**First questionnaire**

**EUROPHRAS**

**European Society of Phraseology /** Société Européenne de Phraséologie (<http://www.europhras.org>)

**Project “Widespread Idiomatic and Formulaic Constructions”**

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Dear Colleagues,

I would like to ask you for your help with the project “Widespread idiomatic and formulaic constructions”. Below, you will find one *grammatical phraseme* (1), two *idiomatic patterns* (2-3) and three *constructional phrasemes* (4-6) suspected of being widespread across many languages. Are there parallels in your native language (multiword units with almost the same syntactic structure and core meaning but different wordings)? If so, I would ask you to please write these equivalents down: first a kind of **dictionary form**. I’d also like to ask you for an **example**. This can be a sentence you have made yourself.

Thank you very much!

Elisabeth Piirainen

**(1) English *not only* –*, but also***

German *nicht nur – sondern auch*

French *pas seulement – mais aussi*

Finnish *ei vain – mutta myös*

This grammatical phraseme is not figurative but highly formulaic. The structure consists of four words. Nothing can be changed: \*only not, but also / not only ..., \* however also. The central feature is the absolute fixedness.

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(2) English *when pigs fly***

French *quand les poules auront des dents* “when the chickens will have teeth”

Spanish *cuando las ranas críen pelo* “when the frogs breed hair”

Russian *когда рак на горе свистнет* “when a craw fish whistles on the mountain”

‘never; when one does not believe something will ever happen’

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(3) English *(to jump) out of the frying pan into the fire***

German *vom Regen in die Traufe (kommen)* “(to come) from the rain into the eaves”

French *(sauter/tomber) de la poêle en/dans la braise (de feu)* [like English]

‘to exchange a bad situation for one that is even worse; to get from an unpleasant situation into an even more unpleasant one’

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(4) English *(to be) the most simple/natural/normal/ … thing of the world***

German *die einfachste/natürlichste/normalste/ … Sache de Welt (sein)*

French *(être) la chose la plus facile/naturelle/normale/ … du monde*

Pattern **[(article) – superlative of an adjective – thing – of the world]**

Figurative meaning: ‘very’, i.e. intensification of the meaning of the adjective.

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(5) English *step by step***

German *Schritt für Schritt*

French *pas à pas*

Russian *шаг за шагом*

‘advancing slowly, gradually, consciously’

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(6) English *who, if not he / …, (could help us / …)***

German *wer, wenn nicht er/ …, (könnte uns helfen/ …)*

French *qui, si ce n’est lui/ …, (pourrait nous aider/ …)*

‘he/ … is the best/the only one who (could help us / ...)

Your language

sample sentence:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much!**