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Aynur Kirci

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Betreuerin:	Dr. Christiane Dalton-Puffer

Abstract

The interest in stereotypes and idioms as two separate fields of research has a longstanding tradition. This thesis investigates these domains by examining the role of national and social stereotypes in the respective idioms. Part I offers an in-depth analysis of the concepts of stereotypes and prejudices and their differences. Moreover, both concepts are analyzed from a philosophical point of view in this first theoretical part. In order to comprehend how prejudices and stereotypes are processed in the minds of the people, part I equally sheds light on psychological aspects including psychological stages involved in the development of the above mentioned notions. Regarding stereotypes and prejudices as important social phenomena, socio-political aspects as well as socio-cognitive functions are analyzed in some detail as well. Part II aims at uncovering the notion of idioms by the study of its structure and different aspects such as frozenness and flexibility or transparency and opacity. The lexical status of idioms and their representation in the mental lexicon of the reader or speaker are likewise analyzed in the second part of the present paper. Idiom comprehension and semantic interpretation are equally worked out in order to facilitate the understanding of how idiomatic expressions are actually acquired. The notion of literal meaning and the literal-figurative distinction are discussed before examining briefly the concept of proverbs which is of the same interest for the purpose of this thesis. Part III represents the empirical part of my thesis providing a corpus of idiomatic expressions that contain either positive, negative of neutral stereotypes about different regions, nations or out-groups.

Das Interesse an Stereotypen und Idiomen als zwei verschiedenen Forschungsgebieten hat eine lange Tradition. Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit befasst sich mit beiden Bereichen, indem sie die Rolle von nationalen und sozialen Stereotypen in den entsprechenden idiomatischen Begriffen analysiert. Teil I umfasst eine fundierte Untersuchung des Stereotypen- und des Vorurteilskonzepts und deren Unterschiede. Ferner werden beide Konzepte aus einer philosophischen Perspektive untersucht. Um zu verstehen, wie Vorurteile und Stereotype kognitiv verarbeitet werden, widmet sich dieser Abschnitt auch den entsprechenden psychologischen Aspekten. Als wichtige soziale Phänomene betrachtet, werden die sozio-politischen

Aspekte sowie die sozio-kognitiven Funktionen beider Konzepte durchleuchtet. Teil II ist der Erforschung des Idiom-Begriffs gewidmet und untersucht seine Struktur und andere wichtige Aspekte wie z.B. Festigkeit und Flexibilität, Transparenz und Opazität. Der lexikalische Status der Idiome sowie deren mentale Repräsentation ebenfalls analysiert. Das Verständnis und die semantische Interpretation der Idiome werden hier gleichermaßen untersucht, um zu erfahren, wie Idiome eigentlich erworben werden. Die literale Bedeutung in Idiomen sowie deren literal/symbolisch-Differenzierung werden angesichts ihrer Bedeutung für diese Thematik im zweiten Teil ebenfalls genauer erforscht, bevor Sprichwörter als letzter Punkt kurz erwähnt werden. Der dritte Teil repräsentiert den empirischen Teil meiner Untersuchung und legt ein Korpus vor, das idiomatische Redewendungen und Sprichwörter mit – positiven, negativen oder neutralen – stereotypischen Zuschreibungen gegenüber fremden Regionen, Nationen oder Außengruppen enthält.

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Dedicated to the memory of my beloved father…

Introduction

Do you take a ‘French leave’ when you have ‘Chinese chance’? Or do you rather have ‘Irish chance’ when you want to ‘go Dutch‘? Or is this all rather ‘Greek’ to you? Stereotypes and prejudices are of day-to-day social relevance and there are important organizations dedicated to their explanation and reduction.

Like many other languages the English language contains numerous idiomatic expressions making allusions to various different social, cultural or national groups.
I have decided to work on the field of idiomatic expression intending to explore the origins and meanings of this type of expressions and show how they are used. Providing valuable and interesting data about this figurative language we use in daily life is the main purpose of this thesis. Therefore, I shall try to explore the origins of the selected idiomatic expressions and their development. A classification of the nations and social classes - in term of positive, negative or neutral reference - mentioned in idiomatic expressions will be given as well.
These questions will be the concern of the main part of this thesis. It is intended to provide linguistic and pragmatic classifications of selected idiomatic expressions. These expressions might be classified in terms of themes (color, nationality, language, politics, etc…) and linguistic categories (verbal versus nominal idioms and others). In the main part, the selected expressions will be treated from a pragmatic point of view as well.
Before that a conceptual basis is provided in part I and II dealing with both stereotypes and idiomatic expressions as two separate fields of research.
Thus, analyzing idiomatic expressions containing any kind of stereotypes involves the research results of two different areas. Idiomatic expressions have to be analyzed equally from a linguistic and pragmatic point of view as the study of their structure and function is necessary for the understanding. Stereotypes, although involved in idiomatic expressions, represent a completely different area of research concerned with socio-cultural, psychological and philosophical questions at the same time.
Therefore, this thesis aims at combining research of the domains of both stereotyping and idioms.

PART I

1. The Concept of stereotypes[1] and prejudices

> We do not study a man and judge him to be bad. We see a bad man. We see a dewy morn, a blushing maiden, a sainted priest, a humorless Englishman, a dangerous Red, a carefree bohemian, a lazy Hindu, a wily Oriental, a dreaming Slav, a volatile Irishman, a greedy Jew, a 100% American [2] (Lippmann 1922 quoted in Astrid Franke 1999: 69).

As can be seen from the quotation above, there have always existed simple and clear-cut stereotypes in the minds of people. Living in the 21st century, in a period of extremely fast developing information technologies, does not necessarily lead to the reduction or elimination of prejudiced ideas. Rosello (1998: 18) in her *Declining the Stereotypes* states that stereotypes are "internally protected against any disreputation" making allusion to the difficulty in coping with them. Hence, any efforts of resisting against them are futile as in the very moment we try to contradict, reject or eliminate a stereotype; we risk a 'monumentalisation' of the same. I.e. in order to denounce it, we need to repeat it. (Rosello 1998 quoted in Garaud 2001: 90). Although my thesis is primarily dedicated to highlighting stereotypic elements existing in idiomatic expressions, a conceptual basis of the various aspects the stereotyping process involves seems to be of equal necessity. In this chapter, I will therefore try to offer a brief philosophical, psychological and theoretical survey for a better understanding of stereotypes as a concept.

As the phenomenon of prejudice or stereotype comprises both social and psychological aspects, my research involves areas other than linguistics as well. It is the domain of psychology, which for example deals with the processing of information by human beings. However, areas such as philosophy or social science have also treated the question of how prejudices are being developed and used as will be seen in chapter 1.3.1.ff. I will not focus on the practical outcomes of stereotypes. For a thorough analysis of this, see papers on 'discrimination'. The concern of this thesis will rather be, as its title suggests, social and national stereotypes in idiomatic

[1] 'Cliché', as often used in colloquial language, is another term for the concept of stereotyping. However, for the sake of uniformity, I shall rather use the term 'stereotype' throughout my thesis.

[2] Lippmann's well-known discussion of stereotypes called *Public Opinion* (1922) is a conceptualized classic in this field. Being a comprehensive study, *Public Opinion* (1922) is quoted in various essential works dealing with this topic. For a in-depth analysis of Lippmann's oeuvre see Astrid Franke's *Keys to Controversies* (1999), chapter III, A.

expressions.

1.1. Towards a definition of stereotype and prejudice

In this first chapter, I am going to provide a conceptual framework by offering some suggested definitions of ‘stereotype’ and ‘prejudice’.

We often use these two terms as synonyms without focusing very much on the actual differences. There are indeed differences in meaning, concept and cause. On the internet site dedicated to the “understanding of prejudices” it is pointed out that

> [p]rejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination often go hand-in-hand, but it is also possible to have one without the others. When an ethnic group is stereotyped with a neutral or positive attribute such as "family-oriented," prejudice and discrimination may not be involved. Similarly, a generalized prejudice against "foreigners" or "amputees" may not include specific stereotypes or acts of discrimination. [3]

We see that there are clear differences and that we cannot use the term stereotype as a synonym for prejudice, which can indeed refer to positive attributions as well. Furthermore, the notion of discrimination is also often mentioned in this context. However, discrimination as a result of stereotyped ideas or behavior is rather the concern of studies dealing with the practical outcomes of the latter, which are not of interest for the topic of my thesis which rather focuses on the linguistic aspects.

Mitulla (1997) points out the fact that there is a lack of a common term usage but a vast choice of various definitions. It is also stated that the relationship between prejudices and stereotypes has not been clearly explained yet. This is the reason why the following definitions and theoretical approaches are difficult to fathom.

On the one hand, stereotypes are regarded as the cognitive part of prejudices which represent the generic term here. It is stressed that a link occurs only if values are seen in the attributions presented in stereotypes. In this case, Stroebe & Insko (1989) see a close link between the two concepts. On the other hand, scholars like Gardener (1994) do not see any link between the concepts of prejudices and stereotypes, as prejudices may equally be based on other attributions than that made

[3] See http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page2.htm.

by stereotyping. In my view, clear-cut theories cannot be provided within this discussion as to see a close link or no link at all between stereotypes and prejudices are views open to discussion.

1.1.1. Stereotypes

According to the online dictionary of Msn Encarta a 'stereotype' is an oversimplified conception. Hence, "an oversimplified standardized image of a person or group."[4]
The term 'stereotype'[5] as a concept dates back to Walter Lippmann's book *Public opinion* which was published in 1922. Ashmore & Delboca (1981) however point out that the very term was created by the French printer Didot in 1798 (Mitulla 1997: 69). Didot referred to a special way of printing whereby a fixed material was used. Hence, a 'stereotype' was „a metal printing plate cast from a matrix molded from a raised printing surface, such as type."[6] Most obviously, Lippmann made use of this very meaning - namely that of 'a fixed unchangeable and preset form'. Referring to solid images in the minds of the people, Lippmann stressed the fact that these images transmit a distorted reality which is in turn shared with others in the same social group. Those stereotyped images in the minds of people are shared with members of the same society.[7] Another fact underlined by Lippmann is that people perceive the environment around them in a rather subjective way. In this context, Lippmann mentions terms such as 'pseudoenvironment' or 'fiction' (Mitulla 1997: 70).

The detailed definition by the Online Encyclopædia Britannica states that a stereotype is

> something conforming to a fixed or general pattern; *especially*: a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment.[8]

[4] See: http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary_/stereotype.html.
[5] The origins of stereotype research date back to a study by Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly (1933). http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page12.htm.
[6] Cf. http://www.yourdictionary.com/ahd/s/s0744600.html.
[7] Cf. Mitulla 1997: 70.
[8] http://www.britannica.com

Allport (1954) even mentions the more precise term ‘ethnic stereotype’ as follows:

> Felt or expressed antipathy based on a faulty and inflexible generalization and may be directed toward a group as ca whole or toward an individual because he is a member of a group (Allport 1954: 9).

Katz & Braly (1993) like Allport (1954) during their long research were rather interested in the contents of stereotypes and saw a link between stereotypes and attitudes.[9] The anthology by Hamilton (1981) however offered a new perspective through which stereotypes were now regarded as social cognitions. Hence, instead of contents, their structure and impact on social information processes were considered. But since structure could not be analyzed without any consideration of contents, the definition provided by Ashmore & DelBoca (1981:16) seemes to be more suitable to Mitulla (1997). Accordingly, a stereotype is “a set of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people” (Mitulla 1997: 70). This rather broad definition was referred to by many scholars among others Banaji & Greenwald (1994), Gardner (1994), Snyder & Miene (1994), Stroebe & Insko (1989) and will be the one used in this study.

1.1.2. Prejudices

This chapter is intended to provide some of the most quoted definitions of the concept of prejudice before studying the differences between stereotypes and prejudices in chapter 1.3.3.1.

It is crucial to note that - with the study of prejudice - the attitudes towards stereotyping in general experienced an important change. Until the 60s, for instance, it has been still „usual“ to harbor prejudices against certain ethnic groups. So usual that even an encyclopedia of prime importance defined black people as having

> dark skin sometimes almost black, broad noses, usually a rather small brain in relation to their size, especially among the taller members of the group, with forearms and shins proportionately long. In the skeleton there is a smoothness of contour which even in adults often recalls the bony form of a child, and among

[9] Cf. Mitulla 1997: 70ff.

> some members of the group the forehead has that prominent and smooth form which is so characteristic of the infant of our own race.[10]

The online Britannica states that a prejudice is – as could be seen from the *Britannica* definition – a

> [p]reconceived judgment or opinion**;** an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge; an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics.[11]

The *Collins New English Dictionary* (2000: 605) more directly expresses that a prejudice is an

> [u]nreasonable or unfair dislike or preference and intolerance of or dislike for people because they belong to a specific race, religion, or group: class prejudice.

In these definitions, we find a clear reference to race, culture and religion. In *Collins* another term, namely 'class prejudice' is added to this list.

1.2. Philosophical aspects – Bacon's four "idols"

In order to draw a rich picture of the concept, it seems to be crucial to provide an exemplary insight into some philosophical discourse about this issue. One early philosopher whose thinking is relevant to the present topic is Francis Bacon.

Being the father of English Empiricism, Bacon believed in the absolute necessity of basing all human knowledge on inductive and experimental science. Bacon affirmed that the process of cognition is thwarted by 'false idols and terms'. In order to describe them, he systematized the adulterations of the intellect by mentioning four different 'idols' dominating the human mind. The four headings of his classifications

[10] The section refers to the 1964 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* describing "woolly-haired groups" under the entry for "Races of Mankind". Buxton 1964: 864A quoted on http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/index.htm.

[11] Etymology: Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *praejudicium* previous judgment, damage, from *prae*- + *judicium* judgment.
Source: http://www.britannica.com/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=prejudice&query=prejudice.

are ‘idols of the Tribe‘, ‘idols of the Cave‘, ‘idols of the Marketplace‘ and ‘idols of the Theater‘.[12]

The idols of the Tribe

The idols of the Tribe refer directly to the human mind, thus concerning the nature of the whole human race. According to this concept, perceptions by the senses or the mind do not reflect the reality but are rather deceptive beliefs being inherent in the mind of humans. These beliefs can be colored by various activities such as education or reading books due the author’s or teachers’ subjective beliefs. A person’s understanding may also be distorted by bad habits or false perceptions of persons s/he admires and holds in too high esteem. [13] Negative experiences with persons of a particular origin or type may also lead to false conclusions about this group. Another human tendency which falls under Bacon’s ‘idol of the Tribe’ is the search for more simplicity or regularity in the world than there really exists. People also tend to regard personal beliefs as the very truth since they already believe them to be true and are attached to them. Hence, people collect evidence in order to prove and support their ‘own truth’ while filtering all information which contradicts it. Another human characteristic mentioned here is the difficulty to separate emotions from right judgment and understanding, which in turn leads to false impressions based on feelings at a given time.

The idols of the Cave

The idols of the Cave are those which develop within the human mind being symbolically a cavern. This kind of thoughts is affected by personal experiences, education, interest and the contact with authorities. Truth is distorted in situations where people observe things in light of their own special knowledge and opinions influenced by their favorite science or theology. Also when people focus on certain

[12] These general information about Bacon‘s conception of ‘idols‘are based on Alfred Zauner‘s M.A. thesis (1986).

[13] For a thorough analysis of the ‘Four Idols‘ by Bacon and his own views on “idols which beset man’s mind” see the website http://www.sirbacon.org/links/4idols.htm as well as Ben Chambers’ and Zeb Dahl’s discussion on http://www.sirbacon.org/zeb-ben.htm.

similarities or differences of things, they might be very distracted by those common features or distinctions. Thus, other essential characteristics of the respective thing are completely neglected leading to a false perception. Philosophers' intense concentration on the past or the future in the attempt to make out the 'truth' is also criticized within the theory of the 'idol of the Cave' as the importance of the now is missed. In the same way, one's intense focus on the details of an issue lead to an incomplete understanding of it. Equally, a rather global view on any subject of study neglecting important details or sub-subjects would provide the same deficient results.

The idols of the Marketplace

The idols of the Marketplace represent the third type of Bacon's idols. They basically deal with errors caused primarily by words and language. Because of the fact that language is ambiguous, very often false significance is put upon words confusing our conception of nature. The use of words without any attention paid to their true meaning results in obscurity of the very idea they are intended to express. The human mind is thus seen as enchained due to the distortion of reality through language (Zauner 1986: 2). Two people having two different definitions of the same word or idea will not get the same meaning due to this misuse or misunderstanding of words while conducting a conversation. Similarly, differing meanings of slang words or the existence of two or more meanings of a word (e.g. 'clever' meaning either 'smart' or tricky') confuses one's understanding.

The idols of the Theater

The idols of the Theater - on the other hand- refer to sophistry and false learning in the domains of philosophic and scientific approaches. In the course of time, these approaches attain acceptance and are no longer questioned. This a priori acceptance of authorities in the respective fields in turn results in a limited of comprehension of reality. Religious questions are discussed here as well. The unquestioned reliance on writings of religious authorities is criticized in a way as certain activities are done in the name of religion although they are explicitly

forbidden in those scriptures. Thus, the philosophy behind a given religion is not itself examined closely enough. The practical interpretation of the theories of certain political systems (democracy, communism, etc.) is equally prone to criticism through the perspective of the 'idols of the theater'. Corrupted education due to stagnant ideas or prejudices (idols) of teachers or false 'philosophies' of political parties reduce the validity of both teachers and parties and are thus criticized through the 'idols of the theater'.

Taken into consideration the emphasis Bacon puts on the importance of language use, it is generally accepted that he projected the modern science of semantics. Moreover, he did not consider idols symbols, but rather fixations. Therefore, Bacon is also regarded as having anticipated modern psychology.[14]

To sum up, Bacon – by listing his "four idols" – provided a philosophical insight into what he regarded as the possible causes of misconceptions. The reason why I dedicated a chapter of my thesis to Bacon's "four idols" was to offer a different approach to the topic before concentration on socio- and psycho-linguistic aspects and to show that Bacon's findings are very well transferable to the modern world. It was also supposed to reveal the importance of the subject of stereotypes and prejudices for scholars throughout history.

1.3. Psychological aspects

In order to provide a better insight into this field of stereotyped ideas which involves many areas of science at the same time, some psychological aspects implied in the development of prejudices and stereotypes will now be pointed out in some detail before focusing later on the social aspects of the subject.

Psychology's concern first was above all the content of stereotypes. Katz & Braly's (1933) studies were based on group stereotypes and attributions associated with certain national groups (Katz & Braly 1933, Allport 1971, Hamilton 1981, Ashmore & DelBoca 1981 as referred to in Mitulla 1997: 70). Katz & Braly (1933) - similar to Allport (1971) - established a link between stereotypes and attitudes or prejudices. As

[14] Cf. www.sirbacon.org/links/4idols.htm.

regards the emotions involved in prejudiced opinions psychologists refer to prejudices as

> not merely a statement of opinion or belief, but an attitude that includes feelings such as contempt, dislike, or loathing.[15]

With Hamilton (1981), a new perspective was achieved in the study of stereotypes. They were considered social cognitions and their structures as well as their influence on information processing were examined in the first place instead of their content. Mitulla (1997), however, emphasized the fact that structure cannot be analyzed without content at all. Thus, content continued to be an essential factor as well. Hence, for psychology a stereotype is

> a set of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people. And a rigid categorical thinking is a central ingredient in prejudice.[16]

1.3.1. Psychological stages involved in the development of prejudices and stereotypes

Several psychological stages have to be taken into consideration when analyzing the readiness of a person to develop prejudices and stereotypes. In the study of the psychological stages a person goes through when developing prejudices and stereotypes, factors favoring the development have to be taken into consideration as well.[17]

Most obviously, one of the most influential role models for children within a society are those of the parents. Children are not born with stereotypes. However, in the course of upbringing, they are directly affected by their parents' system of values and behaviors. Therefore, it is emphasized by Allport (1970: 303) that parents who teach stereotypes also tend to support the development of the same (Allport 1970 as discussed in Dechant 1993: 17).

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[15] Cf. http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/.
[16] See: http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page3.htm.
[17] In this limited consideration, I shall only mention general aspects of the factors causing the stereotyping process. For an in depth analysis, see the MA Thesis of Dechant 1993: 16ff.

Besides parental influence, scholastic environment plays an essential role in the development of stereotypes likewise. The school represents the first environment in which the child gets into contact with its peers by making secondary experiences of socialization (Ibid). In this period, the child is given the opportunity to develop the ability of recognizing the otherness of people around it in order to be prepared for her/his future life (Mitscherlich discussed in Dechant 1993: 18).

Ehrlich (1979) saw also a close link between a child's negative self-esteem and the tendency for using stereotypes in their future life (Ehrlich 1979 discussed in Dechant 1993: 18). Also Tajfel and Turner (1986) indicate that

> when people experience a drop in self-esteem, they become more likely to express prejudice. Thus, at least one effective means of decreasing prejudice may be to address the sources of insecurity that underlie it.

As far as the causes of prejudices are concerned, scholars basically mention two levels of analysis. The first level is called 'individual level'. As the term implies, it pertains all the mechanisms and circumstances of the development of prejudices in the mind of a person. According to cognitive psychology, prejudices of this level are the result of the narrowness of the information processing capacity. In contrast, prejudices of the social level are either the consequence of social conflicts concerning problems between groups, or they result from the process of socialization (Mitulla 1997: 72). Mitualla (1997: 73) visualized the above mentioned individual-social levels of analysis as follows:

Figure 1: Levels of analysis (Mitulla 1997: 73)

Individual	**Society**
Personal characteristics[18]	conflicts between groups
Personal motives and experience	social learning, parents, media
Cognitive narrowness	

[18] See also 1.3.2.

However, this stereotype concept, which is an attempt to explain the causes of prejudices by looking on both the individual and the society level, is according to Mitulla (1997: 73) subject to criticism. The social level approach does not explain why certain groups actually become the target of prejudices. This, as Mitulla puts it, is to be expected from such a theory though. She moreover states that prejudice theories are very often criticized because they focus too much on the individual instead of incorporating social and cultural aspects as well.

While analyzing psychological aspects and stages involved in the development of prejudices, the impact of mass-media on one's conception of the other is of great importance for the understanding of this process. Especially for youngsters, mass-media represents - apart from the personal environment – an essential information source (Dechant 1993: 19ff). Dechant points out that audio-visual input - especially that of foreign reporting - plays an influential role in the process of opinion-forming. Due to the fact that news carries certain elements of the reporters' personal viewpoints, mass-media only convey a small part of reality and encourage the development of stereotypes. Dechant (1993) furthermore states that people are confronted with stereotypical elements in mass media on a daily basis.

An internet site dedicated to the 'understanding of prejudices', refers to an important number of research studies conducted on this topic.

Regarding the impacts of mass media on our stereotypical activation the following results are presented: [19]

1) White television viewers who watch a stereotyped comic portrayal of Black people are later more likely to judge a Black defendant guilty of an assault (Ford, 1997).

2) Males who view movie scenes objectifying women are later more likely to believe that a date rape victim experienced pleasure and "got what she wanted" (Milburn, Mather, & Conrad, 2000).

[19] The results are directly taken from http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page16.htm.

3) People who watch a music video objectifying women later rate a woman as more sexual and submissive when she returns a man's advances (Hansen & Hansen, 1988).

4) Heterosexual men who look at attractive women in magazine erotica later rate their romantic partners as less attractive (Kenrick, Gutierres, & Goldberg, 1989).

Summing up, it can be said that the triggers and roots favoring the development of prejudice are manifold. There are personality factors (e.g. social dominance orientation), cognitive aspects (e.g. categorical thinking), motivational elements (e.g. need for self-esteem) and social factors (e.g. negative attributions for outer groups) being essential points which have to be taken into consideration. [20]

1.3.2. Main characteristics of prejudiced persons

Psychoanalysts also analyzed the main characteristics of prejudiced persons. According to research conducted, Körner (1976)[21] stated the following attributes:

1) strong projective activity: disapproval of own deficiency and forbidden desires are directed to others.

2) sparsely depressive: deep dejection does not surface very often because of the existing escape mechanisms.

3) extra punitive: accusation and punishment are directed to the outer world rather than to one-self.

4) anal character: due to a fixation of the psycho-sexual development in the anal phase, a stingy, constrained and pedantic character is developed.

[20] See: http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page10.htm.
[21] Körner (1979) quoted in Zauner 1986: 8-9.

5) strongly regressive: burdens cause an escape to a former stage of development with “primitive“ reactions;

According to psychoanalytical interpretation, prejudices guarantee the psychological stability by reducing always and again fear developed by a relatively weak Ego. Due to some psychological reasons, which cannot be mentioned in this thesis, fear is developed and eased through prejudices directed to the exterior. Therefore, it can be deduced that – from a psychoanalytical perspective – prejudices have a vital functional significance for the personality (Zauner 1986: 9ff).
Another essential point which has been highlighted as well is that the Oedipus complex has not been overcome by prejudiced persons. Aggressive reactions towards the authoritarian father are directed against minorities which represent for the person the less dangerous part.

It has been noticed so far that the transmission of stereotypes and prejudices occurs during the process of socialization. At the age of 3-4 already, children are capable of ethnic classifications. Aged eight, they consider ethnic membership a constant unchanging factor (Mitulla 1997: 75).
In conclusion, it has to be pointed out that the formation of a biased personality is completed by the beginning of adolescence.

1.3.3. The dissociation model by Devine (1989a)

Many essential studies on the concept of stereotypes and prejudices have been conducted in light of Devine’s (1989a) model of stereotypes and prejudices.
The cardinal tenet of the dissociation model by Devine (1989a) (as referred to in Mitulla 1997: 64-68) is the question under which circumstances stereotypes and therefore the personal biased or unbiased convictions are actually activated. Within the context of the dissociation model, a differentiation between stereotypes and prejudices will be outlined in some detail in the following chapter (1.3.3.1.).

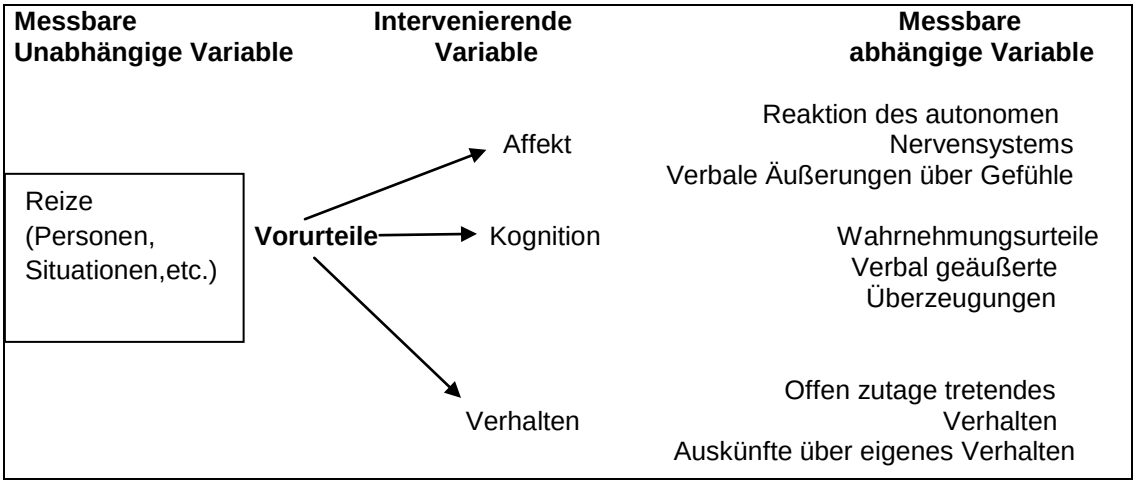
Mitulla (1997) notes that Devine’s dissociation model is a cognitive one. According to

this model, prejudices and stereotypes are on the one hand the result of a restricted capacity of human information processing; on the other hand they affect the social information process. Biased people are generally capable of accepting or refusing the truth of the respective prejudiced ideas (Hort 2007 :31). Devine (1989a) considers stereotypes as part of people's social knowledge because unbiased people rather - or unfortunately - represent an abnormality (Mitulla 1997: 67).

Automatic processes involve the unintentional or spontaneous activation of some well-learned set of associations […] In contrast; controlled processes are intentional and require the active attention of the individual. (Devine, 1989a: 186f. discussed in Hort 2007: 31)

As revealed by the following figure, prejudices represent –according to socio-psychological research- an interceding variable, which processes certain impulses of the subject's environment according to her/his disposition and needs which leads to certain consequences on the affective and cognitive levels or dimensions:[22]

Figure 2: Prejudices as interceding variables



Source: Hort (2007: 34)

Not to be prejudiced is according to Devine (1989a) the result of the active process of analysis with the respective subject, which does not represent the normal situation.

[22] Hort 2007: 34.

People have the ability to think about the appropriateness of the culturally acquired stereotypes and to decide whether the involved attributions correspond to their own convictions (Hort 2007: 32).

Mitulla (1997) sums up the central statements of Devine (1989a) as follows:

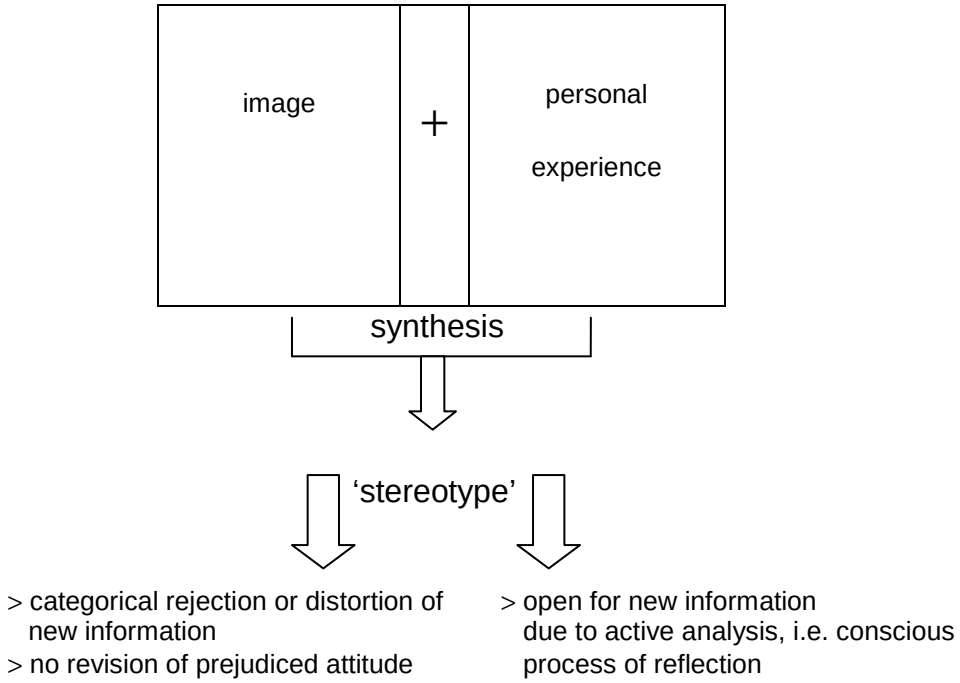
> 1) Stereotypes are learned ‘sets of associations’ which can be activated automatically by respective stimulus.
>
> 2) Biased persons are not differentiated from unbiased ones in terms of their cultural knowledge about the target group because both - as members of a society normally do - learn stereotypes in the course of socialization.
>
> 3) Both parties (prejudiced/unprejudiced) have rather differing personal convictions. Unbiased people for instance largely refuse the cultural stereotypes attributed to the respective target group. These people, i.e. consciously refusing those negative attributions have undergone a process of reflection which resulted in the conscious rejection of these stereotyped attributions. The personal convictions of biased people - on the other hand - correspond to ethnic stereotypes which are deeply rooted.
>
> 4) Once acquired, cultural prejudices and stereotypes are constantly present in the minds of humans even if they do no longer correlate with their actual attitudes, opinions or convictions.
>
> 5) In situations of automatic information processing, stereotypes can - regardless of the level of prejudice - influence the perception and evaluation of given situations and persons.
>
> 6) In situations of conscious information processing, people tend to

react according to their personal convictions.

Expanding the above mentioned ideas - Mitulla (1997: 67) by quoting Katz (1960) - underlines that stereotypes function as a simplification tool of an unclear environment.[23]

Devine (1989a) has affirmed in her dissociation model that a person learns certain stereotypes during the process of socialization which are stored in her/his mind. The person does not have to make use of them though. In the following figure, I have tried to visualize the development of stereotyped convictions according to Devine's model:

Figure 3: The development of stereotyped convictions



As can be seen above, the synthesis of a certain given 'image' about an object, situation, or persons combined with previous personal experience about the same results in the development of a 'stereotype'. After this process, however, the person either rejects or distorts new information (which would falsify the respective

[23] For socio-cognitive functions of stereotypes see chapter 1.4.

stereotype) or he or she undergoes a conscious information process (Hort 2007: 64ff).

1.3.3.1. Differences between stereotypes and prejudices

As could be seen so far, stereotypes and prejudices show numerous similarities as regards function and structure and both terms are often used as synonyms in daily conversations. Moreover, both reveal similar structuring mechanisms, i.e. the 'we-they' and 'I-you' dichotomies as well as the classification of the social environment (persons, groups, etc.) in social categories (Hort 2007: 63) as will be mentioned in chapter 1.5. Despite of these parallels there exist essential differences which will be briefly outlined in this chapter. Florack (2001: 11) explains that a 'stereotype' predominantly refers to 'cognitive processes' of differentiations and generalizations whereas a 'prejudice' concerns 'affective processes' of degradations (Schäfer 1988 quoted in Florack 2001: 11). The 'cognitive dissociation model' (Devine 1989a) has been established as a methodic basis for the differentiation of both terms.

Devine (1989a) criticizes the close relationship between stereotypes and prejudices which are often seen as the same concept by many scholars.

According to her two very different concepts exist. At this point, the following statement made by Devine seems to be relevant in order to provide a deeper insight into the author's objective:

> I am interested in how people manage the intrapersonal and interpersonal challenges associated with prejudice in our contemporary society. One main focus for recent work focused on the sources of motivation, internal and external, for responding without prejudice and the unique challenges these alternate sources of motivation create for managing the interpersonal aspects of inter-group relations. Key questions concern the relation between explicit and implicit prejudice and the processes that regulate the use of stereotypes. In addition, I am interested in the qualitative nature of the tension between majority and minority group members that may create obstacles for harmonious inter-group relations, and which may, in some instances lead to an escalation of prejudice coupled with a tendency to lash out at stigmatized groups. [24]

[24] Source: http://psych.wisc.edu/faculty/bio/devine.html.

In conclusion, it has to be mentioned also that Devine's model has been criticized as well. Hort (2007: 65) for instance – referring to the above mentioned process – states that objective evaluation criteria are lacking within the dissociation theory. The evaluation of a given subject in terms of own personal experience or acceptance is itself a prejudiced action already. At this point, he speaks of a fluid boundary between stereotypes and prejudices. He furthermore recommends – due to this rather narrow dialectical relation between both terms – to regard the stereotype as a cognitive orientation pattern representing a 'prejudgment' for the person. If the person is not capable of processing new information (see figure 3), the prejudgment turns into a prejudice (Hort 2007: 65) which seems to be a quite reasonable way to deal with the topic.

1.4. Socio-political aspects

Before looking at the socio-cognitive functions of stereotypes and prejudices, a general review of socio-political definition of both terms seems to be of relevance in this introductory chapter.

As Dechant (1993) explains, stereotypes are conveyed through generations as part of the social heritage of a given society. They constitute the collective knowledge of the society and are therefore stable convictions which are hardly changeable. Accordingly, this means that the less a person knows about 'others', the likely it is that he or she makes use of stereotypes (Flatz 1989: 15).

People establish a certain attitude towards 'others' which in turn affects her/his behavior (Ibid.). Dechant (1993: 15) mentions the so called *konative Komponente* concerning categories such as age, sex, race, class (profession, education, income), religion, nationality, ideology (in particular political, economic and religious convictions), etc.

There exists also a political viewpoint regarding the causes and reasons for stereotyped attitudes. An encyclopedia[25] on political issues states that:

[25] See *Lexikon der politischen Bildung,* Hufer, K. (1999: 240-242)quoted on http://www.ustinov.at/vorurteile.htm.

> Vorurteile sind starre, meist negative und ablehnende, oft feindselige Einstellungen gegenüber einzelnen oder Gruppen, denen aufgrund fehlerhafter Verallgemeinerung bestimmte "wesenhafte" Eigenschaften und "typische" Verhaltensweisen zugeschrieben werden. (...) Vorurteilsvolles "Denken" arbeitet mit einem stets ähnlichen Inventar von *Stereotypen* und *Klischees*, vor allem aus der "Mottenkiste" ethnozentristisch-nationalistischer Weltanschauungen. (...)

Here again, the very character of stereotypes, i.e. lacking reality, is highlighted in order to reveal that they are tools serving the reduction of the complexity of one's own life and feelings:

> Vorurteile entziehen sich dem Versuch der Wahrheitsfindung, verweigern sich den Kriterien von logischer Stringenz und politischer Rationalität.
> Vorurteile entlasten. Sie schaffen eine Feindwelt, die für einzelne und große Gruppen der Bevölkerung als eine krisenhaft empfundene Wirklichkeit - auf Kosten von Fremden, Außenseitern und Minderheiten - erträglicher macht. Für persönliche und gesellschaftliche Schwierigkeiten, für Zukunftsangst und ökonomische Krisen werden *Sündenböcke* verantwortlich gemacht und *die* anderen, *die* Fremden, *die* Ausländer etc. als vermeintlich Schuldige attackiert (Hufer 1999: 240-242).

The political view goes so far as to note that prejudiced concepts are a major stabilizer for systems of power. Moreover, they are considered responsible for the development of ideologies and facilitate polarized thinking:

> Besonders wichtig für die politische Bildung: Vorurteile stabilisieren auch Herrschaft, lenken ab von den wahren Ursachen gesellschaftlicher Missstände - und von den Verursachern (Hufer 1999: 240-242).

Being responsible for historical deceptions and the development of ideologies, prejudices are even considered as immune against facts and arguments (…) (Ibid.).

Being a political journalist, Lippmann (1991) regarded stereotypes as a projection of the people's perceptions of their own values and rights. Stereotypes have according

to Lippmann by far not a negative nature only. Rather, they do involve a certain cognitive economy resulting out of the respective distances:[26]

> There is economy in this. […] In a circle of friends, and in relation to close associates or competitors, there is no shortcut through, and no substitute for, and individualized understanding. […] But modern life is hurried and multifarious, above all physical distance separates men who are often in vital contact with each other, […]. There is neither time nor opportunity for intimate acquaintance. Instead we notice a trait which marks a well known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry in our heads (Lippmann 1991: 88ff. quoted in Hort 2007:13).

Lippmann's analysis relates to a central social aspect of stereotypes. This aspect concerns the fact that social closeness and distance between the respective members of social categories are essential factors in determining the content and significance of stereotypes. This is equally outlined by the social psychologist Triandis (1975):

> […], dass weniger distante Gruppen exakter stereotypisiert werden. Deshalb nimmt der Inhalt von Stereotypen umso mehr den Charakter von Projektionen an und verliert um so mehr an Exaktheit, je entfernter und unbekannter die Außengruppe ist (Triandis: 1975: 170 quoted in Hort 2007:14).[27]

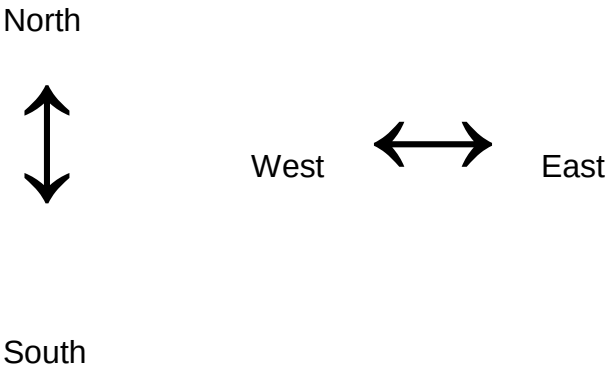
Thus, a Bavarian, for example is stereotyped by a North-German in a specific way while on the other hand s/he is stereotyped by the English only as typical German. A more intensive contact with Germans of different regions is necessary in order to be able to differentiate between them and construct more precise stereotypes (Hort 2007: 15).

In Europe, rough social and national stereotypes are constructed along a west-east and north-south axis. Compared with their neighbors of the east, people from the western part of a given geographic region see themselves a more civilized and cultivated (Ibid.). In turn, westerners are regarded as arrogant and superficial by their eastern opponents. Regarded from the north, southerners are considered temperamental on the one hand and messy and unreliable on the other hand.

[26] Hort 2007: 13.
[27] For regional stereotypes within the same nation, see part III/England.

Northerners are in turn seen as stubborn, distant and boring by their southern neighbors (Hort 2007: 16). In the following figure, I have visualized the above mentioned north-south and east-west axis, which reveal the quite straightforward dynamics of stereotyping:

Figure 4: Simple dynamics of stereotypes



The above cited *Lexikon der politischen Bildung* furthermore notes that fixed negative attitudes towards other ethnic groups are caused by excessive national feelings, which is of special interest for my study of national stereotypes in idiomatic expressions and which confirms what is illustrated in figure 4:

> Der Vorurteilsvolle zeichnet sich in der Regel auch durch übersteigerten Nationalismus aus, verficht die Ideologie der natürlichen Ungleichheit, neigt zu Schwarz-Weiß-Denken, das mit einer klaren Vorstellung von Oben und Unten, Gut und Böse, Stark und Schwach verbunden ist, hängt an autoritären Orientierungsmustern (...) (Hufer 1999: 242).

Interesting is, however, that stereotypes – despite of their normative character – impinge on certain 'social norms' leading to the unequal treatment of people:

> (...) Der Vorurteilsbegriff ist (...) wesentlich durch seinen normativen, moralischen Gehalt bestimmt. Demnach unterscheiden sich Vorurteile von anderen Einstellungen nicht durch spezifische innere Qualitäten, sondern durch ihre soziale Unerwünschtheit. Als Vorurteile erscheinen also nur soziale Urteile, die gegen anerkannte menschliche Wertvorstellungen verstoßen, nämlich gegen die Normen:

- der Rationalität, das heißt, sie verletzen das Gebot, über andere Menschen nur auf der Basis eines möglichst sicheren und geprüften Wissens zu urteilen (...)
- der Gerechtigkeit (Gleichbehandlung), das heißt, sie behandeln Menschen oder Menschengruppen ungleich (...)
- der Mitmenschlichkeit, das heißt, sie sind durch Intoleranz und Ablehnung des Anderen als eines Mitmenschen und Individuums gekennzeichnet, ihnen fehlt das Moment der Empathie, ein positives Sich-Hineinversetzen in andere Menschen (...) [28].

In general, prejudices are – from a socio-political point of view - regarded as negative attitudes towards certain persons or groups. However, I will present in part III idiomatic expressions consisting of positive or even totally neutral national stereotypes.

1.4.1. Socio-cognitive functions of stereotypes and prejudices

> Prejudice is both a cognitive and a social phenomenon.
> Teun A. van Dijk (1984:13)

As already mentioned before, stereotypes have crucial socio-cognitive functions for the personality of the respective persons. This part will highlight them in some detail. Gordon Allport (1954) - in his book *The Nature of Prejudice* - was the first to describe "the relationship between prejudice and categorical thinking." His book has become a classic in this field recognizing "the emotional, social, economic, and historic dimensions of prejudice." The author also underlined that prejudice "is partly an outgrowth of normal human functioning." Allport (1954) wrote that

> [t]he human mind must think with the aid of categories....Once formed, categories are the basis for normal prejudgment. We cannot possibly avoid this process. Orderly living depends upon it.[29]

The affective aspects of the functions of stereotypes will be traced briefly. They basically encompass emotional evaluation systems of social circumstances. Dechant

[28] See „Was sind Vorurteile" in *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, Bergmann W. (2001) quoted on http://www.ustinov.at/vorurteile.htm.
[29] See still: http://www.understandingprejudice.org/apa/english/page4.htm.

(1993:17) asserts that emotions are rather unexplainable rationally. However, they represent an important element in the communication process between two different persons and are of considerable importance in the development of sympathy or antipathy. Thus, emotionally affected stereotypes are an extreme of attitudes, which are quite resistant against any influence or change. Stereotyped judgments – being based on insufficient check of reality – are made rashly representing global descriptions of oneself (auto stereotype) or other persons or groups (hetereo stereotype). They also facilitate orientation through simplification of the information diversity. Moreover, stereotypes have an emotional and evaluative aspect (Tewes 1999: 377).

Several factors are involved in the development of social or national stereotypes. The processing of information varies according to psychological, social and environmental conditions. Besides cognitive processes[30], Hamilton (1976) also underlines the social learning experiences as well as motivational factors which facilitate the acquisition and conservation of group conceptions. However, there is a certain interaction between these two factors which have a huge impact on the perception of reality (Hamilton 1976 quoted in Zauner: 67ff). Van Dijk (1984: 13) explains this by stating that prejudiced ideas are not "merely a characteristic of individual beliefs or emotions about social groups" but rather a "shared form of social representation in group members, acquired during processes of socialization". The cognitive structures of ethnic attitudes and the strategies of their use reflect social functions, as will be discussed now (Cf. Van Dijk (1984: 13).

Tajfel (1982 as referred to in Zauner 1986: 70-71) points out four basic functions of stereotypes. The first, cognitive function is mentioned within the structuring function of stereotypes. The second function concerns the maintenance of own value systems. The creation and conservation of group ideologies justifying certain actions, as discussed later, and the isolation from foreign groups are listed among the last two functions.

[30] The term 'cognitive' relates to cognition, which - according to the online Oxford Dictionary - refers to mental acquisition of knowledge through thought, experience and the senses. Source: http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/cognition?view=uk.

1) The cognitive function refers to the accentuation of differences between groups and the overemphasis of the similarity within those groups with the aim of structuring the individual's own social environment. Fischer (1992) (as quoted in Mitulla 1997: 64) clarifies that Stereotypes - in the form of orientation systems or prejudices- structure our daily life by offering simple orientation patterns which consist of a system of values and norms. In addition, they reduce the socio-cultural complexity of our environment. As Astrid Franke (1999) writes - by quoting Lippmann (1922) - that stereotyping is a "constitutive element of public opinion in […] two ways":

> Analyzed at a cognitive level, the stereotype is a kind of filter with the help of which we understand the world. As the world is far too complex to perceive it in all its details and as its various aspects cannot be directly experienced any more, we need **simplifications**[31] which render order to a multitude of impressions. (Lippmann 1992 quoted in Franke 1999: 65)

As Franke (1999) reminds us "stereotypes are necessary, but if we do not learn to hold them lightly and critically they will do more damage than good." However, I shall not focus on the practical outcomes of stereotypes.

As regards the structuring function of stereotypes, let me mention Daniel Castillo Durante (1994) who inferred that a stereotype is also an enemy, but an enemy who organizes our discourse in spite of us:

> Le stéréotype est aussi l'ennemi, mais un ennemi qui nous habite et qui organise nos discours en dépit de nous.
> (Castillo Durante 1994 quoted in Garaud 2001: 10).

2) The second function of stereotypes is the maintenance of the individual's own value system. In order to assess other social groups in a more stable way, it is necessary for individuals to define the differences and similarities within the groups. These social groups can be evaluated - according to one's personal interpretations - in a positive or negative way.

However, outsiders are more likely to be presented negatively by a given group highlighting the identity of its own group (Fischer 1992 quoted in Mitulla 1997: 64). At

[31] My emphasis.

this point, the most influential stereotypes are national or ethnic ones -or if within the same country -the regional ones (Hahn 2002 quoted in Florack 2007: 64).

3) The third function concerns groups rather than individual persons. It deals primarily with the creation and conservation of a certain group ideology which serves the function of justifying, for example, anti-Semitic actions. People often refer to their established group ideologies trying to justify their biased actions.

4) A sub-function of social stereotypes is the isolation from foreign groups in order to protect one's positive image. People distance themselves from negative actions of out-groups in order to reinforce their positive image regarding that particular issue, action, etc. From a sociological perspective, it is highlighted that a function of prejudices is to strengthen one's superiority by degrading others. Hillmann (1994) notes that prejudices strengthen self-esteem and the idea of moral integrity by degrading and discriminating foreign groups (Hillmann 1994: 914).

Scholars also mention the protective function of stereotypes, Franke (1999) discerns - again by quoting - Lippmann (1922) that a pattern of stereotypes

> [i]s the guarantee of our self-respect; it is the projection upon the world of our own sense of our own value, our own position and our own rights. The stereotypes are, therefore, highly charged with the feelings that are attached to them. They are the fortress of our tradition, and behind its defenses we can continue to feel ourselves safe in the position we occupy (Lippmann 1922 quoted in Franke 1999: 68).

As already outlined before, prejudices have also a clarifying and ordering function in complex situations:

> In Krisensituationen steigt in der Regel die Vorurteilsbereitschaft an. Eine 'funktionale' Deutung sieht in Vorurteilen auch eine Entlastung, insofern sie eine 'Ordnung' in die Komplexität sozialen Erlebens bringen (Lippmann 1922 quoted in Franke 1999: 68).

Furthermore, prejudiced ideas function as compensatory tools for own insufficiency

by projecting it to foreign groups which are conventionalized as enemies. These groups are furthermore blamed for insecurity, risks as well as own social failure and bad living conditions because finding the actual culprits represents a more difficult task (Lippmann 1922 quoted in Franke 1999: 68).
It is important to remind ourselves of the exonerating function of stereotypes for the user. However, stereotypes

> preced[e] the use of reason, [are] a form of perception,
> impos[e] a certain character on the data of our senses before
> the data reach intelligence (Ibid.).

Summing up the most relevant issues in ethnic stereotypes and prejudice, van Dijk (1984: 15-16) states that

a) prejudice is a specific property of social information processing about outer groups, involving mechanisms such as overgeneralization, simplification, selection or other properties of 'faulty' reasoning;
b) these processes are embedded within various socio-cultural constraints, such as conformism, in-group royalty, institutions, socialization of the child, norms and laws; and
c) there are individual differences in the susceptibility to prejudiced attitudes that are determined by authoritarian education, childhood experiences, personal frustration, and anxiety.

1.5. National Stereotypes

> Die Zuordnung von Stereotypen zu untersuchen heißt, die Sprache des Vorurteils zu studieren, denn Stereotype liefern eine gemeinsame Sprachregelung für voreingenommene Menschen. […] gleichzeitig stellen sie die Basis für die Entwicklung und Aufrechterhaltung von Solidarität bei den Trägern der Vorurteile dar. (Ehrlich 1979: 32 quoted in Hort 2007: 86)

As stereotypical sayings often refer to certain specific 'characteristics' of given nations, this chapter intends to work out the concept of 'national character' in

general. For this purpose, also a brief historical overview of how the concept ‘national character’ evolved throughout history and between different nations will be provided. Ascribing positive or negative and sometimes even neutral characteristics to certain nations and their people has a longstanding tradition. As will be pointed out later in this chapter, several decisive aspects such as wars, trade and different types of social, cultural and intellectual contact have facilitated the development of stereotyped images in the mind of the people who have been making use of the so-called “selective representation” as a social function of stereotypes; i.e. existing or past relations between two different groups are portrayed in stereotypes expressions according to the historical, political or cultural relations of both countries (Hort, 2007: 30). Regardless of their positive, negative or neutral nature, national stereotypes may disappear under given circumstances and reappear when they have changed. Florack (2001: 45) offers an example to that fact by quoting from the supplement to the *Enzyclopédie* by Charles-Claude de Montigny (1776: 308), a text being a reaction to the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763).Bellicose aspects of the stereotyped group reappear after a period of two hundred years:

> Les Allemands comme leurs ancêtres, sont robustes, grands & bien conformés. Tous semblent nés pour la guerre […]. Ce peuple de soldats […] se soumet sans murmure à l’austérité de la discipline militaire (Montigny 1776: 308 quoted in Florack 2001: 45).

Florack (2001) refers to Klemperer (1961) who outlines very well the above mentioned changing character of perspectives of one nation about another:

> Zunächst fällt ein ständiger Wechsel in Blickrichtung und Werturteil auf. […] das deutsche Frankreichbild […], wenn es im 17. Jahrhundert literarisch, im 18. philosophisch, im 19. und 20. politisch und sozial bestimmt ist; anders in den Köpfen eines neutralen, eines unterdrückten, eines siegreichen Volkes; anders unter der Wirkung einer idealistischen und einer positivistischen Weltanschauung; anders aus kleinstädtischer Besinnlichkeit und aus weltwirtschaftlichem Getriebe heraus (Klemperer 1961 quoted in Florack 2000: 15-16).

The variable attitude of the Germans towards the French can equally be applied to the relation between two other nations.

The dominant perception of one's own nation and characteristics does not correlate with the opinion of others. What happens then with the perception of 'national character' after a revolution like the French one? How do others perceive a particular nation, when it has changed its view of its own 'national character'? System breaks do not lead to a retirement but a re-stabilization of stereotypes. Stereotypes are redeployed and national characteristics are now ascribed to particular stratums of that society or are reassessed (Florack 2001: 6).

Hence, this introductory chapter in part III is supposed to elucidate the concept of "national character" before presenting it in the respective idiomatic expressions later on. The development of a certain national character throughout the centuries will also be discussed in this chapter by presenting expressive parts of the most essential literary examples dedicated to this issue.

This matter has been the subject of investigation for scholars for a number of decades and even centuries. In linguistic studies, the concept of "national character" has been formulated rather vaguely as Van Dijk for example (1984) speaks of the "shared nature of the underlying opinions or wisdoms" when defining the notion of "ethnic stereotypes" (Van Dijk 1984 quoted in Florack[32] 2001: 32). In the Middle Ages, peoples were ascribed only to certain rudimentary epithets, which changes from the 16th century onwards with the reception of ancient knowledge within humanism and the conquest of space in the course of the expeditions (Florack 2001: 32). There existed only simple and undeveloped ascriptions to various nations, which changed with the upcoming of new data combined with the ancient climate theory. This coinage led to very detailed stereotypes often classifying the same nation into two different groups, the north and the south. Florack (2001) moreover points out that the ancient climate theory coined with new empirical knowledge offered a systematic comparison of peoples. Therefore, the origin of national stereotypes lies – according to Florack – in a knowledge which was shared by European scholars (Florack 2001: 33). As regards the function of stereotyped comparisons, Florack (2001) emphasizes the following dilemma:

[32] Florack's *Tiefsinnige Deutsche, frivole Franzosen* (2001) is an in-depth analysis of both cultures with reference to essential texts encompassing four centuries.

> Stereotype Etikettierungen der eigenen und der fremden Nation oder Kultur schaffen sowohl die Möglichkeit als auch die Probleme interkulturellen Verstehens. Möglichkeiten eröffnen sich dadurch, dass kulturell Differentes, auf nationale Stereotype zurückgeführt, prinzipiell vergleichbar wird. Als Ausdruck „erstarrten Denkens“[33] erschweren diese jedoch zugleich die Annäherung über kulturelle Grenzen hinweg (Florack 2001: 1).

Many different terms for describing the concept of ‘national character’ have developed in the course of time. (Florack 2001: 24ff) Luther already talked about the Germans as coming across as crude and clumsy (Florack 2001: 42) and Montesquieu – during the Age of Enlightenment - even requires in his *De l’esprit des Lois* to adjust the form of government to the respective ‘national character’ and justifies his standpoint with the latest neural findings combined with the ancient Theory of Climate (Florack 2001: 42).[34] Bravery, hunting, drinking and frankness are traditional ‘German’ stereotypes already allocated in Tacitus’ *Germania* (Florack 2001: 42). In Scaliger’s *Germani simplices* we find a strict north-south and east-west-labeling. Florack (2001:43) underlines the fact that especially those countries or cities are mentioned in such comparisons which were known to each other through scholarly contacts, trade or wars, i.e. Spain, Italy, France, Holland, Germany, England, Poland or Moscow.

Goethe mentions ‘innere Natur’ or ‘Eigentümlichkeit’ when describing his impressions of his visits to foreign countries. In the Zedler’s *Universallexikon* as well as in the texts of Lessing, there is talk about the ‘Naturell’ of a people whereas Schiller writes on the ‘Nationalgeist’ which corresponds to the Latin ‘natura’ or ‘ingenia populorum’, as Scaliger puts it. What was described in French as ‘naturel’, caractère’, ‘esprit’ or ‘génie’ turned in the 19th century to the ‘Wesen eines Volkes’ in German, developing terms like ‘Deutschtum’ or ‘Franzosentum’. Nowadays there is some question of ‘mentality’ of a given nation. Florack furthermore points out that the ‘national character’ aspect had existed long before the romantic idea of ‘Volksgeist’ (Florack 2001: 25). The French scholar Furetière (1695) for example states in his *Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française* that *"c*haque nation a ses coustumes, a ses vertus & ses

[33] See Günther Blaicher (1987) *Erstarrtes Denken. Studien zu Klischee, Stereotyp und Vorurteil in englischsprachiger Literatur* for further analysis of the term.

[34] For Montesquieu’s interesting and detailed medical ‘explanation’ on why the northerners are keen on hunting, traveling, wars and wine, see Florack 2001: 42.

vices, c'est l'humeur, l'esprit, le genie de la nation*".* A century later, the French author Charles Duclos defines more explicitly the notion of national character in his *Considérations sur les moeurs* (1751) and states that "les mœurs d'une nation forment précisément le caractère national" (Florack 2001: 26).

Before, in 1632, the lawyer Christophorus Besoldus issues a script with the title *De natura populorum* in which he gives hints on how to reign successfully. Therefore, he outlines in a more detailed way the various characteristics of different nations because "not every body can be healed with the same medicine", as he puts it. The 'ingenium' of the homeland and the 'spiritus' of the region have to be studied in order to infer the medievalism and affinities of a given nation having particular endowments and weaknesses. (Florack 2001: 33) In his work, Besoldus underlines the energy of each country and its people. Hence, there are those who possess a "naturalis levitas" – a natural easiness – opposed to those who rather suffer from a clumsy spirit ("pingues gravesque animi") and are unable to plan or to bear any thirst. Besoldus also makes use of astrology when trying to explain the reasons for the nations' differing virtues. According to his astrological findings, Greece is under the influence of Apollo being responsible for philosophy's flourishing there. In Italy people are voluptuous and in favor of music and theater because of the influence of Venus. The French are affected by the power of Mercury and are therefore choppy and careless people, with sharpness of the mind and well mannered behavior though. The climate in Germany, Belgium and England is under the influence of the moon which in turn results in drunkenness, lacking brilliancy and idle spirits.
Hereby, Besoldus is – besides antique knowledge and the Bible - referring to authorities such as Jean Bodin and his tract under constitutional law *Les six livres de la République* of the year 1576. According to this famous French text which discusses the problem of sovereignty and theoretically justifies absolute rule, a particular regime has to be adjusted to the "diversité des hommes". In his *Méthode pour faciliter la connaissance de l'histoire* (1566), Bodin criticizes the old methods of history writing as they do not involve people of undiscovered regions and their characteristics:

> Evidemment les anciens auteurs n'ont rien pu nous laisser de semblable, vu leur complète ignorance des régions et des contrées qui n'étaient pas encore découvertes (Bodin 1566 quoted in Florack 2001: 34).

Therefore, Bodin argues that generalities regarding the "nature of people" have to be established in order to verify the truth of history:

> Il nous faudra donc commencer par établir des généralités concernant le naturel[35] sinon de tous – du moins des principaux peuples afin de pouvoir éprouver par une juste critique la véracité des histoire (Ibid.).

He adds that finding the "natural facts" about people is more important than concentrating on human institutions such as law, religion, etc.

Vitruv on the other hand, insists on the ancient Theory of Climate, according to which there is a complementary designed opposition between the north and the south. It is affirmed that humidity in the north is not absorbed by the sun and therefore penetrates into the human body making it rich in blood and consequently in power. On the other hand, it causes physical and spiritual heaviness, too. In the south however, the opposite takes place. The sun dispels the humidity in the body and makes the people there sagacious, although less brave.[36]

Also in the 16th century, a Dutch physician named Levinus Lemnius issues a text in which he reinforces the north-south opposition. He characterizes the northerners as inhuman, terrible, wild and defiant with threatening mien and frightening voice, again as a result of the climatic conditions of the north. [37]

Another author to write about the impact of climate on human body in the 16th century was the Spanish priest, ethnologist and confessed opponent of the Conquista Bartolomé de Las Casas. In contrast to his contemporaries and compatriots who defended the submission of the "inferior foreign" people, Las Casas took a stand on the equality of humans. In his *Apologética Historia* (1525), he explains the differentness of cultures not only by the influence of the stars but also – with reference to authors of the antique period – by the different climatic zones. Based on antique knowledge, Las Casas claims that Italy, most of Greece and Spain (as lying

[35] „Populorum natura" as defined in the original Latin text.
[36] Cf. Florack 2001: 34.
[37] Cf. Florack 2001: 36.

in the “third, fourth and fifths climate”) are the regions which have brought forth almost “ideal” people regarding both body and spirit (Florack 2001: 37).
In most of these texts, the French, for instance, are portrayed as having a sharp and flexible spirit and a light and fluent way of speaking. The Germans on the hand are often referred to as brave, adventurous but also coarse and simple minded. This ‘knowledge’ about nations as ‘persons’, represents the basis for national stereotypes (Florack 2001: 28). From a scientific point of view, national stereotypes have their basis in the concept of national character, which was mostly formulated by scholar in Latin (Florack 2001: 43).[38] Summing up, in former global comparison scholars have combined the above mentioned climate related approach of the “populorum natura” with the ancient tradition and presented the outcome as the very knowledge about people of foreign origins.[39]

1.6. The language of stereotypes

The language of stereotypes – i.e. linguistic patterns in discourses conveying prejudiced messages will be briefly outlined in this chapter.
The language of stereotypes is characterized by words describing one person but referring to a whole ethnic, social or national group to which the person belongs. In this respect, scholars refer to ‘nations as persons’. Thus, whole groups or even entire nations are referred to by very global characteristics with which one would rather refer to a particular person, e.g. *love-less as an Irishman,* making the entire Irish nation a love-less one as it would normally be the case with certain persons only. Special words or even idiomatic expressions - both positive and negative - are used so as to refer to a particular group. These types of expressions represent the corpus of this thesis.
This fact is also demonstrated by the linguist Teun van Dijk (1984: 73):

> People not only have ethnic stereotypes but also linguistic or textual stereotypes, such as fixed expressions, locutions, or proverbs. When people talk about minorities, they will often also

[38] See Tacitus‘ *Germania* or Caesar’s *De bello Gallico*.
[39] Cf. Florack 2001: 6.

> use such stereotyped expressions, which of course are a strategic way of handling the difficult task of opinion selection and formulation in discursive interaction. Their stereotypical nature, so to speak, provides interactional 'safety', due to the commonsense and, hence, shared nature of the underlying opinions or 'wisdoms'.

Van Dijk's viewpoint regarding the importance of the language of stereotypes appears already in Scaliger's[40] texts in which he recommends to acquaint oneself with proverbs and the vernacular in the same way as with history.[41] Proverbs together with all types of idiomatic expressions tell a great deal about the culture and common thinking of a nation. With the study of idiomatic expressions the chance of learning about essential ideas of a given society about particular themes such as drinking, hunting, working, lifestyle, different nations or important historical events is given. Thus, a certain repertoire of idiomatic expressions and the know-how of their origins might very well contribute to the general knowledge of a person.

Van Djik (1984) underlines that the stylistic formulation of stereotyped attitudes elicits negatively associated lexical items. Referring to research conducted in the field of expressions of prejudice, Van Dijk (1984: 136ff) stressed for example the systematic use of 'demonstratives of distance' (e.g. '*those foreigners, those Turks, such people'*, etc.). There is also a clear distinction between the use of 'we' (for in-group members) and the unspecified 3rd person plural pronoun 'they' (for outer group members). Formulations of very general norms are done by the use of proverbs, e.g. '*in Rome, do as the Romans do'*, implying that foreigners should adapt themselves to the respective country[42]. Van Dijk (1984: 138) also mentions the "more or less fixed lexical register" in conversations about minorities or outer-groups stressing the differences (e.g. '*they have a different mentality, habits, way of living, belief*', etc.).[43]

I will now mention some rhetorical operations which people use in order to render

[40] Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) was a French religious scholar and leader.
[41] Cf. Florack 2001: 13.
[42] See point 6a) in the following part concerning 'rhetoric operation strategies'.
[43] See 'cognitive function' in chapter 1.4.1.

their personal opinions “plausible, reasonable, and acceptable”.[44] The following interaction strategies, as listed by Van Dijk (1984: 139-141), are among the most frequent ones which have been used by (Dutch) interviewees during respective research. Most of them occur also in my corpus. The respective idiomatic expressions are given brackets. This part is supposed to show the importance of these rhetorical operations in English for both normal and idiomatic discourse.

1) *Contrast:* Contrastive operations are typically used to differentiate between the positive properties of Dutch majority members and the negative ones of minorities, or to mark differences in lifestyles or interests:

   1a) My husband was working. They were not.

   2a) He explained in a decent way. She began to shout.

2) *Generalization:* Being the central feature of prejudices opinions, it is one of the most forceful means enhancing the effectiveness of concrete examples:

   2a) All foreigners carry a knife.

   2b) If you read the newspaper, it is always a Moroccan or a Turk who has been shooting or stabbing.

   (e.g. *All Cornish gentlemen are cousins)*

3) *Exaggeration*: Negative qualities or actions of minorities are frequently exaggerated together with positive self presentation:

   3a) Thirty people in an apartment.

   (e.g. *The streets of London are paved with gold)*

   However, this strategy is also used to stress that one does not have a negative opinion about a give ethnic group:

   3b) They are neat as a pin.

   3c) Some of them are extremely kind.

[44] Cf. Van Dijk (1984: 139-141).

4) Litotes (understatement): This operation is supposed to mitigate a highly negative evaluation:

> 4a) My neighbor has recently been mugged… and that is not NICE.[45]

5) Repetition: Another rhetorical strategy frequently used to underline the personal opinion:

> 5a) very often, very often, I have very good contacts with them (foreigners), very good contacts; I really mean that.

6) *Comparison:*[46] Comparisons are also used by people as a means of argumentation especially when arguing in favor of the adaptation of foreigners to national norms, rules, and habits,

> 6a) because we also (must) so so in other countries.
> (e.g. *Learn in Italy; clothe yourself in Germany; flirt in France; banquet in Poland)*

[45] Not my emphasis.
[46] Some of these interaction strategies reappear in part III, for example contrast, generalization, exaggeration, comparison, etc.

PART II

2. IDIOMS

2.1. Towards a definition of idioms

The second part of this thesis aims at uncovering the concept of idioms which represent the second field of research of my thesis. In this second part I will offer an insight into how idioms are mentally represented, understood, and acquired. Different aspects which play a key role in the comprehension of idiomatic expressions will also be presented here. Moreover, their syntactic behavior as well as their place in language will be discussed in some detail.

Johnson-Laird makes the following interesting statement: “If natural language had been designed by a logician, idioms would not exist” (Johnson-Laird[47] in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: vii). However, they play an essential role in our linguistic repertoire and speakers of different languages around the world use idiomatic expressions in their daily conversations. Idioms arise from figurative expressions which tend to reveal “facts, beliefs, cultural models, natural events, etc. shared by the members of a speech community” (Ammer 1989 and Makkai 1987 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: xi).

In the Turkish community, for instance, idiomatic phrases and diverse sayings are very commonly used. It is not an unusual thing that a child happens to say an idiom wisely used within the appropriate context. This then often causes common laughter in the present group. Thus, Turkish speakers have –compared with Austrians – a totally different attitude towards wise sayings dating back to previous generations which are appreciated very much by everyone. Also, idiomatic expressions play an essential role in professional communication within the Turkish community. Hence, idioms represent a major part of our daily usage of language rendering it more vivid and colorful. It is also agreed upon that the “general tendencies of present-day English are towards more idiomatic usage” (Seidl & McMordie 1978:1) – being reason enough to study it in some detail. From Shakespeare to the Bible, from daily language use or slang to formal language – idiomatic expressions represent an

[47] Johnson-Laird wrote the foreword to the outstanding study of idioms edited by Cacciari and Tabossi in 1993.

essential part of our linguistic repertoire and cannot be separated from it. Throughout this thesis, idiom will be used as an umbrella term for all different kinds of idiomatic expressions, such as sayings, proverbs, maxims, etc. Also, I will use the terms “idiom” and “idiomatic expression” as synonyms.

As it is very often the case, definitions differ also in the domain of idioms as they are manifold and sometimes contradict each other. In the edited volume of Cacciari & Tabossi (1993), Tabossi and Zardon by quoting Dascal (1987) and Fernando (1978) state that offering a clear-cut and precise definition of what idioms are supposed to be remains a difficult task; they are referred to as “multifaceted objects” which are in many respects complex and elusive “to the point that it is probably a useless exercise to try and define them”. Nonetheless, some major propositions of what idioms are like shall be presented in this introductory chapter.

The Oxford Dictionary (5th.ed.) defines an idiom as the “language of a people of country“, or a “form of expression peculiar to a language“(Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: xi). Here, we are clearly reminded of the fact that language is also about culture and that learning a language involves some socio-cultural knowledge. In other words, I may safely assume that it takes in depth study when trying to learn a language to the fullest as “idioms are transparent to native speakers, but a course [sic!] of perplexity” to second language learners” (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: vii). Jaeger (1999: 162) describes “the established idiomatic expressions of a language” as

> collectively coined imaginative utterances of two or more words but usually sentence-length which are a) based on a range of figurative patterns[48] aimed at achieving specific sound and sense effects, and b) linguistic signs in their own right.

As previously mentioned, idioms as ‘multifaceted objects’ belong to the large family of figurative expressions such as metaphors, proverbs, indirect speech acts, etc.[49] (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: xi). To some extent they share the "degree of conventionalization of meaning" by also differing "in semantic as well as syntactic properties" (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 27).

[48] These figurative patterns will be listed in chapter 2.1. about the “structure of idioms”.
[49] The notion of „figurative expressions“ will be outlined in detail in chapter 2.3.2.

2.2. Structure and different aspects of idioms

In this chapter of my thesis, I will briefly refer to divers aspects of idiomatic expressions such as syntax and semantics.

As regards syntax, Seidl & McMordie (1978) note that "the way in which the words" in some idiomatic phrases "are put together is often odd, illogical or even grammatically incorrect". In other idiomatic phrases we find a "completely regular and logical" grammar and vocabulary (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 4). Concerning the semantics of idiomatic expressions, Seidl & McMordie (1978: 5) refer to "every-day life of Englishmen, from home life" , e.g. *to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth, to hit the nail on the head* to "food and cooking", e.g. *to be in the soup, out of the frying-pan into the fire*. Agriculture, military life, animals, colors are only some of the sources of idioms. Seidl & McMordie (1978) assert that "if the source of an idiom is known, it is sometimes easier to imagine its meaning", especially for a native speaker (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 5).

So, forms or structure of idioms differ, "they can be very short or rather long" whereby the majority consists of the combination of noun and adjective, e.g. *cold war, French leave, Chinese chance*, etc. (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 5). As it was already highlighted above, idioms can have a both regular and irregular structure being even grammatically incorrect, e.g. "I am good friends with him", as Seidl & McMordie (1978: 5) put it, "is irregular or illogical in its grammatical structure". *"I"* - being singular – does not match with the plural NP *"friends"*. However, the grammatically correct from *"I am a good friend with him"* "is impossible although it is more logical" (Ibid.) because of the fixed grammatical structure of this very idiom. Despite of this fact, the meaning is quite clear to a native speaker, who is probably "not consciously aware of this inconsistency" (Ibid.).

It has to be mentioned also that while some idioms allow changes in nouns, pronouns or verbs whereas others are totally fixed ones which cannot be changed in any way.

Another idiomatic expression with a fixed (but correct) grammatical structure is for example "*to sit on the fence"* which "cannot become *to sit on a fence* or *to sit on the fences"*.[50] *"To have a bee in one's bonnet"* on the other hand has a quite regular form

[50] See http://www.idiomconnection.com/whatis.html.

but is the kind of idiom where the "meaning is not obvious" (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 5). Seidl & McMordie (1978) refer to "a third group, in which both form and meaning are irregular", e.g. *"to be at large"* [51] having the form *Verb + Preposition + Adjective* without a noun which "is strange" (Seidl & McMordie 1978:6). This idiomatic phrase does not give any hints about its meaning, either. *"To be at daggers drawn"* [52]*, "to be in the swim"*[53] are only some of those idiomatic expressions whose form and meaning are irregular.

Most idioms however, seem to belong to the group "where form is regular, but the meaning is unclear" whereas also in this group the degree of unclearness may vary (Seidl & McMordie 1978:6). While the meaning of some idiomatic phrases can be guessed by certain words they contain, others are only understandable in context: In *"to give someone the green light"*, the word "green" is associated with the concept of "permission to start something" whereas the phrase *"to be at the top of the tree"* is more difficult to interpret correctly. It may suggest a "dangerous position" or that one is hiding. In context however, the meaning becomes clear to the hearer or reader: "[…] John joined the company, and now he's the general manager! Yes, he's really at the top of the tree!" (Ibid.).

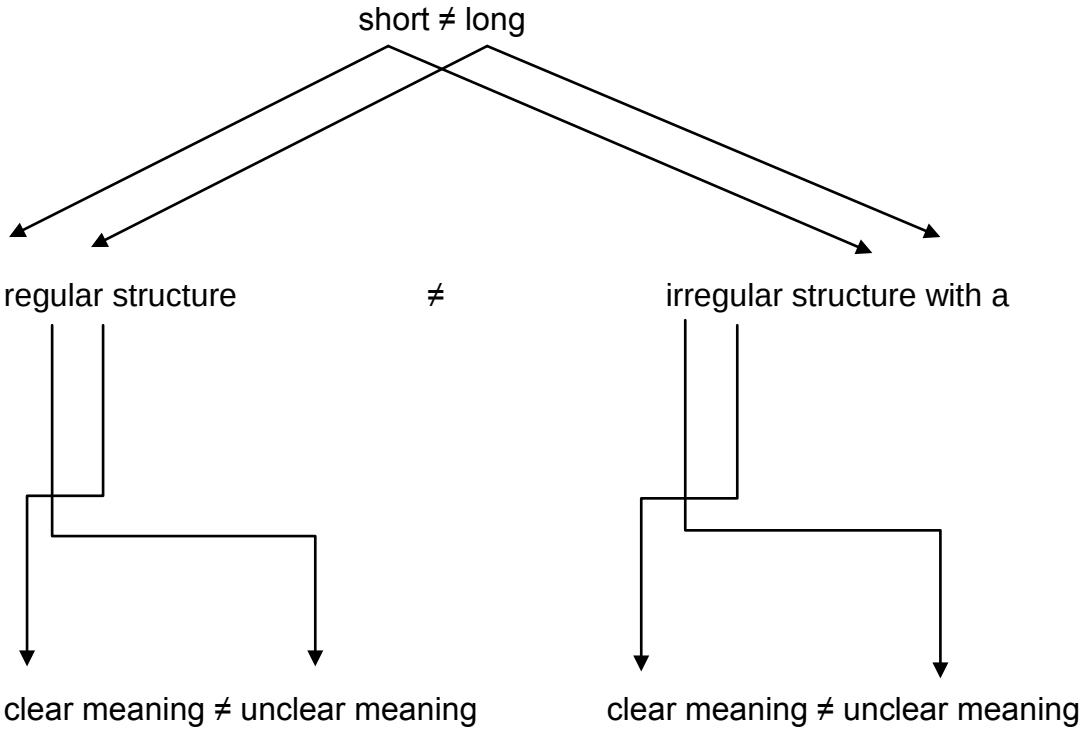
There are also idioms, which are - even in context - unclear for the hearer or listener unless they have been heard before: *"To tell someone where to get off "*[54]*, to bring the house down or to take it out on someone"* (Ibid.).

To sum up the information on the nature of idioms, I have designed an 'idiom typology' in order to visualize the different types of idiomatic expressions:

[51] A prisoner, for example, who is still at large, means that he is still free (Seidl & McMordie 1978:6).
[52] Meaning: "T*o be angry with each other".*
[53] Meaning: *"To be up to date".*
[54] This phrase is usually associated with public means of transport. Here, however it means to tell a person openly and rudely one's true opinion.

Figure 5: Idiom typology

Idioms can be



Regarding their structure, English idiomatic expressions (be it short or long) can thus be divided into four groups of different structure and meaning:

1) Regular structure and clear meaning, e.g. *the Dutch have taken Holland.*

2) Regular structure and unclear meaning, e.g. *to give s.o. the green light.*

3) Irregular structure and clear meaning, e.g. *I am good friends with him.*

4) Irregular structure and unclear meaning, e.g. *to be at large.*

Most of the idioms belong to group 2, i.e. the vast family of idioms with regular form but unclear meaning.

On a website offering a collection of idioms, phrasal verbs and proverbs the multi-

faceted nature of idiomatic phrases is highlighted. They “can have a literal meaning in one situation and a different idiomatic meaning in another situation.” They are phrases which do “not always follow the normal rules of meaning and grammar.”[55]

The following examples demonstrate the above mentioned aspects:

> *[t]o sit on the fence* can literally mean that one is sitting on a fence.
> *I sat on the fence and watched the game.*
>
> However, the idiomatic meaning of *to sit on the fence* is that one is not making a clear choice regarding some issue [:]
>
> *The politician sat on the fence and would not give his opinion about the tax issue* (http://www.idiomconnection.com/whatis.html#A2).

There are also, however, idioms that are quite similar to idiomatic expressions in other languages and can thus be easily understood by language learners”, e.g. *all roads lead to Rome*, while others come from older phrases and have changed in the course of time, e.g. *to hold one’s horses,* which means to stop and wait patiently for someone or something. This idiomatic phrase dates back to times when people rode horses and had to hold their horses while waiting for someone or something (Ibid.).

2.2.1. The diachronic dimension of idioms

The correct use of idiomatic language is one of the aims of every non-native learner. However, a great deal of idioms is “illogical or grammatically incorrect” causing difficulty to the language learner (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 4). Seidl & McMordie state that it cannot be explained why certain idioms have developed an unusual arrangement or choice of words; long usage has fixed the idioms.
We read on the above mentioned website that *“[t]o hold one's horses”* means to stop and wait patiently for someone or something.” This idiomatic phrase dates back to a “time when people rode horses and would have to hold their horses” while they were waiting for someone or something (http://www.idiomconnection.com/whatis.html#A2). Another example is offered by Seidl & McMordie (1978: 5) who equally highlight the fact that sometimes special vocabulary in idiomatic expressions gives hints about the

[55] Source: http://www.idiomconnection.com/whatis.html#A2.

period of development of the idiom, so for example *"to buy a pig in a poke"* meaning an uninspected purchase which is "worth less than one paid for it". As "poke" is an old word meaning "sack", it "appears in present-day English with this meaning in this idiom (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 5). These examples reveal that idioms also continue "to be used long after the individual word" (Ibid.).

2.2.2. Frozenness and Flexibility

Frozenness and Flexibility of idioms refer to the degree to which they can by verified and changed morphologically or syntactically. According to Flores d'Arcais, the more frozen an idiom is, the less it tolerates modifications or insertions of lexical elements and clauses (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 70). As for the example mentioned above, it is perfectly possible to say "a Tartar was caught by John" but the "passivization operation destroys the idiomatic meaning of the original expression" (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 80) which is *to catch a Tartar.* So, in order to no lose the idiomatic meaning[56], this phrase is to be used in its rather frozen form.

Idioms can vary from very frozen to very flexible. In his classification Fraser (1970) proposes a frozenness hierarchy in which an idiom at a given level tolerating a given modification equally tolerates all operations of idioms listed below that level (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 80). He proposed the organization of idioms into a "frozenness hierarchy" as idiomatic expressions "differ in the extent to which they can be syntactically transformed" by still retaining their idiomatic meaning. Thus, Fraser (1974) states that "idioms do not from a homogeneous class with respect to the transformations they may undergo". [57]

Fraser's scale involves seven levels which range from L6 – "Unrestricted" (no idioms this level) and L5 – "Reconstitution" allowing most flexibility, e.g. *pass the buck, spill the beans*, to L1 – "Adjunction", e.g. *kick the bucket, shoot the bull* and L0 – "Completely frozen", e.g. *build castles in the air, trip the light fantastic*, which allow the least flexibility.[58]

[56] I.e. "to encounter an adversary who is too strong for you".
[57] Quoted on http://lcnl.ucsd.edu/LCNL_main_page/Publications_PDF/1979_Swinney_Cutler.pdf.
[58] Cf. Grant's (2003: 33) *A Corpus-based investigation of idiomatic multiword units* on researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz.

2.2.3. Transparency and Opacity

The degree of idiom transparency simply refers to the degree to which the literal meaning of an idiom can be interpreted easily. The literal meaning of the more or less transparent idiom "the Dutch have taken Holland" is obvious whereas "in "to take a leak" the literal interpretation is no longer available" (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 80). The (transparent) idiomatic expression *the Dutch have taken Holland* conveys no other idiomatic meaning than its individual words contain, i.e. the phrase conveys the same meaning as its individual lexical units express, namely that the Dutch have taken Holland[59], whereas the idiomatic meaning of the (opaque) phrase *to take a leak* (to urinate) does not correlate with the meanings of its individual words. This phrases, often referred to as vulgar slang refers to the process of urinating and hence conveys a completely different meaning than its individual words mean. Thus, the idiomatic meaning has nothing to do with 'taking something' or with 'a leak'. Flores d'Arcais (1993: 80) states that "most opaque idioms are fossils in which the literal meaning is no more than a philological curiosity". She furthermore stresses that the dimensions frozenness and flexibility on the one part and opacity and transparency on the other part represent rather "continuous dichotomies" as idioms can be "more or less frozen" in the way they can be "more or less opaque". So, the two dimensions are not completely independent (d'Arcais 1993: 80).

2.2.4. Idiom Uniqueness

Analyzing idiom recognition involves the question at which point an idiom becomes an idiom. Idiom uniqueness refers to the point where the speaker or reader identifies an idiom uniquely (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 81). Idiomatic phrases may take their "idiomatic character" either at the beginning or at the end of the phrases as following examples aim at revealing:

[59]Referring to "a quiz when anyone tells what is well known as a piece of good news", i.e. an obvious fact (http://homepages.cwi.nl/~sjoerd/dutch.html).

In the idiomatic expressions "**East**[60] is East, and **West** is West" and "All roads lead to **Rome**" the listener or reader only needs to hear or read the first parts i.e. "East is East…" and "All road lead to…" in order to recognize their idiomatic messages.

In other idioms, such as in *to lose face* the idiomatic character does not appear until the end of the phrase. For the sake of completeness I quote the following example in order to demonstrate the idiom uniqueness of lexical idiomatic expressions:

> "In the discussion about the financial situation, it became apparent to John that his arguments were weak, and that he was going to lose money face ('money')" (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 81).

Familiarity of the idiom and context are also essential factors which have an impact on the point at which a reader or listener correctly interprets the idiom. This point may either coincide or even precede the point of idiom uniqueness, as Flores d'Arcais assumes further. There exist of course idioms which do not require any context in order to reveal their point of idiom uniqueness (e.g. "to spill the beans" meaning "to violate a secret" - the word 'beans' providing the idiomatic character); however, any previous context dealing with the concept of violation will make the word 'spill' the point of idiom recognition which - in this case - even precedes the point of idiom uniqueness (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 81).

2.2.5. The lexical status of idioms and their representation in the mental lexicon

It has already been emphasized that the knowledge of the meaning of the constituent words in an idiomatic phrase does not suffice to deduct its idiomatic meaning.
So, the representation of idioms in the mental lexicon and the structure of their meaning are crucial aspects when it comes to the reconstruction of idiom meaning. Three basic types of idiom representation have been described. According to Flores d'Arcais (1993: 82ff):

> (a) idioms can be listed in the mental lexicon as multiword lexical

[60] National or geographic names shall be put in bold print, especially throughout the 3rd part of the thesis.

entries;

(b) idioms are not listed as such, but are reconstructed on the basis of the idiomatic meaning starting from the entry of one or more of the content words that constitute the idiom; and

(c) the meaning of the idiom would not be represented as such at all, but would be computed each time on the basis of the lexical units and of the phrasal structure by some process of metaphor construction.

The first type of mental idiom representation has its basis in the so called idiom list-hypothesis reported by Weinreich (1966) who suggests that the lexicon - additionally to the 'normal' dictionary entries - contains a list of idioms consisting of a "string of morphemes of various lengths, together with the meaning associated with it. The latter point has been critiqued by Flores d'Arcais, although I do agree with it, as explained under figure 6. Flores d'Arcais critique concerns the idea of double listing for words which are part of an idiom, as proposed by Weinreichs idiom list theory (1966). These words would be listed in the normal dictionary entry list as well as in the idiomatic list (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 83) and each time associated with each other with the so called 'pointer'.
In order to visualize Weinreich's (1966) theory, I shall provide the following 'double listing' scheme by applying it the exemplary idiom "to have Chinese chance".

Figure 6: Mental Lexicon

MENTAL LEXICON

Normal dictionary entry		**idiomatic list**
chance (Nn.)		
Chinese (Adj.)	←'pointer'→	"to/have/Chinese/chance"
to have (Vb. - infinitive)		⇓ ⇓ ⇓ ⇓
		Respective entries under the main words

I agree with Weinreich (1966) to some extent as - as it is very often the case that I

use idiomatic phrases in my mother tongue Turkish - certain words remind me immediately of the idiom that goes with the situation; hence, the „pointer method“ was actually the method I used when I encountered an idiom, (e.g. on the internet) not listed in the idiom dictionaries I had - I looked up the main entries in normal or etymological dictionaries in order to find out something about its origins, etc.
My critique concerns the question this hypothesis requires to address, i.e. with which word the ‘pointer’ in our mental lexicon is being triggered? With the words ‘Chinese’, ‘to have’ or even the more one (than ‘have’) ‘chance’? This question equally addresses the second approach according to which idioms would not be listed separately but would rather be reconstructed via their individual lexemes. (d’Arcais 1993: 83)This suggestion includes the presence of pointers which would build the link between the listed words and the idiomatic meaning they stand for. The third classification excludes any lists or reconstruction methods but argues for computation every time idioms are actually encountered. This happens via “processes of analogical inference” (d’Arcais 1993: 83). In this approach, idiom comprehension is equated with the process of metaphor comprehension. D’Arcais, however, asserts that one hypothesis does not exclude another, so that any of them may occur according to the degree of idiom familiarity. The following scheme I try to visualize is supposed to illustrate d’Arcais’ conclusion on idiom comprehension:

Figure 7: Mental lexicon of the reader/listener

Highly familiar idioms	Infrequent and unknown idioms (esp. opaque ones)	New idioms
⇑	:	≡
⇓	:	≡
Represented as unitary entries	No unitary representation	Treated as metaphors

This assumption may relate to the following level scheme I designed in order to show the various steps a metaphor goes through until being totally perceived as an idiom:

Figure 8: Level scheme

LEVEL 1	⇔	Metaphors
LEVEL 2	⇔	No unitary entry available yet
LEVEL 3	⇔	Idioms represented as unitary entries

The figure illustrates that a new expression (on its way to become an idiomatic one) is first treated as a metaphor by the mental lexicon. On level two infrequent and unknown idioms are not represented in a unitary way. On the last level, very familiar idioms are represented as unitary entries.

2.2.6. Syntactic Parsing and Idiomatic Analysis

Regardless of idioms being part of the mental lexicon as separate units or not, they are normally presented “as part of a larger sentence structure” on their own”. (D’Arcais 1993: 82) Hence, “various morphological and syntactic operations are allowed” in the given idiomatic phrase. D’Arcais states that the encounter of an idiomatic phrase does not exclude “normal syntactic parsing” because the “linguistic processor” – normally until the point of idiom uniqueness – does not know the nature of the idiom. The operations of a “lexical processor” and a “parser” are responsible for obtaining the meaning of each sentence while the principle of compositionality is considered to be the basis for the reconstruction of the meaning of any sentence. (Ibid.) In order to explain the process of meaning reconstruction and idiom recognition, d’Arcais gives the following example: The phrase “a big dog” is interpreted as compounds of the meaning *big* and *dog*.
The meaning of the phrase “to kick the ball” is reconstructed by the meaning of the words *kick* and *ball* whereas the meaning of the phrasal idiom “to kick the bucket” cannot be reconstructed compositionally – representing a “particular problem” according to d’Arcais who remarked that the reader or listener – as the idiomatic expression normally is “embedded in a sentence” – does not know that an idiomatic phrase will follow until a “certain critical point” is reached. Therefore, syntactic parsing

should normally take place until this very point - where the reader/listener has recognized the "full idiomatic expression" - has come: "… and then he kicked …" followed by the NP *the ball* or *the bucket*. With the NP *the bucket* the reader or listener is given a "unique identification" (Ibid.). In conclusion, an idiomatic expression undergoes "normal syntactic analysis" which results in literal interpretation "based on the principle of compositionality" but since "the idiomatic character of the idiomatic phrase is not compositional" the reader or listener is not provided that idiomatic meaning which is not instantiated "on the basis of the joint operations of the parser and of the lexical processor" (Ibid.).

It has now often been indicated that idiom meaning is not deduced compositionally, i.e. knowledge of the meaning of the constituent words the idiom contains. In other words, with the usual syntactic and semantic rules. However, neither is noncompositionality regarded as a "sufficient condition for an idiom" nor can it be said that there is no compositionality in all idioms. Only, they are not "wholly compositional" (Pulman 1993: 250). Pulman finds that this does not actually represent the real problem to theoretical and computational linguistics but the problem would rather be that

> Unlike (most) lexical items, (most) idioms have considerable internal structure that seems to interact with the usual productive syntactic and semantic mechanisms of a language in ways that render a "look-up" approach impossible in the general case (Pulman 1993: 250).

He furthermore infers that there exist certain "properties of idioms" not being "captured satisfactorily by any of the current grammatical frameworks"[61] seeking to "accommodate the behavior of idioms". (Pulman 1993: 251).
Pulman (1993: 251) concludes that – due to these properties idioms are

> in fact not properly to be considered as part of the domain of a grammatical theory at all.

[61] He mentions the Standard Theory transformational grammar (Fraser 1970; Katz 1973), Generative Semantics (Newmeyer 1972), transformational theories (Chomsky 1980), Lexical-Functional Grammar (Bresnan 1982), Generalized Phrase Structure Grammar (Gazdar et al. 1985) or Tree Adjoining Grammar (Abeille 1990).

He explains:

> Instead, the recognition and interpretation of idioms belongs in the relatively unexplored areas between compositional syntax and semantics on the one hand, and contextually interpreted, fully resolved, interpretations of utterances on the other. (Pulman 1993: 250).

2.3. Idiom comprehension and semantic interpretation

For the purpose of this thesis, I shall concentrate on the comprehension and semantic interpretation of phrasal idioms. In this respect, the broad use of the term idiom is equated with

> a phrasal unit whose meaning is not obtainable from its syntactic components. (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 79).

Flores d'Arcais (1993: 79) posits that an idiomatic phrase can either be expressed with a single word (e.g. *Mexican carriage* meaning "donkey") or with an entire proposition (e.g. *to take French leave* meaning "to go away without permission or without notice")[62].

This claim mirrors that a phrasal idiom typically consists of a verbal phrase with a verb and a noun phrase (NP) (e.g. 'to catch a Tartar'). We see that the phrase is given a certain meaning or rather interpretation which does not correlate with the meaning of the respective units. It seems that the 'literal meaning' of the idiom differs from the idiomatic meaning (Flores d'Arcais 1993: 79).

D'Arcais explains that previous researchers of psycholinguistics have tried to find answers to two questions; whether listeners or readers retrieve both the literal and the idiomatic meaning of the idioms, or only the idiomatic one. Another question concerns the chronological order of computation, i.e. which one of the two meanings is retrieved first. Previous research conducted into this area was in favor of the "literal first" hypothesis by Bobrow and Bell (1973), or the "both meanings are computed in parallel" approach by Swinney and Cutler (1979). Later works by for instance Gibbs

[62] Examples from my corpus.

(1984, 1986) and Schweigert (1986), however, revealed “the idiomatic meaning is accessed directly” without any extra process “and that the literal meaning may not even be recovered” (d’Arcais 1993: 84).[63] Thus, three main assumptions on the idiom comprehension process are proposed:

The majority of “words and utterances are characterized by [a variety] of senses and metaphoric meanings”. Thus, for example, when referring to a school, the adjective “new” rather has an idiomatic sense of “a new school type” rather than a new building. Consequently, the metaphoric meaning of a word occurring in an idiom is retrieved rather than the rest of the meanings. D’Arcais (1993: 84) furthermore implies that all senses and meanings can “become available” yet the “idiomatic sense” only becomes available “when the idiom is interpreted as such”.

The lexical representation hypothesis however stresses that during the process of comprehension, “the process of recognition of an idiom starts at the beginning of the string”, as idioms are “stored in the lexicon as long, morphologically complex words” which “are identified as any other lexical items”. And although this process occurs “in parallel with the computation of” [the literal meaning of the idiom], “the idiomatic meaning of the string” is retrieved before the literal one” (Swinney & Cutler (1979) quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 146).
Another view however assumes that “the computation of the literal meaning of an idiom does not run in parallel with the process of recognition of its figurative meaning”. This view is explained with the argument that the computation of the literal meaning rather “occurs after that process, and is started only when the idiomatic meaning fails to integrate into context” (Gibbs 1980, 1986 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 146).

2.3.1. Contextual reasoning for idiom interpretation

Contextual reasoning is the process whereby linguistically, i.e. compositionally, derived information is derived from a given utterance in a sentence and combined

[63] Without going into detail, d‘Arcais notes that these conclusions may vary according to the degree of idiom frozenness and the type of idiom studied.

with the “local context or general background knowledge” in order to gain a “fully specific interpretation” of that utterance in that specific context. (Pulman 1993: 250). There are, however, “contextually dependent vague relations” (associated possessives, compound nominals, and verbs like *have* or *do*[64]) with that need to be clarified within this process. It also includes the establishment of the referents of “pronouns and other anaphoric devices” as well as the “resolution of ellipsis”, etc.

2.3.2. Idiom acquisition and “Figurative Competence”

As already pointed out, idioms are to be found in the domain of “fixed phrases, clich[é]s, proverbs, indirect speech acts, speech formulas“, etc (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 27).[65] There exist, however, differences as regards ‘semantic and syntactic properties.’[66]
Referring to this large linguistic family, Fillmore (1978) speaks of “conventionalized ways of sayings things“, which has also been noted by several authors.[67] The main limitation Cacciari & Tabossi (1993: 27) refer to concerns the usage of idiomatic expressions. It has been proposed by Searle (1975) to talk “idiomatically unless there is some good reason not to do it” (Searle 1975 in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 27).

One major drawback of idiom use is that the idiom user has to consider a number of essential criteria when making use of it. Some of them are - especially within the concept of stereotyped idioms- cultural background of the group of speaker, correct intonation, context, interpersonal relations, etc. These vital aspects have to be taken into consideration within a conversation before deciding to use an idiom.

There exist expressions with both a literal and idiomatic meaning.
Psycholinguists have argued that there is an “inseparable” link between the comprehension and production of idiomatic phrases and so-called “figurative competence (Levorato 1993: 101). According to Levorato (1993:101)

[64] In order to interpret those devices correctly as a reader or listener, the author mentions the need to know, for example, the difference between the *have* of „John has measles“ and the *have* in „John has a sister“.
[65] It is interesting to note here, that idioms go hand in hand with clichés revealing the ‘stereotype character ‘of many idiomatic phrases, which actually supports the concept of this thesis.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

> the development of children's ability to produce and understand idioms depends on the development of the same linguistic abilities on which figurative language as well as language in general are based (Levorato 1993: 101).

2.4. The notion of literal meaning and the literal-figurative distinction

It has already been pointed out that the global meaning of idioms which are "composed of freely occurring units" (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 27) cannot be reduced to the meanings given in those units. Cacciari & Tabossi (1993) furthermore highlight the natural characteristics of idioms being not "all created equal" as the notion of idiomaticity involves "very different linguistic phenomena", e.g. partially frozen constructions with each word having "roughly the same meaning" as in isolation, to constructions with meanings totally different from the meanings of the constituents; from "phrasal verbs to compounds; from indirect speech acts to formulaic expressions (Lehrer 1974 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 28). Literal language – always defined as distinct from idiomatic language - also functions as an "anchor point for defining metaphorical language". Hence, scholars have been trying to sketch out the place of idioms in the literal and metaphorical world (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 28).

The notion of literal language used in linguistics as well as in psychological literature is the one outlined by Katz and Fodor (1963). It is based on "the anonymous letter criterion" which deals with a person receiving an anonymous letter containing a single sentence only. The letter contains no contextual information whatsoever (motives, circumstances, etc.). Thus, the addressee can only deduct the "sentence meaning" (the literal meaning of the sentence) rather than the "utterance meaning" which calls for contextual information (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 28). However, as it is furthermore pointed out, the plausibility of the "zero context" assumption has been questioned by scholars such as Clark & Carlson 1981 who criticized the lack of certain "linguistic presuppositions" such as background knowledge or world knowledge in comprehension processes. Linguistic phenomena such as deictics, indirect speech acts, conversational implicatures, irony, etc. have been used as evidence for their argument (Clark & Carlson 1981 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi

1993: 28). Furthermore, Gibbs (1984) used evidence from psycholinguistic studies on literal and figurative language comprehension to reveal that the “literal language hypothesis” is “a rather unplausible model of humans’ linguistic behavior”. Psycholinguistic findings have – according to Gibbs (1984) – shown that “the same processes are at work in the comprehension of both types of language”. Thus, the meaning of for example idioms or indirect speech acts – being “highly conventionalized strings of words” – is deducted “directly without any need to compute their literal meanings” (Gibbs 1984 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 29).

Dascal (1987) on the other hand, questioned the “priority accorded to the notion of literal meaning” although he claimed that “parts of the literal meaning of a figurative expression” could indeed play a key role in the “construction of its meaning”. This may even occur “without being present in the final interpretation (e.g., in irony) (Dascal 1987 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 29). Interestingly, it has to be mentioned that he posited the “moderate literalism hypothesis” which requires a more broadened notion of literal meaning in order to “include conventional meaning attached to certain expressions”.
According to Dascal (1987) frozen metaphors such as “John is a lion” have a figurative meaning which must also be regarded “literal” due to its conventionality. This figurative meaning is “accessed directly precisely because [the literal meaning of idioms, indirect speech acts, etc.] has come to include also all conventionalized aspects of meaning that were once metaphorical or indirect” (Dascal 1987 quoted in Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 29). However, the concept of conventionality – as it has been argued – may not represent an ideal substitute for the notion of literal meaning. It has been posited that the notion of conventionality is equally “open to the same criticism addressed to the notion of literal meaning” (Cacciari & Tabossi 1993: 29).

Rumelhart (1979) simply states that we are well aware of the existence of literal and figurative utterances although this distinction or classification – according to him – depends on our judgment in the same way we classify languages as formal or not. However, this awareness must not imply “any
claim or need to postulate different processing mechanisms or strategies”.

Furthermore, there is less agreement in psycholinguistics regarding the "validity" of the "figurative - literal language distinction" (Rumelhart (1979). This debate has been challenged on the grounds that the criteria which are used for the literal - figurative differentiation "have not yet been identified definitively." (Ibid.) Figurative language, as Levorato puts it (1993: 101), is characterized by three main elements. The first one concerns the obvious gap "between the speakers words and his or hers communicative intentions" which occurs typically in ironic expressions where the intended meaning represents "the exact opposite of the explicit meaning" (1993: 102). Another criterion distinguishing figurative from literal language is the conventionality of figurative language, departing from its initial meaning, the literal one, acquiring "new meaning by strongly held conventions" (1993: 102). The third difference between literal and figurative language concerns the fact the figurative language "is generally more dependent on the context than literal language is". Levorato also signals that each of these three differences "may be debated on several grounds" (1993: 102.).
According to Glucksberg "idioms are not unanalyzable wholes but can be decomposed into linguistic and conceptual elements" (Glucksberg 1993: 23).
He underlined the fact that the literal meanings of the linguistic elements do not suffice. Therefore, additional sources such as "stipulated and allusional" providing meaning have to be recalled for the detection of idiom meaning. "The complete interpretation of the idiomatic expression" may be obtained that way (Ibid.).

He furthermore underlines that besides linguistic and stipulated meanings, a great number of idiomatic expressions equally have the so-called "allusional content"[68] (Glucksberg 1993: 23). He affirms that "whenever an expression calls to mind a specific action, event, situation of person", the very use of the respective expression represents "an allusion to that action, event, situation, or person" (Ibid.). This so-called "communicative intent" of the speaker must be inferred by the listeners as the "literal meaning of an allusive expression […] is never enough to convey the full speaker's intention" (Ibid.).
The right use of an allusive expression requires the suitable context in order to be

[68] This term is contributed by Glucksberg himself.

inferred correctly by the listeners, too. Glucksberg gives the example of a familiar song, “I want a gal, just like the gal that married dear old Dad.” Used in the context of a wedding ceremony, the meaning of this utterance might be understood correctly, i.e. “the similarity of the bride to the groom’s mother”. In the context of *Oedipus Rex* however, “it would be taken as a satiric and perhaps tasteless comment on the Oedipus legend itself”, as Glucksberg puts it (Ibid.). Therefore, Glucksberg suggest “the three sources of meaning involved in idiom use – literal, stipulated [(idiomatic)], and allusional.

2.5. Some rhetorical patterns in current English idioms[69]

The following overview is supposed to provide an insight into the rich figurative patterns in idioms of the English language. A great number of these patterns reoccur in the idiomatic expression of part III of this paper.
Hence, this sections aims at revealing the idiomatic richness of the English language by pointing out some of the many rhetorical patterns in current English idioms. These patterns will also be used as tools of analysis in the empirical part.

- Adjunction: “a kind of ellipsis through omission in one part of an expression of a word used in an adjoining part of it”: *be that as it may, good men and true*, etc.
- Adynaton: “The impossibility device”, “a stringing together of impossibilities”: *be up in the clouds, move heaven and earth,* etc.
- Alliteration: “Multiple repetitions of an identical sound”: *part and parcel, through thick and thin, weak as water*, etc.
- Allusion: “A figure of speech that makes brief reference to a historical or literary figure, event, or object”: *a Herculean task, the apple of discord*, etc.
- Characterismus: “description of the body or mind”: *fit as a fiddle, light as a feather, be skin and bone,* etc.

[69] Based on Jaeger (1999) referring to Dupriez (1991), Frye et al. (1985), Holman, Harmon (1992), Lanham (1969, 1991), Lausberg (1990), Leviţchi (1975), Preminger, Brogan (1993). For a full list see Jaeger (1999: 163-169). I have only selected the most popular ones and the ones which are of interest for my corpus as will be discussed in part III of this thesis.

- Epitheton: “an adjective that frequently or habitually accompanies a certain noun”: *a lazy dog, a kindred spirit, a nervous wreck*, etc.
- Ethopoeia: “description of natural propensities…character portrayal generally”: *have one’s heart in the right place, be merry as a cricket, be eaten up with pride,* etc.
- Hyperbole: “Exaggeration understood as such, to emphasize a point”: *wet to the bone, cry one’s eye out, go through the roof, in less than no time,* etc.
- Litotes: “A form of understatement in which a thing is affirmed by stating the negative of its opposite”, “the assertion of something by the denial of its opposite”: *no spring chicken, be no stranger to something*, etc.
- Periphrasis: “The replacement of a single word by several which together have the same meaning”: *a man/woman of few words, a man of many parts,* etc.
- Polyptoton: “Repetition of words from the same root but with different endings”: *in one’s heart of hearts, die the death, tell tales,* etc.

2.6. Proverbs

Many idiomatic expressions of the corpus of this thesis have been found in proverb dictionaries. Thus, the concept of proverbs will be outlined in this chapter.

A possible definition of proverbs - offered by the above mentioned internet site dedicated to the study of idiomatic expressions – is as follows:

> A proverb is a short saying or sentence that is generally known by many people. The saying usually contains words of wisdom, truth or morals that are based on common sense or practical experience. It is often a description of a basic rule of conduct that all people generally follow or should follow. Proverbs can be found in all languages.[70]

Norrick (1985) states that “two basic characteristics differentiate proverbs generally from freely formed utterances”, i.e. proverbs are performed, inventorized linguistic units as well as traditional items of folklore (Norrick 1985: 25). Seidl & McMordie (1978) highlight the fact that “we owe many proverbial sayings to the Bible, to

[70] See http://www.idiomconnection.com/whatis.html.

Shakespeare and to other major authors of the past" (Seidl & McMordie 1978: 241). Here again, the close link of proverbs with the past is emphasized. Having a "universal value", proverbs "express in few words a truth which relates to everyday experience" (Ibid).[71] Proverb definitions involve according to Norrick (1985) "syntactic, semantic and pragmatic considerations" According to the traditional definitions, proverbs are "self-contained[72], pithy, traditional expressions with didactic content and fixed, poetic form" (Seiler 1922 quoted in Norrick 1985: 31). The "self-contained" character of proverbs "means that none of their essential grammatical units may be replaced". [73]

Many scholars have characterized proverbs as pithy or pregnant in meaning (Seiler 1922, Firth 1926, Hain 1963 and Röhrich and Mieder 1977 referred to in Norrick 1985: 36). This view has been criticized because of the relative nature of the notion of pithiness and "no communicative unit can be absolutely pithy, but only relative to some other unit", so Norrick (1985) who asks whether proverbs are pithy according to other linguistic units in general, of comparable length or to "other items of folklore" (Norrick 1985: 36).

Another essential characteristic of proverbs is the fixedness of the traditional form which is worth being mentioned. Taylor (1962) notes that the "rigidity of form" is "an essential characteristic of proverbs" (Taylor 1962 referred to in Norrick 1985: 43).

There is an interesting aspect worth being noted as far as the fixed form of proverbs is concerned:

> Fixedness of form in proverbs, as in all idiomatic units of language, follows from the necessity that they be recognizable as such to members of the linguistic community. The speaker uses a proverb under the assumption that it is familiar as a unit to his hearer. (Norrick 1985: 43)

[71] Some of the expressions I will refer to in the 3rd (=empirical) and last part of my thesis are considered to be proverbs. However, the above mentioned definition may not comply with some of the proverbs, especially the ones containing negative national stereotypes.
[72] „In sich geschlossene Sprüche".
[73] However, Seiler (1922) ascribes this unchangeable structure only to proverbs as distinguished (by Seiler) from proverbial sayings such as *„To face the music"* or *„Brown as a berry",* "lacking precisely essential grammatical units, which can thus be substituted […] (Norrick 1985: 32).

As regards the notion of traditionality, scholars say that it “correlates closely with their status as items of folklore” (Norrick 1985: 39). Abraham (1969) defines the term “folklore” as “traditional items of knowledge which arise in recurring performances” (Abraham 1969 quoted in Norrick 1985: 39). Scholars also stress that proverbs “are linguistic items [and] the recurring performances in question must be verbal” although they are recorded in writing later on (Norrick 1985:39).

A second and often recalled consequence of using idiomatic utterances such as proverbs - being "inventorized" – concerns "their value in signaling group membership. Thus the correct use of proverbs is - like other idiomatic expressions such as jokes, clichés, allusions, quotes, etc. - an effective way of "bonding between people whereby the speaker can "signal his membership in and identification with the local [...] community (Norrick 1985: 25).

Norrick - studying proverbs in use - (1985) states that the speaker "avoids the necessity of formulating an original utterance of his own" by making use of a "ready-made utterance with a standard ideational [/textual and/or interactional] meaning" (Norrick 1985: 25). He furthermore points out that "recurrent situations" require "stock formulas" with certain "standard functions" facilitating "smooth interaction in society". Proverbs are also listed among this stock of utterances.

Part III

3.1. Methods of research and corpus assemblage

Part III represents the empirical part of my thesis. For the purpose of the present study, I have consulted several dictionaries of idioms and proverbs (as can be seen from the list of abbreviations). After having selected quite a number of idiomatic expressions representing the corpus of this thesis, i.e. those in which nations, regions, and social or nation groups are mentioned, I have consulted the online Oxford English Dictionary of Idioms and Proverbs when idioms were no further explained in the initial sources. Out of a wide range of idioms I have selected idiomatic expressions containing positive, negative and neutral stereotypes towards certain nations, people or landscapes. However, I have not taken into consideration idioms with stereotyped ideas concerning the black or Jews, as there exist already a considerable number of in depth analyses. Also they would exceed the scope and interest of this thesis.

The following dictionaries and sources have been used for assembly the corpus of the empirical part (III). Throughout part III, they will be cited as indicated in the footnotes:

- Champion (1950) = Champion, Selwyn Gurney. 1950. *Racial Proverbs*.
- Collins (1956) = Collins, Vere Henry. 1956. *A Book of English Idioms*.
- Collins (1959) = Collins, Vere Henry. 1959. *A Book of English Proverbs*.
- Fergusson (1999) = Fergusson, Rosalind. 1999. *The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs*.
- Partridge (1947) = Partridge, Eric. 1947. *A Dictionary of clichés*.
- Plotkin (1955) = Plotkin, David George. *Dictionary of American Proverbs*.

3.2. A corpus of idiomatic expressions containing social and national stereotypes[74]

In this empirical part – as already mentioned- I have provided a list of various idiomatic expressions, (clichés – according to Partridge[75], sayings, proverbs, etc.) which are of interest for the purpose of this thesis, i.e. containing any (positive, negative or neutral) attitudes towards other nations. My corpus contains idiomatic expressions referring to various nations or geographic regions. The organizing principle of the corpus is geographic names.

Before presenting the individual idiomatic expressions and their meanings in the main part, I have provided a general overview of the different semantic and structural types of idioms my corpus contains:

- **Idioms with verb phrases**
  *to catch a **Tartar**[76]*
  *to spoil the **Egyptians***

- **Idioms with the verb "to be"**
  *to be **Greek***
  *to be double **Dutch***

- **Idioms with premodified nouns**
  ***Dutch** courage*
  ***Chinese** chance"*

- **Idioms with the preposition "in + country"**
  *Learn in **Italy**; clothe yourself in **Germany**; flirt in **France**; banquet in **Poland***
  *In **Spain**, the lawyer; in **Italy**, the doctor; in **France**, the flirt; in **Germany**, the artisan; in **England**, the merchant; in the **Balkans**, the thief; in **Turkey**, the*

[74] The respective nations are arranged in grammatical order, the English speaking countries arranged first.
[75] Partridge uses the general term cliché for all four groups, i.e. 1) for idioms that have become clichés, 2) other hackneyed phrases, 3) stock phrases and familiar quotations from foreign languages and 4) quotations from English literature.
[76] Throughout part III, the respective nations will be presented in bold for a better overview.

*soldier; in **Poland**, a Treasury official; in **Moscow**, the liar - can all make a living*

- **Idioms that are definitions**

  *The citizens of **Cork** are all akin*

- **Idioms of comparison**
- *Learn in **Italy**; clothe yourself in **Germany**; flirt in **France**; banquet in **Poland**.*

- **Idioms with generalizations of the respective countries and their inhabitants**

  *All **Cornish** gentlemen are cousins*

- **Proverbial wise sayings**

  *A man must not choose a wife in **Westminster**, a servant in Paul's, or a horse in Smithfield, lest he choose a queen, a knave, or a jade*

  *See **Naples** and die*

3.2.1. America

- *Be as **American** as apple pie* (If something or someone is as American as apple pie, it/he/she is typically or completely American).[77]
- *Good **Americans**, when they die, go to **Paris*** (The person alluded to was Thomas Gold Appleton (1812–84). The equivalence of Paris with Heaven is implied).[78]
- *Every little **American** is born with his nose poking west; every little **Briton** with his nose poking everywhere* (Allusion is made to meddling).[79]

[77] Source: http://humanities.byu.edu/elc/student/idioms/idioms/american_as_apple_pie.htm.
[78] "Good AMERICANS when they die go to Paris" *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. Oxford University Press, 2003. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 12 August 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t90.e38>
[79] Plotkin (1955: 159)

- ***American** devil (*a piercing whistle, used by American factories to signal the start or finish of a shift).[80]

3.2.2. England

3.2.2.1. Attitudes to England

- *Our far-flung Empire* (A British cliché, dating from the stridently imperialistic last twenty years of the 19th century).[81]
- ***England** is a good land and a bad people.*[82]
- ***England** is the paradise of women, the hell of horses, and the purgatory of servants.*[83]
- ***England** is the ringing island* (A reference to the large number of bells in the country).[84]
- *With all the world have war, but with **England** do not jar.*[85]
- ***England** is a little garden full of very sour weeds.*[86]
- *When **England** wrings, **Thanet** sings (*The **Isle of Thanet** in **Kent** has dry, chalky soil that needs plenty of rain).[87]
- *A famine in **England** begins at the horse-manger* (The implication is that a shortage of oats is generally accompanied by a shortage of other crops.)[88]
- *Gluttony is the sin of **England***.

3.2.2.2. National characteristics of the English

- *The Peerage is the **Englishman's** Bible* (A reference to *Burke's Peerage* (1826), a dictionary of peers and their genealogy)[89]

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[80] Green (1996: 327)
[81] Partridge (1947)
[82] Fergusson (1999: 70)
[83] (Ibid.)
[84] (Ibid.)
[85] (Ibid.)
[86] (Ibid.)
[87] Fergusson (1999: 254)
[88] Fergusson (1999: 38)
[89] Fergusson (1999: 21)

- *The **English** are a nation of shop-keepers (*This saying is generally attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 - 1821), although he was not the first to use it. [90] Used non-specifically by Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations* in 1775 and specifically in the French National Convention in 1794. “Attributed without authority, to Napoleon I” (Benham))[91].
- *An **Englishman’s** word is his bond* (First mentioned in 1500 *Lancelot of Lake* (STS) l. 1671 “O kingis word shuld be o kingis bonde.”).[92]
- *The **English** are the swearing nation*.
- *One **Englishman** can beat three **Frenchmen*** (1599 Shakespeare *Henry V* III. vi. 144 When they were in health. ..I thought upon one pair of English legs Did march three Frenchmen.).[93]
- *The **English** never know when they are beaten.[94]*
- *A right **Englishman** knows not when a thing is well.[95]*
- *An **Englishman** loves a lord.[96]*
- *It is an **Englishman’s** privilege to grumble.[97]*
- *An **Englishman’s** home is his castle (*A reference to the **Englishman’s** love of privacy. A variant of this proverb substitutes “house” for “home”).[98]
- *Long beards heartless; painted hoods witless; gay coats graceless; makes **England** thriftless* (A contemptuous **Scottish** proverb).[99]
- *Beware of the horns of a bull, of the heels of a horse, of the smile of an **Englishman***.[100]

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[90] Fergusson (1999: 70)
[91] Partridge (1947)
[92] Source: "An ENGLISHMAN's word is his bond" *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. Oxford University Press, 2003. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 1 June 2008 http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t90.e647
[93] Source: "One ENGLISHMAN can beat three Frenchmen" *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. Oxford University Press, 2003. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 1June 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t90.e645>
[94] Fergusson (1999:79)
[95] (Ibid.)
[96] (Ibid.)
[97] (Ibid.)
[98] (Ibid.)
[99] (Ibid.)
[100] Champion (1950: 50)

- *Mad dogs and **Englishmen** go out in the noonday sun.*[101]
- *When there is a deep silence in a drawing-room the chances are that a visiting **Englishman** has been telling a joke.*[102]

3.2.2.3. Regions and counties

- *The sunny **South*** (The South coast of England: an English cliché since ca. 1920).[103]
- *Shipshape and **Bristol** fashion* (Everything in good order. Recorded from the mid 19th century, this term originally referred to the commercial prosperity of the port of Bristol and the good condition of its shipping).[104]
- *Blessed in the eye, that is betwixt **Severn** and **Wye*** (This refers to the pleasant countryside of **Hereford** and **Worcester**).[105]
- *What **Lancashire** thinks today, all **England** will think tomorrow* (This proverb was coined in the days of the Anti-Corn Law League, a political movement which originated in **Lancashire** in 1839).[106]
- ***Yorkshire** born and **Yorkshire** bred, strong in the arm and weak in the head* (Variants of this proverb substitute other northern counties or towns for **Yorkshire**).[107]
- *Give a **Yorkshire** man a halter, and he'll find a horse*.[108]
- *Shake a bridle over a **Yorkshire** tike's grave, and he'll rise again* (Both reference to the **Yorkshireman's** love of riding).[109]
- *Shake a **Leicestershire** man by the collar, and you shall hear the beans rattle in his belly* (Ibid.).
- ***Suffolk** is the land of churches* (Ibid.).

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[101] Plotkin (1955: 81)
[102] Plotkin (1955: 81)
[103] Partridge (1947)
[104] Source: "shipshape" *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*. Ed. Judith Siefring. Oxford University Press, 2004. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 12 August 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t35.e2249>
[105] Fergusson (1999: 79)
[106] Fergusson (1999: 79)
[107] Fergusson (1999: 80)
[108] Fergusson (1999: 80)
[109] Fergusson (1999: 80)

- ***Essex*** *stiles,* ***Kentish*** *miles,* ***Norfolk*** *wiles, many a man beguiles* (Ibid.).
- *Some places of* ***Kent*** *have health and no wealth, some wealth and no health, some health and wealth, some have neither health nor wealth* (Ibid.).
- ***Sussex*** *won't be druv*. ("Druv" means "driven". The proverb implies that the people of **Sussex** cannot be forced to do anything against their will) (Ibid.).
- ***Hampshire*** *ground requires every day in the week a shower of rain and on Sunday twain* (Ibid.).
- *All* ***Cornish*** *gentlemen are cousins* (The implication is that the **Cornish** upper class generally intermarry) (Ibid.).
- *The devil will not come into* ***Cornwall****, for fear of being put into a pie* (A reference to the **Cornish** tendency to make pies of anything edible) (Ibid.).
- *There are more saints in* ***Cornwall*** *than in heaven* (Ibid.).
- *The* ***north of England*** *for an ox, the south for a sheep, and the middle part for a man* (Ibid.).
- *The* ***north*** *for greatness, the* ***east*** *for health; the* ***south*** *for neatness, the* ***west*** *for wealth* (Ibid.).
- *Out of the* ***north****, all ill comes forth* (Ibid.).
- *Three ills come from the* ***north****, a cold wind, a shrinking cloth, and a dissembling man* (Ibid.).
- *Cold weather and knaves come out of the* ***north*** (Ibid.).

3.2.2.4. Towns and villages

- *When a man is tired of* ***London****, he is tired of life* (Samuel Johnson (1709-84)).[110]
- *The streets of* ***London*** *are paved with gold* (The implication is that it is easy to make one's fortune in London. The inaccuracy of the proverb has been found out by many to their cost).[111]
- ***Oxford*** *is the home of lost causes*[112] (Matthew Arnold called Oxford University "the *home of lost causes*," assumably referring in particular , to Oxford's

[110] Fergusson (1999: 81)
[111] (Ibid.)
[112] (Ibid.)

support for the ill-fated Charles I during the Puritan Revolution).[113]

- ***Oxford*** *for learning,* ***London*** *for wit,* ***Hull*** *for women, and* ***York*** *for a tit* ("Tit" here means "horse").[114]
- *Said the devil when flying o'er* ***Harrogate Wells****, I think I am getting near home by the smells* (A reference to the sulphur springs at Harrogate)[115]
- *If* ***Poole*** *was a fish-pool, and the men of Poole fish, there'd be a pool for the devil and fish for his dish*. [116]
- ***Sutton*** *for good mutton,* ***Cheam*** *for juicy beef,* ***Croydon*** *for a pretty girl, and* ***Mitcham*** *for a thief.*[117]
- *Set the* ***Thames*** *on fire* (Do something remarkable; make a brilliant reputation. The phrase is nearly always used negatively, with reference to a person who is not thought likely to do this).[118]
- *Carrying coals to* ***Newcastle*** (Take something to a place where it is so plentiful that it is not wanted; figuratively, do something that is absurdly superfluous. The first use of the phrase is by Fuller in 1650, though 'as common as coals from Newcastle' appears in 1606. The French have porter de l'eau à la rivière ('to carry water to the river').[119]
- *The* ***English*** *love; the* ***French*** *make love.*[120]
- *When the Ethiopian is white the* ***French*** *will love the* ***English****.*[121]

3.2.3. Ireland

- *An* ***Irishman*** *before answering a question always asks another* (The other question referred to is, "Why do you ask?").
- *Put an* ***Irishman*** *on the spit, and you can always get another* ***Irishman*** *to baste him* (A reference to the civil strife within **Ireland**).
- *The citizens of* ***Cork*** *are all akin* (The implication is that the people of **Cork** mistrust outsiders, and therefore only marry amongst themselves).

[113] Cf. www.antiwar.com/stromberg/s071399.html.
[114] Fergusson (1999: 81)
[115] (Ibid.)
[116] (Ibid.)
[117] (Ibid.)
[118] Collins (1956: 59)
[119] Collins (1956: 57)
[120] Champion (1950: 26)
[121] Champion (1950: 28)

- *Hit him again, for he is **Irish***.
- *Love-less as an **Irishman***. (Gaelic)
- ***Irish** draperies* (cobwebs).[122]
- ***Irish** diamonds* (rock crystal).[123]
- ***Irish** marathon* (a relay race).[124]
- ***Irish** fire* (never catches properly, burns only at the top).[125]
- ***Irishman's** reef* (a sail that was tied only at the top).[126]
- ***Irish/Irishman's** dinner* (no dinner at all, emerged in America, reinforced by immigrant memories of the deadly famine of 1845-6)[127]
- ***Irish** cherry* (a carrot).[128]
- ***Irish** lemons/grapes* and *apples* (all refer to potato).[129]
- ***Irish** compliment* (a backhanded compliment).[130]
- ***Irish** evidence* (perjury).[131]
- *To weep **Irish*** (to utter words of apology).[132]
- ***Irish** legs* and ***Irish** arms* (thick and heavy legs).[133]
- *Lace-curtain **Irish*** (genteel and petit-bourgeois).[134]
- *Shanty **Irish*** (the lower class).[135]
- ***Irish** theatre* (British army slang; a military guard-room, alluding to the likelihood of finding Irish soldiers incarcerated there).[136]
- ***Irish** kiss* (a slap in the face).[137]
- *Get one's **Irish** up* (to lose one's temper).[138]
- ***Irish** hoist* (ca. 1800, a kick to the backside, or a clumsy, painful fall).[139]

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[122] Green (1996: 97)
[123] Green (1996: 97)
[124] (Ibid.)
[125] Green (1996: 98)
[126] (Ibid.)
[127] Green (1996: 168)
[128] Green(1996: 155)
[129] (Ibid.)
[130] Green (1996: 144)
[131] (Ibid.)
[132] (Ibid.)
[133] Green (1996: 194)
[134] Green (1996: 284)
[135] (Ibid.)
[136] Green (1996: 296)
[137] Green (1996: 209)
[138] Green (1996: 301)

3.2.4. Scotland:

- ***Scotty*** ("a person of irritable temper, who is easily put in a passion", as James Vaux, Australia's first lexicographer put it in 1812).[140]
- *A **Scot**, a rat, and a **Newcastle** grindstone travel all the world over.*
- *The **Scot** will not fight till he sees his own blood.*
- *Biting and scratching is **Scots** folk's wooing.*
- *A **Scotsman** is always wise behind the hand.*
- *A **Scottish** mist will wet an **Englishman** to the skin.*
- *To answer **Scotch** fashion* (to answer one question by asking another).[141]
- *A **Scotch** cousin* (a distant relative).[142]
- *To **Scot*** (verb; to levy taxes and to pay them).[143]
- *A **Scotch** mark* (a defect, whether physical or moral serving to distinguish a given person).[144]
- *To **Scotch*** (to injure).[145]
- *The **Scotsman** is never at home but when he's abroad.*
- *Three failures and a fire make a **Scotsman's** fortune.*
- ***Scotsmen** always reckon from an ill hour.*
- *A **Scotchman** is one who keeps the Sabbath and every other darned thing he can lay hands on*.
- *A **Scotch** mist* (a drizzling rain that "will wet an Englishman to the skin", as Francis Grose put it in 1785).[146]
- ***Scotch** coffee* (hot water flavored with burnt biscuits).[147]

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[139] (Ibid.)
[140] Green (1996: 109)
[141] (Ibid.)
[142] (Ibid.)
[143] (Ibid.)
[144] (Ibid.)
[145] (Ibid.)
[146] Green (1996: 110)
[147] Green (1996: 164)

3.2.5. Europe

3.2.5.1. Finland

- **Finland** is the devil's country (a reference to the physical geography of the country, rather than to its inhabitants).

3.2.5.2. France

- ***French** novel* (a repository of filthy thoughts and deeds).[148]
- *To loose **French*** (around 1900, meant to swear or to indulge in "violent language" as the slang lexicographer J. Redding Ware put it).[149]
- ***Frenchy*** (adj., means moody, flighty and capricious).[150]
- ***French** fare* (elaborately polite behavior in the 14th to 16th centuries)[151]
- ***French** harp* (a harmonica in America).[152]
- ***French** disease* (Morbvs Gallicvs, i.e. syphilis, goes back to the poem *Syphilis, sive Morbvs Gallicvs*, published in 1530 by the physician, astronomer and poet of Verona, Girolamo Fracastoro. The poem came into English in 1686, translated by Nahum Tate with the title *Syphilis: or, a Peotical History of the French Disease*).[153] Also known as ***French** gout, **French** crown, Malady of **France.***[154]
- *To take **French** lessons* (contract the disease).[155]
- ***Frenchified** (infected).*[156]
- ***French** faith* (16th-century English, neither faithful nor trustworthy).[157]
- *To drive **French** horses* (to vomit). [158]
- ***French** land* (land that fails to produce a crop).[159]

[148] Green (1996: 65)
[149] (Ibid.)
[150] Green (1996: 93)
[151] Green (1996: 94)
[152] Green (1996: 95)
[153] Green (1996: 225)
[154] Green (1996: 256)
[155] Green (1996: 256)
[156] (Ibid.)
[157] Green (1996: 143)
[158] Green (1996: 177)
[159] Green (1996: 332)

- *To take **French** leave*. 18th-century coinage. To go away, be absent, or do a thing, without permission or without notice. S.O.E.D. says 'French leave' originally referred to the custom, prevalent in the seventeenth century France, of going away from a reception etc. without taking leave of the host or hostess. Then jocularly it came to mean to do anything without permission or notice. The French have the same meaning in the phrase filer à l'anglaise = 'to go off in English style'. It looks as if each nation ascribed bad manners to its hereditary enemy. There are also other uncomplimentary things that the French said were English, and the English said were French.[160] Or absenting oneself from a job or duty without prior permission.[161] Original positive usage (with the best intentions) was replaced by the 19th century.[162]
- *A **French** leave-taker* (a military deserter). [163]
- *Send a fool to **France** and he'll come back a fool.*[164]
- *Send a donkey to **Paris**, he'll return no wiser than he went.*[165]
- *Jack would be a gentleman if he could speak **French**.*[166]
- *Have the **Frenchman** for thy friend, not for thy neighbor.*[167]
- *The **Frenchman** is a scoundrel* (Ibid.)
- *When the **Ethiopian** is white, the **French** will love the **English*** (Ibid.).

3.2.5.3. Germany

- *When a snake gets warm on ice, then a **German** will wish well to a **Czech***.[168]
- *The **German's** wit is in his fingers* (The implication is that a **German's** practical skills are superior to his intellectual ability).[169]
- *Lead a pig to the **Rhine**, it remains a pig*.[170]

[160] Collins (1956: 225)
[161] Green (1996: 332)
[162] Green (1996: 291)
[163] Ibid.
[164] Plotkin *(1955: 240)*
[165] Fergusson (1999: 240)
[166] Fergusson (1999: 21)
[167] Fergusson (1999: 184)
[168] Fergusson (1999: 185)
[169] Fergusson (1999: 185)
[170] Fergusson (1999: 240)

3.2.5.4. Greece

- *To be **Greek*** (to be unintelligible, to be beyond comprehension).
- After shaking hands with a **Greek**, count your fingers.[171]
- *The **Greeks** only tell the truth once a year*.[172]
- *Fear the **Greeks** bearing gifts* ("The Greeks" here refers to any enemy).[173]
- *When **Greek** meets **Greek**, then comes the tug of war (*A reference to any contest between two sides of equal strength. The proverb is based on a line from *The Rival Queens* by Nathaniel Lee (1655- 92)).[174] It is a late 18-20th-century cliché that is a misquotation of Nathaniel Lee's "When Greeks joined Greeks" (i.e. engaged in battle) "then was the tug-of-war" (*The Rival Queens* (IV, ii), a poetic tragedy, 1677).[175]
- ***Greek** ease* (laziness). [176]
- ***Greek** back* (a simulated illness serving as an excuse for malingering).[177]
- ***Greek** trust* (no trust at all).[178]
- *To play the **Greek*** (to drink excessively).[179]

3.2.5.5. Holland

- ***Dutch** courage*. Courage produced by strong drink: mid C. 19-20. From the heavy drinking of Dutch soldiers in earlier times.
- *The **Dutch** have taken Holland*.[180]
- *Double **Dutch*** (coined ca. 1789, unintelligible language or just foreign speech).[181]
- ***Dutch** jawbreakers* (words that are very difficult to pronounce)[182]

[171] Fergusson (1999: 186)
[172] (Ibid.)
[173] Fergusson (1999: 103)
[174] Fergusson (1999: 84)
[175] Partridge (1947)
[176] Green (1996: 334)
[177] Green (1996: 250)
[178] Green (1996: 143)
[179] Green (1996: 181)
[180] Collins (1956: 179)
[181] Green (1996: 58)
[182] (Ibid.)

- ***Dutch** treat* (entertainment (a meal, a film, etc.) where each person pays his own share; they *go Dutch*).[183]
- ***Dutch** concert, Dutch tune* (18th century), *Dutch medley* (19th century) (any performance in which each musician plays a different tune, bad performance).[184]
- ***Dutch** dab* (a poorly executed landscape or still life).[185]
- ***Dutch** uncle* (ca. 1830s, a paternal or patronizing person who tends not so much to talk but to lecture, e.g. *to talk like a Dutch uncle* – to lecture one severely).[186]
- ***Dutch** comfort/**Dutch** consolation* (When speaker intones "Thank God it is no worse").[187]
- *To be in **Dutch*** (American term since 1912, to be in trouble).[188]
- ***Dutch** defense* (no defense whatsoever, implication that one betrays one's own side).[189]
- ***Dutch** steak* (taking Dutch for Deutsch is a hamburger).[190]
- *Cut one's foot with a **Dutchman's** razor (19th century, to step in excrement).*[191]
- ***Dutch** bargain (*also known as *wet bargain*, is any deal concluded over drinks).[192]
- ***Dutchman's** anchor* (sailing slang, a basic requisite left at home).[193]
- ***Dutch*** pennants (untidy ropes on board of a ship).[194]
- ***I'll be a Dutchman/I'm a Dutchman*** ("under no circumstances" or "beyond possibility". Thackeray seems to have introduced this phrase in 1837 in *Ravenswing*: "If there's a better-dressed man in Europe…I'm a Dutchman.").[195]

[183] Green (1996: 176)
[184] Green (1996: 72)
[185] Green (1996: 86)
[186] Green (1996: 92)
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Green (1996: 148)
[191] Green (1996: 188)
[192] Green (1996: 319)
[193] Green (1996: 331)
[194] Ibid.
[195] Green (1996: 81)

3.2.5.6. Italy

- *To fiddle while **Rome** burns* (to amuse oneself, to be engaged in trivial activities, while a war, a crisis, a disaster, or something otherwise important is in progress: C. 19-20. G. Daniel, 1649, “Let Nero fiddle out Rome’s obsequies”)[196].
- ***Italian** hero* (a large sandwich).[197]
- ***Italian** quarrel* (treachery, poison and remorselessness).[198]
- *The **Englishman Italianate** is a devil incarnate.*
- *All things are to be bought at **Rome.**[199]*
- *All roads lead to **Rome*** (medieval L. *mille vie ducunt hominem per secula Romam*, a thousand roads lead man for ever towards Rome. (ca.1391) Chaucer *Astrolabe* Prologue l. 40 Right as diverse pathes leden diverse folk the righte way to Rome).[200]
- *See **Naples** and die* (reference to the beauty of Naples and its environs).[201]
- *The **Neapolitan** is wide-mouthed and narrow-handed* (“narrow-handed” here means “tight-fisted, mean”).[202]
- *A man would live in **Italy**, but he would choose to die in **Spain*** (the implication is that while Italy is the more pleasant place to live, the Catholic religion is more strictly practiced in Spain).[203]
- *When in **Rome**, do as the **Romans** do* (deportment; English records go back to the 16th century; adapt yourself to the customs and manners of those you live among or are for a time closely associated with).[204]

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[196] Partridge (1947)
[197] Green (1996: 159)
[198] Green (1996: 295)
[199] Fergusson (1999: 184)
[200] All ROADS lead to Rome" *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. Ed. Jennifer Speake. Oxford University Press, 2003. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 12 August 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t90.e1788>
[201] Fergusson (1999: 184)
[202] (Ibid.)
[203] (Ibid.)
[204] Collins (1956: 109)

3.2.5.7. Poland

- ***Poland** is the peasant's hell, the **Jew's** paradise, the citizen's purgatory, the noble's heaven, and the grave of the stranger's gold.*
- ***Polish** disease* (a disease of the scalp, endemic in Eastern Europe, which results in the matting of the hair).[205]

3.2.5.8. Spain and Portugal

- *A castle in **Spain**, or castles in **Spain*** (Fond imaginings; a rosy dream of future wealth and happiness: semi proverbial; but in the 19-20th centuries already chlichés. Originals: c*hâteaux en Espagne* and the Italian *castelli in aria* (Benham). Often build castles in the air (rarely *Spain*).[206] This means the same as castles in the air. French also has chateau d'Espagne. 'Spain', perhaps because Spain was regarded at one time as a romantic country. The expression appears as far back as the thirteenth century in The Romaunt of the Rose: Thou shalt make castle thanne in Spain, And dream of joie alle but in vayne)[207].
- *Nothing ill in **Spain** but that which speaks.*[208]
- *The **Spaniard** is a bad servant, but a worse master.*[209]
- *The **Basque** is faithful.*[210]
- *He who has not seen **Seville**, has not seen a wonder.*[211]
- ***Spanish** flag* (California rockfish – from its red and yellow coloring – or a West Indian fish of the *Serraniadae* family).[212]
- ***Spanish** padlock* (Francis Grose cites it as "a kind of girdle contrived by jealous husbands of that nation, to secure the chastitiy of their wives").[213]

[205] Green (1996: 252)
[206] Partridge (1947)
[207] Collins (1956: 59)
[208] Fergusson (1999: 184)
[209] (Ibid.)
[210] (Ibid.)
[211] (Ibid.)
[212] Green (1996: 243)
[213] Green (1996: 209)

- ***Spanish*** *lady* (ladyfish or Spanish hogfish).[214]
- *To ride the* ***Spanish*** *mare* ("to sit astride a beam, guys loosed, sea rough as a punishment" as defined by Farmer & Henley). [215]
- *Old* ***Spanish*** *customs* (long-standing unauthorized or irregular practices which are nevertheless continued). [216]
- ***Spanish*** *guitar* (meaning cigar).[217]
- ***Spanish*** *money/coin* (18th century, defined as "fine words that cost little", i.e. flattery or smooth talk).[218]
- *A bad* ***Spaniard*** *makes a good* ***Portuguese****.* [This implies that the best of the **Portuguese** are no better than the worst **Spaniards**]
- ***Portuguese*** *parliament* (a situation in which many people are speaking at once and hardly anyone listening).[219]
- *A blue eye in a* ***Portuguese*** *woman is a mistake of nature. p.185*

3.2.5.9. Turkey

- *The Sick Man of* ***Europe***. **Turkey**[220] (This political and journalistic cliché is obsolescent: Kemal Atatürk changed all that. It was coined in a conversation between the Czar Nicholas I and Sir G. Seymour on Feb. 21, 1853; the phrase caught on almost immediately (O.E.D.).[221] Refers to a country that is politically or economically unsound, especially in comparison with its neighbors in the region specified. In the late 19th century, following a reported comment by Tsar Nicholas I of Russia about the moribund state of the Turkish empire, the Sultan of Turkey was described as *the Sick Man of Europe*. The term was later extended to Turkey itself and subsequently applied to other countries.

[214] Green (1996: 243)
[215] Green (1996: 241)
[216] Green (1996: 141)
[217] Green (1996: 104)
[218] Green (1996: 64)
[219] Green (1996: 72)
[220] See OED's quite 'interesting' definition of 'Turk': "applied to any one having qualities attributed to the Turks; a cruel, rigorous, or tyrannical man; any one behaving as a barbarian or savage; one who treats his wife hardly; a bad-tempered or unmanageable man..." (OED quoted in Green 1996: 106-107).
[221] Partrige (1947)

1992 *Independent* He vilified the West as 'the sick man of the modern world' and attacked its institutions as 'the dictatorship of the majority dressed up as democracy'.[222]

- ***Turkish** medal* (an undone button on the trouser fly).[223]
- ***Turk's** head* (a round broom with a long handle).[224]
- *Unspeakable **Turk*** (used widely in Britain and America, what were condemned as the 'Turkish atrocities' (1890s).[225]
- *Turn **Turk*** (used by Shakespeare, change completely for the worse).[226]
- *Young **Turk*** (used in Britain for 'hysterical child').[227]

3.2.6. Russia

- *The cold is **Russia's** cholera.*[228]
- *Scratch a **Russian** and you'll find a **Tartar*** (an investigation of someone or something will soon reveal their true nature. The first version of this expression used in English, in the early 19th century, was a translation of a remark attributed to Napoleon: *grattez le Russe et vous trouverez le Tartare*, 'scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar').[229]
- *The **Russian** Bear* (Russia or the Soviet; the Russian nation personified: journalistic: late 19-20th centuries. The Russian bear is one of the three of four chief kinds of bear).[230]
- ***Russian** law* (ca. 1640, punishment of one hundred blows on the bare shin).[231]
- ***Russian** boots* (leg chains affixed to prisoners).[232]

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[222] "sick" *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*. Ed. Judith Siefring. Oxford University Press, 2004. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 12 August 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t35.e2277>
[223] Green (1996: 221)
[224] Green (1996: 330)
[225] Green (1996: 304)
[226] (Ibid.)
[227] Green (1996: 301)
[228] Fergusson (1999: 185)
[229] "scratch" *The Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*. Ed. Judith Siefring. Oxford University Press, 2004. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universitatsbibliothek Wien. 12 August 2008 <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t35.e2195>
[230] Partridge (1947)
[231] Green (1996: 299)

3.2.7. Asia

3.2.7.1. China

- ***Chinees*** or ***Chinese duckets*** (complimentary tickets to a theatrical or sporting event). [233]
- ***Chinese*** *landing* (a landing in which one wing is lower than the other. The pilot is referred to as the ***Chinese*** *ace* in that case).[234]
- *From* ***China*** *to* ***Peru*** (From one side of the world to the other. This is a quotation from Dr. Johnson's *On the Vanity of Human Wishes*: 'Let observation with extended view Survey mankind from China to Peru').[235]
- ***Chinese*** *tobacco* (opium).[236]
- ***Chinese*** *puzzle* (synonymous with intricate, baffling complexity).[237]
- *To walk in* ***Chinese*** *fashion* (to walk single file).[238]
- ***Chinese*** *chance* (is no chance at all, from the mid-19th-century California Gold Rush).[239]
- *I have must killed a* ***Chinaman*** (Australian phrase widely used to explain one's sudden spate of bad luck).[240]
- ***Chinese*** *compliment* (America; refers to the pretended acceptance someone's acceptance or display of exaggerated deference masking probably hostile intentions).[241]

3.2.7.2. Egypt

- *Spoil the* ***Egyptians*** (Force your enemies to supply your needs. The phrase comes from the Bible, where (Exodus, 3,22; 12, 36), as Moses was assured

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[232] Green (1996: 221)
[233] Green (1996: 321)
[234] Green (1996: 189)
[235] Collins (1956: 60)
[236] Green (1996: 172)
[237] Green (1996: 79)
[238] Green (1996: 194)
[239] Green (1996: 344)
[240] Green (1996: 345)
[241] Green (1996: 143)

by God, the Egyptians lent the Israelites things they needed.[242]To despoil, to plunder one's enemies: 19-20th c. *Exodus*, iii. 22, "Ye shall spoil the Egyptians" (Vulgate, *spoliabitis AEgyptum*)).[243]

- *The flesh-pots of **Egypt*** (Luxurious living, prosperity, comforts and privileges, regretted – or regarded enviously: 18-20th c. In allusion to *Exodus*, xvi. 3, Would that we had died … in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, when we did bread to the full": Vulgate, *super ollas cranium*. *Flesh-pot* is a pot in which flesh is boiled).[244]
- *Dark as **Egypt*** (in America meaning strange and mysterious).[245]

3.2.7.3. Persia

- ***Persian** fire* (anthrax, listed as *Persicus ignis* in an English translation of *Blancard's Physical Dictionary* of 1693).[246]

3.2.8. Mexico

- ***Mexican** breakfast* (entails no more than a cigarette and a glass of water).[247]
- ***Mexican** dish* (made of crushed Indian corn, flavored with pieces of meat or chicken, red pepper, wrapped in corn-husks and baked).[248]
- ***Mexican** car/carriage and jeep* (donkey).[249]

3.2.9. Comparisons of countries

- *Learn in **Italy**; clothe yourself in **Germany**; flirt in **France**; banquet in **Poland.***
- *In **Spain**, the lawyer; in **Italy**, the doctor; in **France**, the flirt; in **Germany**, the artisan; in **England**, the merchant; in the **Balkans**, the thief; in **Turkey**, the soldier; in **Poland**, a Treasury official; in **Moscow**, the liar - can all make a living.*[250]

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[242] Collins (1956: 201)
[243] Partridge (1947)
[244] (Ibid.)
[245] Green (1996: 76)
[246] Green (1996: 254)
[247] Green (1996: 168)
[248] Green (1996: 213)
[249] Green (1996: 242)
[250] Fergusson (1999: 183)

- ***Essex*** *stiles,* ***Kentish*** *miles,* ***Norfolk*** *wiles, many a man beguiles.*[251]
- *The* ***Italians*** *are wise before the deed; the* ***Germans*** *in the deed; the* ***French*** *after the deed.*[252]
- *An* ***Irishman*** *half intoxicated, an* ***Englishman*** *with his belly full, and a* ***Scotsman*** *hungry* (*i.e. their best form*).[253]
- *In settling as island, the first building erected by a* ***Spaniard*** *will be a church; by a* ***Frenchman****, a fort; by a* ***Dutchman****, a warehouse; and by an* ***Englishman****, an alehouse.*[254]
- *An* ***Englishman*** *is never happy but when he is miserable, a* ***Scotchman*** *never at home but when he is abroad, and an* ***Irishman*** *never at peace but when he is fighting.* [255]
- *The* ***Englishman*** *weeps, the* ***Irishman*** *sleeps, but the* ***Scottishman*** *gangs while he gets it* ("Gangs while" means "goes until". The proverb is supposed to refer to the behavior of the **English**, **Irish**, and **Scottish** when they need food).[256]
- *The* ***Irishman*** *for a hand, the* ***Welshman*** *for a leg, the* ***Englishman*** *for a face, and the* ***Dutchman*** *for a beard* (The implication is that the **Irish** have the best hands, the **Welsh** the best legs, and so on).[257]

3.3. General analysis

Idiomatic expressions are to a great extent stereotyped phrases which have been transmitted for centuries. Therefore, it has been necessary to include the study of idioms as well as stereotypes and prejudices as two fields close to each other although they have been presented in two separate parts in this thesis. Hence, I have had to take into consideration part I and part II– seemingly two separate domains of research– in order to offer an overall picture of the concept of idiomatic expressions. Part I and part II represent therefore preparatory chapters for the empirical part of this

[251] Fergusson (1999: 80)
[252] Champion (1950: 32)
[253] Champion (1950: 54)
[254] Fergusson (1999: 183)
[255] Fergusson (1999: 186)
[256] (Ibid.)
[257] (Ibid.)

thesis which looks at English idiomatic expressions from a historical, structural, and content perspective as will be outlines in the following lines.

For the corpus of this thesis, which encompasses 209 idiomatic phrases, I have consulted six idiom dictionaries. These dictionaries include all kinds of idiomatic expressions. I have selected those, which were of interest for the purpose of this thesis, i.e. idiomatic phrases involving stereotyped ideas about a nation, geographic region, etc.

In total, I have selected 209 idiomatic expressions dealing with different nationalities or geographic regions. Thus, my corpus represents a complete list of idiomatic expressions dealing with the respective national groups or regions as presented in the dictionaries I have consulted except idiomatic expressions about black people, Indians or Jews. Including them would exceed the scope of this thesis. Another essential factor for not including these three groups was the fact that there already exists an important number of works discussing them in thorough detail.[258] Also it would not have represented a fresh study as a great number of works and articles can be found on these groups. In contrast, a study of English stereotyped idiomatic expressions about national groups or geographic regions can rarely be found. This thesis therefore is an attempt to analyze the idiomatic expressions as can be found scattered in divers dictionaries listed on page 70 and to offer a general structural and content analysis of them.

My corpus, which has originated after a certain period of selection, is supposed to give hints about stereotyped ideas transmitted until today with the help of idiomatic expressions.

3.3.1. Content and structure analysis

Among these 209 idiomatic expressions, 54 deal with England, its nation, towns or villages. Especially in those idioms, the north-south distinction– as previously

[258] See for example Cheyette (1995), Champion (1950), Green (1996) Hewitt (1986).

mentioned in this thesis[259]– can clearly be seen, even within the same country. These idioms occupy nearly five of 19 pages of my corpus in total.

It would be interesting to see, whether the majority of idiomatic expressions in other languages also deal with the respective country, its people, landscape, or culture.

It is furthermore interesting to note that despite of intense contact in history, there exist only few idiomatic phrases concerning America and its people; I have encountered only four. France, Greece, Holland and Italy are represented with nearly the same amount of idiomatic expressions in the English language; Ireland and Scotland likewise. Finland, Germany, Greece and Poland are relatively under-represented (1 - 10 idioms max.). Idiomatic phrases about Asian countries do not amount to high numbers either, which gives hints about their historical relations with Anglo-Saxon countries.

From a structural point of view, the majority of the idiomatic expressions in my corpus contain idiomatic expressions with premodified nouns, idioms that are definitions, and proverbial wise sayings.

It can also be said that there exists, for instance, a quite negative attitude towards the Irish people who are often referred to as a bibulous nation.[260] Also idioms about Scotland have a negative touch and it can be stated that Europe and Asia are also represented quite negatively in my corpus. In only two comparative idiomatic phrases (chapter 3.2.9.) certain European countries are mentioned regarding their best "sectors" and "organs" in a positive way.

[259] See figure 4 about the "simple dynamics of stereotypes" in chapter 1.4. on "socio-political aspects of stereotypes", Scaliger's as well as Levinus Lemnius' theories on page 56ff. and the "climate theory" in chapter 3. on "national stereotypes".

[260] See chapter 3.2.3. on Ireland.

4. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to analyze the concepts of stereotypes, prejudices and idioms in combination. After respective definitions of both notions, a brief philosophical survey based on Bacon's four "idols" has been provided in order to offer a different view about this issue that has– to a great extent– been analyzed from a linguistic, socio-cognitive, and socio-political perspective. Comprising important social and psychological aspects, the notion of stereotype has been described in terms of fixedness of standardized mental images about members of outer-groups. In this respect, the psychological functions of stereotypes– predominantly referring to cognitive processes– as regards their structuring and complexity-reducing characteristics have been outlined according to the findings of scholars of the field. Prejudices on the other hand are seen as affective processes of degradations. This differentiation is based on Devine's (1989a) dissociation model, which– although criticized by many scholars– has not been totally outstripped yet. Stereotypes and prejudices have been describes as having essential socio-cognitive functions, although people– as Devine (1989a) proposes– have the choice to consciously accept or refuse prejudiced ideas which would in that case represent a conscious information processing. Highlighting an essential difference between the two concepts, it has been noted that stereotypes rather concern the cognitive processes of generalizations while prejudices represent the affective processes of devaluation.
As this thesis aims at studying stereotyped ideas in idiomatic expressions, a chapter has been dedicated to the language of stereotypes and certain interaction strategies are highlighted for a better understanding of how people use language when trying to convey their own prejudiced opinions. In the second part, idioms have been analyzed from different perspectives. First, some light has been shed on their structure (i.e. short-long, regular-irregular, frozen-flexible, transparent-opaque, etc.) before examining their lexical status and their representation in the mental lexicon of the reader or listener (facing new idioms). Hence, idiom comprehension and semantic interpretation have been vital points of part II, too, which has dealt primarily with the question whether the literal or the idiomatic meaning is retrieved first. For answering this question, scholars have proposed different theories. I have presented three main

assumptions on the idiom comprehension process. The notion of literal meaning and the literal-figurative distinction were the next aspects which needed some analysis. While Rumelhart (1979) stated that we are well aware of the existence of literal and figurative utterances, we have seen in part II that there is less agreement in psycholinguistics as regards the validity of the figurative-literal distinction which has not been definitively identified yet.
For part III, which represents the empirical part of the present thesis, I have consulted various dictionaries of idiomatic expressions and searched for those containing any attributions towards regions, nations, groups of persons, etc. Thus, part III contains over 200 idiomatic expressions with stereotyped ideas.

We have seen that the research of stereotyping is of great importance as it constitutes an essential element in the explanation of social and cultural crises. A change in orientation, support for anti-prejudice norms, empathy and the motivation to do so are listed among the most essential solutions to reduce stereotypes.[261]

I hope that the findings in this thesis will contribute to a better understanding of prejudices and stereotypes in order to be able to cope with them more effectively in the future.

[261] See www.understandingprejudice.org.

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Curriculum Vitae

Angaben zur Person:

Aynur KIRCI
Geb. 2. 1. 1980 /Wien

Schulbildung:

01/09/1995 - 30/06/2000
BHS-Matura
Tourismusschule Wien 21
Wassermanngasse 12
1210 Wien

01/10/2000 – 11/2008
Studium der Anglistik und Romanistik an der Universität Wien
Diplomarbeit im Bereich der Linguistik („*National and Social Stereotypes in English Idiomatic Expressions*“)

Sprachreisen:

16/06/1996 - 23/06/1996
English for Business and Tourism
Bluefeather School of Languages
Dublin/Ireland

01/10/1997 - 20/10/1997
Lanuage trip to U.S.A.
Sonoma Valley High School/Sonoma
San Francisco/Los Angeles

06/10/1999 - 21/10/1999
Echange Lingua Montpellier
Lycée Jean Monnet de Montpellier
Montpellier/Frankreich

Berufserfahrung:

01/06/1998 - 31/08/1998
Traineeship
Empfangsbereich
Magic Life der Club Bodrum
Bodrum/Türkei

29/12/1999 – 4/2008
Nachhilfe-Lehrkraft
Lehrtätigkeit in den Fächern Deutsch, DaF, Englisch und Französisch.
Phönix-Institut für Kultur, Bildung und Sport
Nachhilfeinstitut Lernquadrat

01/10/2004 - 30/06/2005
Fremdsprachen-Assistentin
Sprachassistenz in Deutsch
Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres
St.Etienne, Lyon
Frankreich

01/06/2006 - 31.12.2006
(ehrenamtliche Tätigkeiten)
Pressesprecherin - Interkultureller Dialog
Pressearbeit
Institut Friede für Dialog
Hoher Markt 1/3
1010 Wien

01/2008 – dato
Redakteurin des deutschsprachigen Teils der Wochenzeitung ZAMAN
Rotenturmstraße 1-3/3
1010 Wien

Weiterbildung:

19/05/1998
Kommunikationstraining
Kommunikationstraining im Ausmaß von 30 Stunden
Unter der Leitung vom ÖAGG in der HBLA Wien 21,
1210 Wien

20/11/2006 - 25/11/2006
Bibliothekarin
Lehrgang für ehrenamtliche und nebenberufliche BibliothekarInnen
Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung St. Wolfgang

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