shown that there are some parallels between the examined texts. The analyses demonstrate the differences between the idioms employed in the speeches from lexical, pragmatic and also semantic point of view.

The analyses showed that the length of the inaugural speeches is influenced by the nationality of the speaker. On the other hand, it also demonstrates that the speeches given at different occasion do not differ significantly. The difference is visible especially in comparison of inaugural addresses. The inaugural speeches of American presidents are longer than the first speeches of Prime Ministers. It can be assumed, that in the USA have inaugural speeches higher importance than first speeches of prime ministers in Britain.

In each of the texts can be found mostly idiomatic expressions with nominative functions which express actions and processes. The rest of the idioms have either communicative function and they describe situations or the idioms do not have any distinctive function. In that case are the idioms present in the speech in order to organize the text. The analyses show that there is no significant difference in function of the idiomatic expressions. There is no significant difference between the forms of the expressions either as the politicians employ

mostly verbal and adverbial idioms. In the texts can be also found the idiomatic expressions which are considered prepositional phrases.

From the analyses can be asserted that level of transparency is influenced by the occasion at which is the speech given. In the inaugural speeches occur only transparent and semi-opaque idioms, however, in the speeches given at the universities appear also opaque idiomatic expressions. One of the reasons why the politicians do not apply opaque idioms in inaugural speeches might be the fact that the situations require higher level of formality. What is more, inaugural speeches need to be easily understandable. The inaugural addresses are intended for general public therefore the audience consists of various groups of people not only of native speakers and people with necessary knowledge. As a result the idioms might be misunderstood. On the contrary, the politicians employ more informal style as they deliver the speech to young people.

Formality of the political speeches decreases with the time. This can be observed especially from the comparison of the inaugural speeches given by American politicians. Barack Obama employs idiomatic expressions also in order to create humorous situations when delivering the inaugural address, whereas Roosevelt speaks seriously all the time. The study of British speeches does not demonstrate the difference so clearly. As mentioned earlier, in the past the situation required more serious approach, what might be caused by the war.

We believe that what makes speeches different is the personality of the speaker and his character. It should be noted that each of the previously mentioned politician focuses on different topics and each of them emphasizes different ideas. For instance, the analysis showed that Barack Obama often repeated in his speech idiomatic expressions which refer to the fight, battle or triumph. He used the idioms to present himself not only as a strong and determined representative but also as a good husband and father. Using these idioms he tries to use persuasion through personality. David Cameron uses idioms in order to give the impression that he is firm but also carrying and solicitous prime minister. What is more, he often emphasizes the importance of cooperation. The analysis showed that for this purpose he usually employs idiomatic expression *work together* as it is present in every speech analysed. Both, Churchill and Roosevelt employ idioms that refer to future that lie before the nations.

Despite the fact that topics present in the speeches are different and each politician presents himself in different way, some of the themes occur in more speeches regardless the time period or the nationality of the speaker. In the texts are most often used the idioms containing words *move, build or forward*. Speakers often emphasize the idea of unity and cooperation as well. Idioms which refer to these topics can be found especially in the speeches given at universities. The speakers probably do so because the speeches focus on young people, university students, who can be motivated and encouraged by the speakers, as well as the fact that they are delivered in different foreign countries where friendship and cooperation between countries are implied as crucial.

As noted in the theoretical part, politicians often employ persuasive devices when they talk to the audience. The study of the chosen texts confirms this premise, as there was in each analysed speech found at least one of these devices. The persuasive devices are not the main subject of the analysis, however, it demonstrates that idiomatic expressions are often part of them. Idioms are frequently used in repetitions, alliterations or metaphors. The idiomatic expressions, however, do not influence a degree of persuasiveness significantly.

To conclude, the presented analyses confirm the hypothesis that political speeches are predetermined by cultural conventions, time period and socio-political context. Nationality of the speaker influences significantly the length of the speech, as well as the level of formality. The degree of formality changes with time period, too. The analyses, however, demonstrate that previously mentioned factors do not always influence the themes to which politicians refer in their speeches.

6 CONCLUSION

The bachelor thesis provides information about the idioms present in the political speeches based on the comparative analyses. The results of the analyses also demonstrate that the speaker's choice of the idioms varies in accordance to the occasion on which is the speech given or audience to which is the speech delivered. These factors influence especially the level of transparency and the level of formality of the idioms. From semantic point of view are the idioms affected mainly by the personality of the speaker. To conclude, from the results of the analyses can be asserted that political speeches and consequently also the choice of the idioms employed in them are predetermined by the cultural conventions, as well as time period and socio-political context.

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