Idiomatic Expressions in VerbaLex

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Idioms

. . . multi-word expression with some degree of fixedness (prefabrication) that can be used in both literal and figurative meanings.

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The figurative meaning dominates.

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Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idioms

Idioms are described in specialized dictionaries. For Czech, it is the Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idioms by F. Čermák et al.

vyzvonit° to/všechno

(kol; nepřízn) **0** neg, pas, imp, préz, 1. sg a pl *(Zvl. čl. naivní, nezkušený ap. v postoji ke svěřené důvěrné informaci, tajemství ap.:) bezstarostně, bezelstně a obv. neúmyslně něco (celé) prozradit, někomu oznámit.* Děti chtěly rodiče překvapit, ale malá Markétka to všechno vyzvonila. **Cf** prozradit něco, vykecat/vyslepičit všechno, jít se vším na trh ●**A** let the cat out of the bag, spill the beans **N** (etw ausplaudern) **F** crier qch sur les toits

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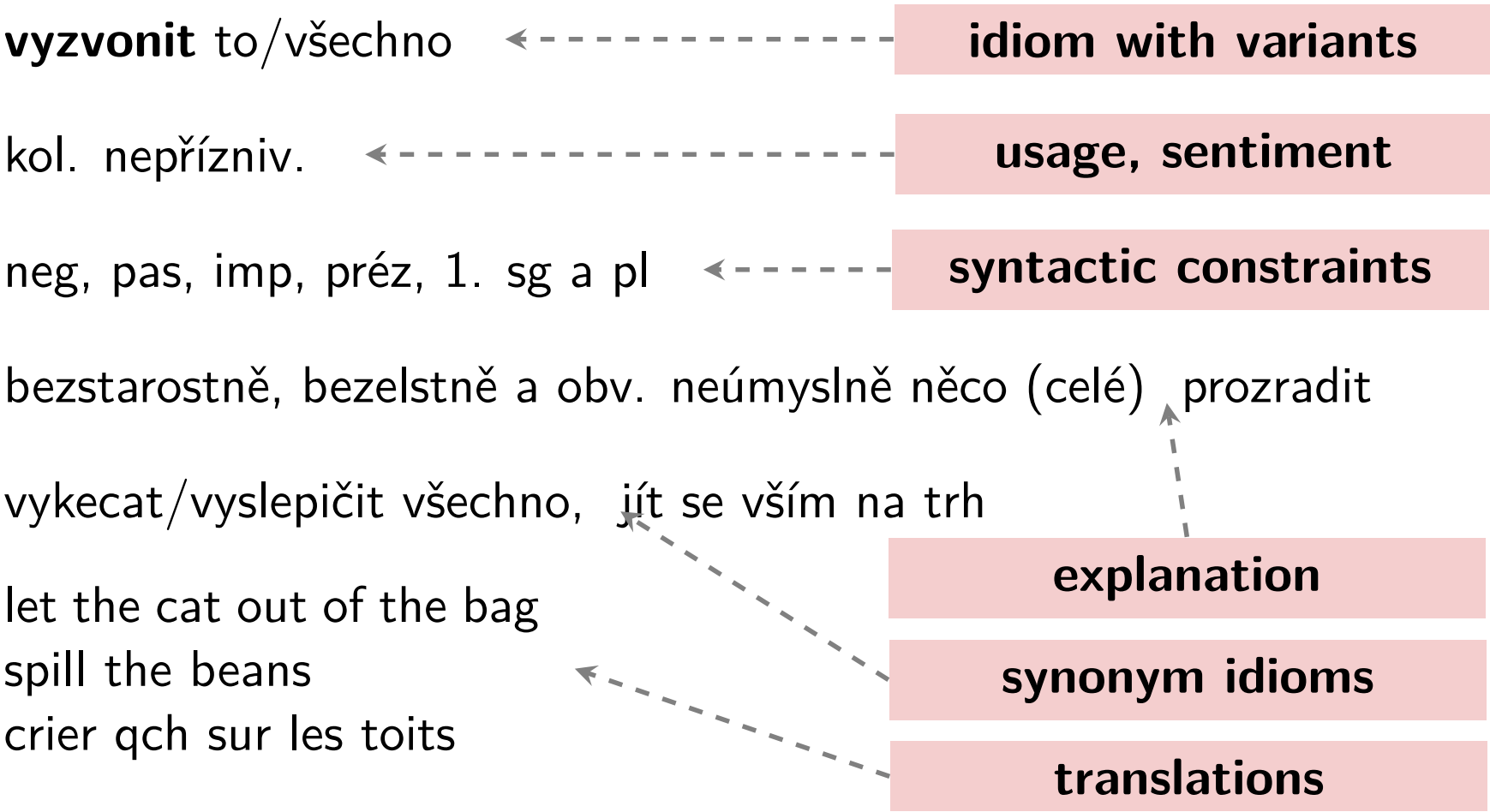
Slovník české frazeologie a idiomatiky: výrazy slovesné

. . . suitable for humans, not understandable by computer programs

Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idioms



Describing the Meaning of Idioms

We focus on idioms containing a verb.

Syntactic description:

- valence (most idioms are uni- or bivalent)
- arguments (animate/inanimate, cases, prepositions)
- constraints on word order
- other constraints (tense, negative, number)

Semantic description:

- meaning (explanation or one-word synonym)
- sentiment

VerbaLex

verb valency lexicon of Czech verbs:

6,244 verb synsets, 19,158 verb frames, 10,449 unique verbs

about 30 semantic roles (AG, PAT, LOC, . . .)

chovat$^{\text{impf}}_{1}$ **pohoupat**$^{\text{pf}}_{1}$ **pohupovat**$^{\text{impf}}_{1}$ **pochovat**$^{\text{pf}}_{2}$

1 chovat$_1$, pohoupat$_1$, pohupovat$_1$, pochovat$_2$ ≈

-frame: **AG** <person:1> obl a1 **VERB** obl **PAT** <child:1> obl a4 **PART** <body part:1> opt na+i6

-example: *matka pohoupala dítě na klíně* (***pf***)

to cradle a child in one's bodypart

Idioms in VerbaLex

about 1,000 verb frames with the semantic role DPHR

topit se$^{\text{impf}}_{1}$ **polykat**$^{\text{impf}}_{3}$

1 topit se$_1$ ≈

-frame: **AG** <person:1> obl a1 **VERB** obl

-example: *dítě se topí* (***impf***)

2 polykat$_3$ ≈

-frame: **AG** <person:1> obl a1 **VERB** obl **DPHR** <andělíčky> obl

-example: *dítě polyká andělíčky* (***impf***)

to be drowning

Idioms in VerbaLex

sometimes the meaning of the idiom is assigned to a bad verb synset (here *to knit*)

2 splést$_2$, splétat$_2$, uplést$_2$, uplétat$_2$, zaplést$_2$, zaplétat$_2$ ≈

-frame: **AG** <person:1> obl a1 **VERB** obl **PAT** <person:1> obl a3 **PART** <hair:1> obl i4 **ATTR** <shape:2> obl do+i2

-example: *maminka upletla dceři vlasy do copánků* (***pf***)

3 uplést$_2$, uplétat$_2$ ≈

-frame: **AG** <person:1> obl a1 **VERB** obl **PAT** <person:1> obl a3 **PAT** <person:1> obl na+a4 **DPHR** <bič> obl

-example: *upletla si na sebe bič* (***pf***)

make a rod for one's own back

The plan is . . .

. . . to re-annotate idioms in VerbaLex

- add information about syntactic properties (word order fixedness, constraints on tense, negative, number)
- add information about sentiment
- assign the meaning with the correct verb synset (where applicable)
- find idiom in corpora and provide corpus evidence

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Phase One: Conversion of the Dictionary

- convert Dictionary of Czech Phraseology and Idioms into machine understandable format
- expand entries such as:
  chovat/hřát (si) **hada** na prsou/za ňadry (cherish a serpent in one's bosom)
  to
  - chovat hada na prsou
  - chovat si hada na prsou
  - hřát hada na prsou
  - hřát si hada na prsou
  - chovat hada za ňadry
  - ...

Phase Two: Corpus Search

convert dictionary entries into CQL queries:

- consider changes in the word order
- consider gaps
- consider non-standard uses (e.g. být vs. bejt)

Discussion

- so far, VerbaLex contains standard Czech, however, some idioms are rather non-standard language
- different degrees of fixedness: fixed: aby tě husa kopla (meaning refusal)
  less fixed: chovat si hada na prsou (cherish a serpent in one's bosom)
- literal vs. figurative meanings: we propose not to consider different meanings

And that's it!

Thanks Adam for presenting