Intertextuality and Multimodality of Modern Culture-bound Internet-born Phrasemes from a Cross-linguistic and Translational Perspective.
A case study of the unit *Niemiec płakał jak sprzedawał*

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Presentation Plan

- Introduction
- Culture-boundness of phrasemes: their intextuality and multimodality
- Cross-linguistic equivalence of the unit *Niemiec płakał, jak sprzedawał*
- Selected aspects of translational equivalence of the phraseme
- Conclusions

Aims

- to discuss phrasemes exhibiting culture-boundness of intertextual and multimodal nature with a focus on its interlingual and translational equivalents
- to present an analysis of the the Polish phraseme *Niemiec płakał jak sprzedawał* [lit. The German was crying while selling (it)] to illustrate this issue

Culture-boundness of phrasemes

- Culture-specific / culture-bound phrasemes (Sabban 2008)
- Culture-bound phrasemes as interesting units from a cross-linguistic and translational perspective (Colson 2008; Boria, Carreres, Noriega-Sánchez, Tomalin 2019)
- Carriers of cultural contents, potential lacunarity
- Linguo-cultural approach (Zykowa 2011)

Niemiec płakał, jak sprzedawał [lit. A German was crying while selling (the car)]

- used as ironic statement uttered in a situation in which a person has bought a second-hand car which turns out to be of low quality
- an example of potentially lacunary unit of complex nature
- originally functioning on the Internet
- over time, used in the informal variety of the Polish language, also out of the Internet, for instance, in media or everyday conversations

Artefacts: *Niemiec płakał jak sprzedawał*

Linguo-cultural specificity

- Internet-born unit → neophraseme
- Sentence-like structure, useful from a pragmatic perspective
- Multimodality as an important component of the unit use
- Creativity: modifications on the linguistic plane and originality in terms of choosing visual contents
- Interaction
- Intertextuality
- Cultural-embeddment: shared knowledge, stereotypes and widespread beliefs

Stereotypes, beliefs, observations

- Poles as persons who are not well-off and who would like to buy a second hand car and the dealer who is usually the importer tries to talk them into purchasing an old car.
- Germany as a producer of good cars
- Germans as people who take good care of their cars
- Poles as a nation that is poorer than Germans
- Relation between the dealer of second-hand cars and the customer: the former tries to make a profit, using the naivity of the latter

Multimodality: A German was crying while selling…

Creativity: A German was crying while was selling a Honda to you.

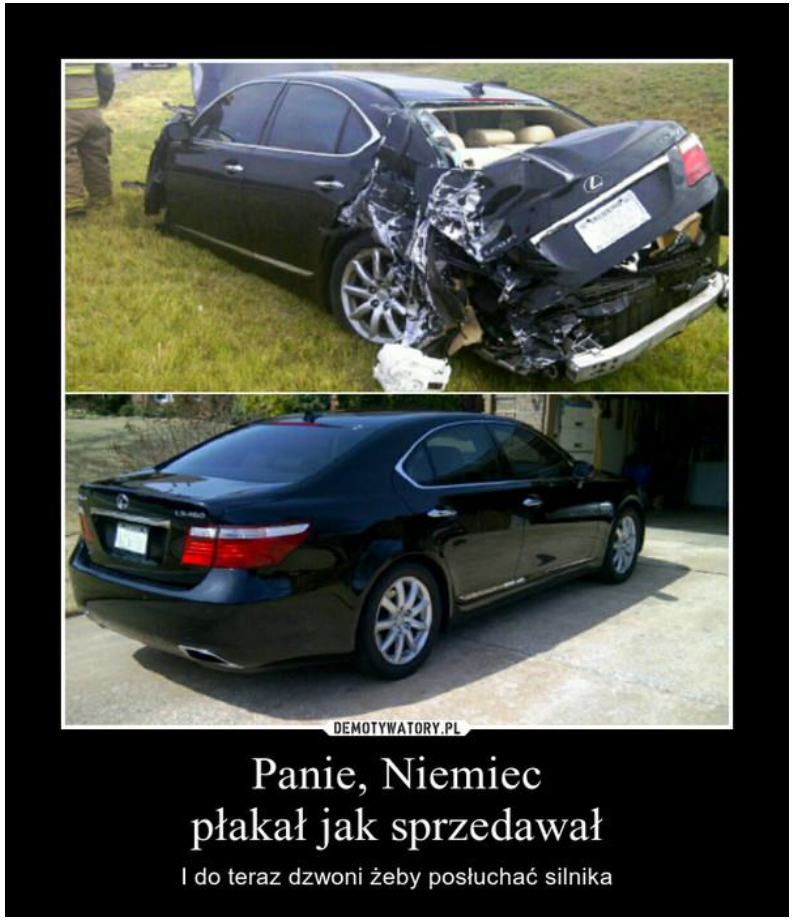
Selling an Opel. A German had kept it under the blanket

For sale. Almost brand new, never crashed. A German was crying while seling it, drove it only to church.

Multimodality: A German was crying while selling (it)

Interaction & Dialogicity: - A German was crying while selling, sir. – Well, for joy, I guess.

Ludic function: A German was crying while selling it, sir. And up to now, he has kept phoning to listen the engine.

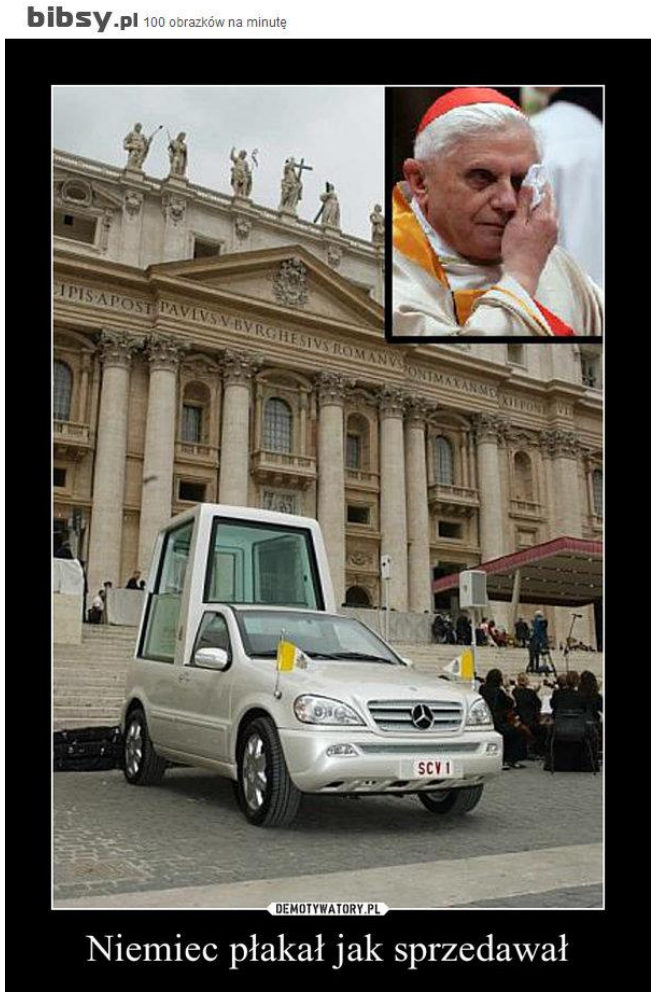


Intetextuality & shared knowledge: Siiiiiiiiiiir, a German was crying while selling. A Pole can.

Why was a German crying while selling a Golf. Because a Pole can afford it, and the German can’t.

A German was crying while selling it.

A German was crying while selling [it].

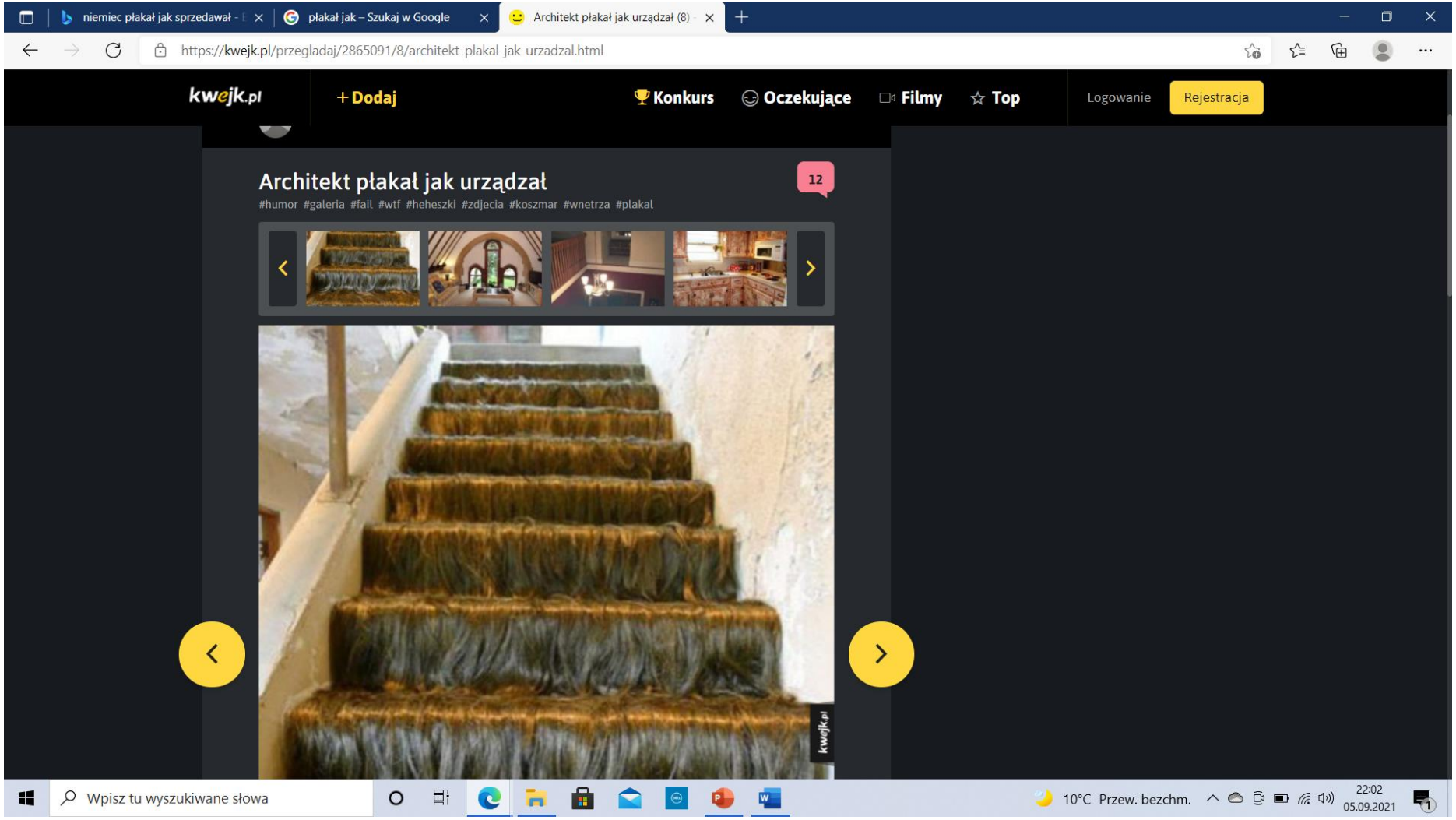


A German was crying while selling [it].

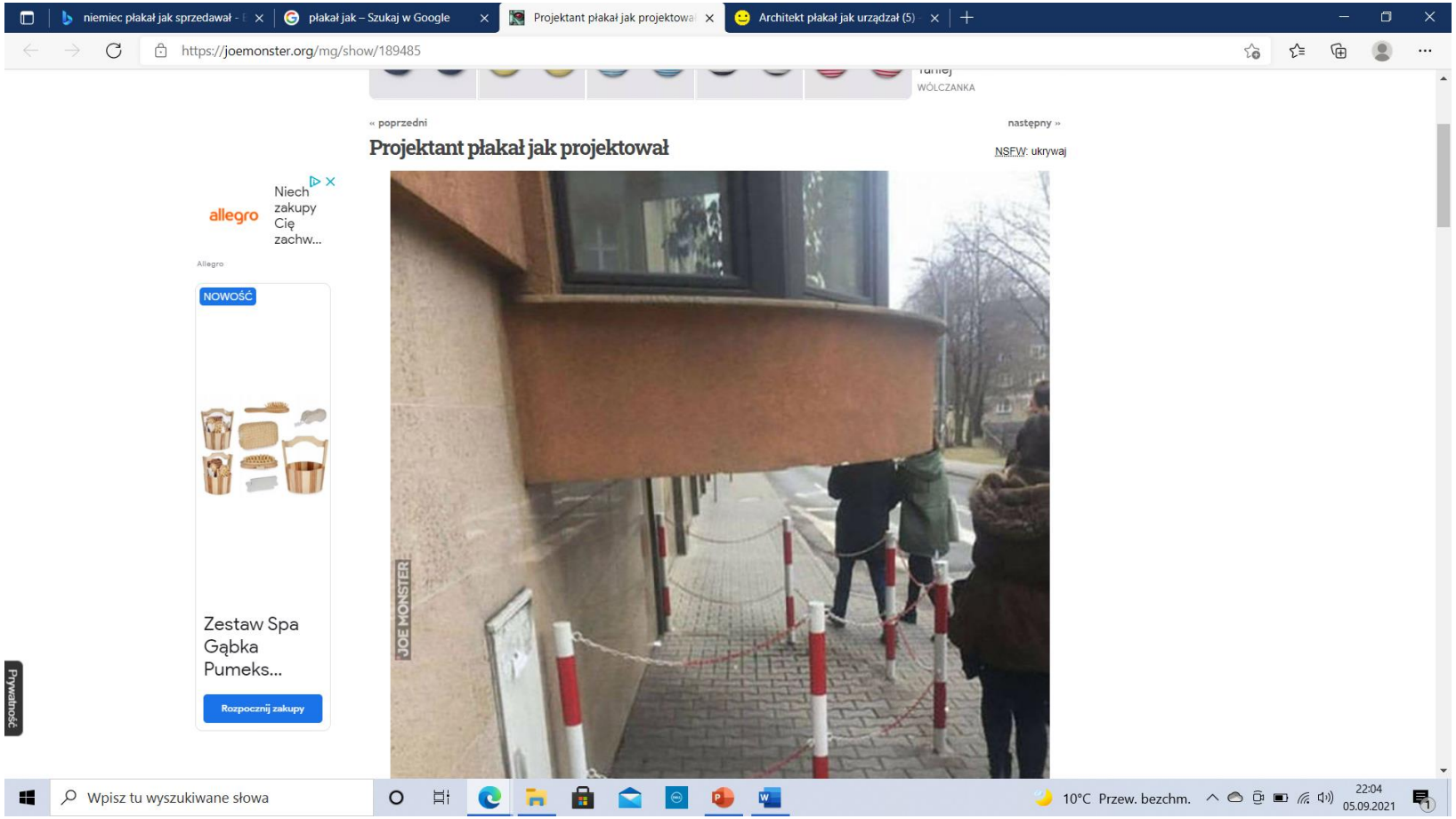
A German was crying while selling [it] and the steering wheel clean since he was wearing gloves.

A German was crying while selling [it], and hookers were clapping when I was entering the country.

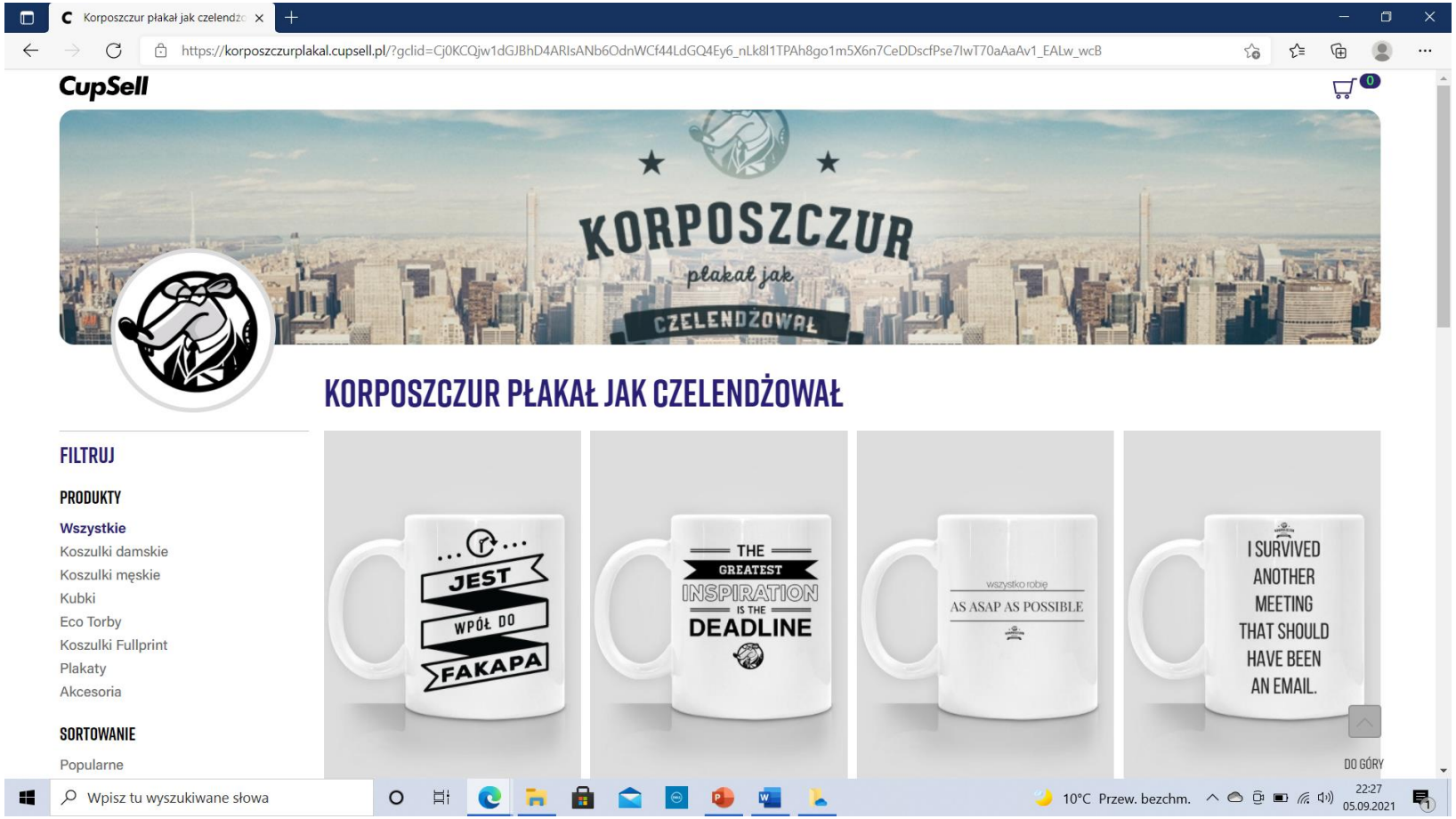
An Architect was crying while desigining it.



A designer was crying while desigining [it].

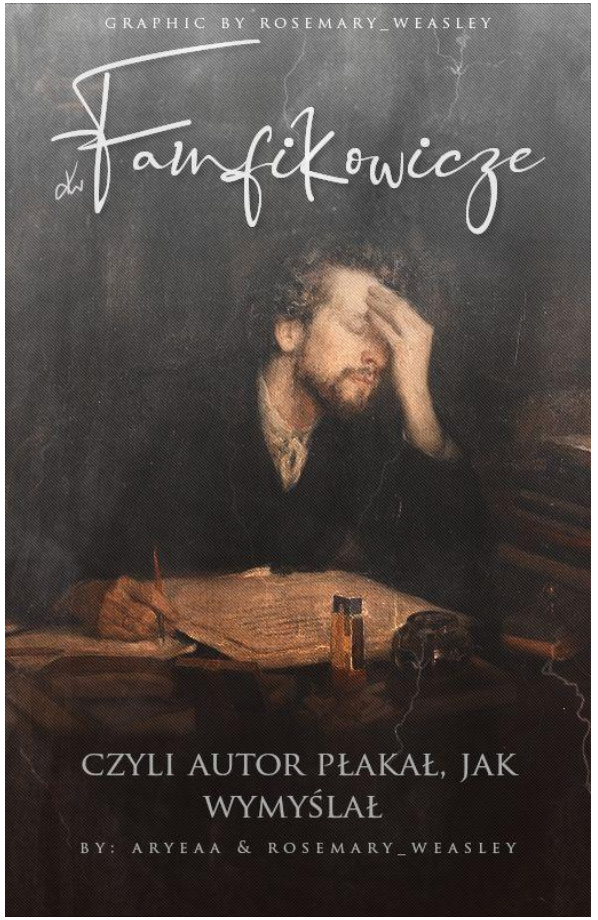


A corpo rat was crying while challenging.



A graphic designer was crying while desigining [it].

Fanfiction, i.e. an author was crying while he was inventing it.



A copywriter was crying while he was writing.
A client was crying while reading.

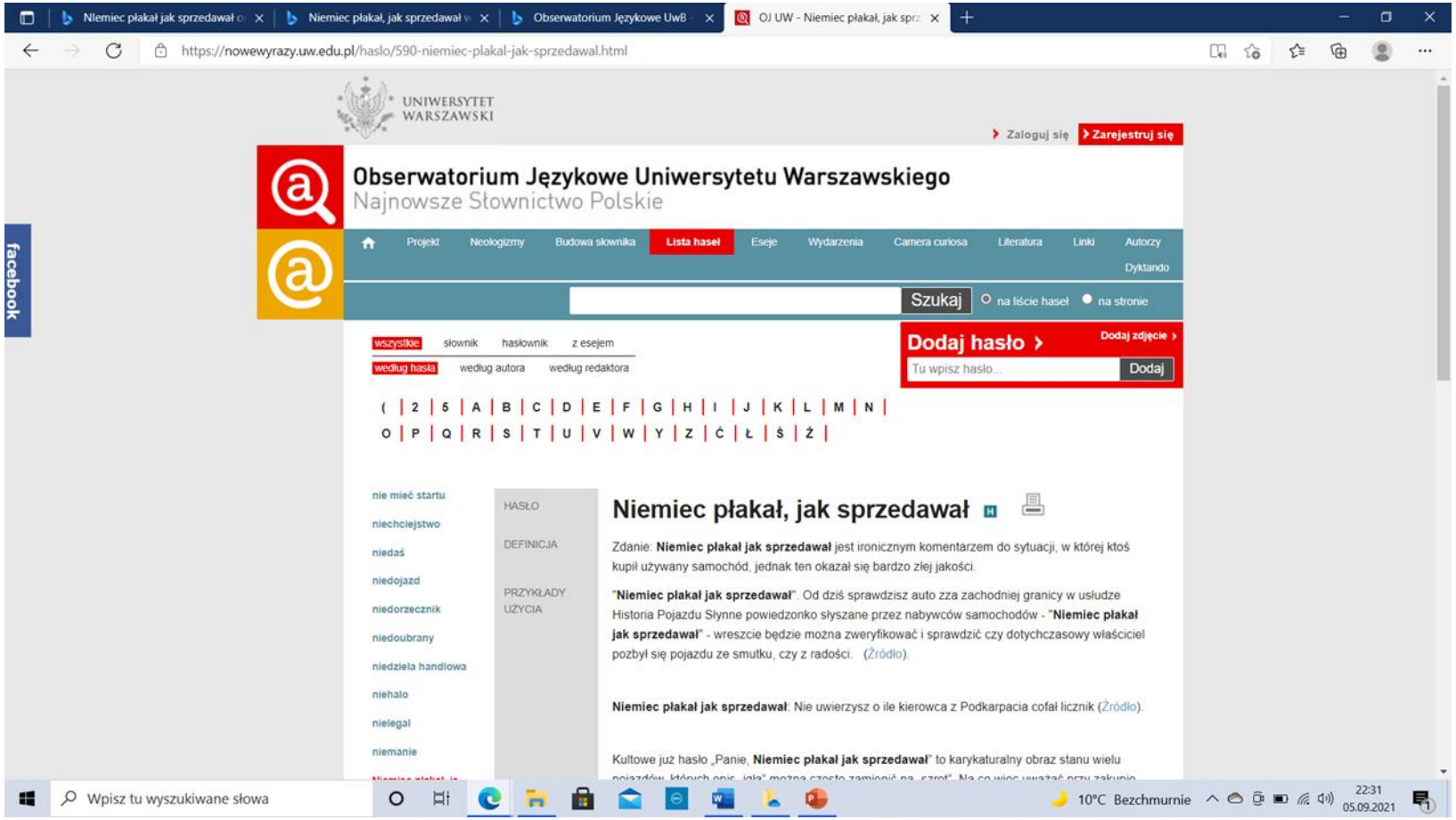
A Frenchman was crying while he was selling it so that he has not eaten frogs for a month.

Polish strawberries! Only 20 PLN for a kilo! Madam, the Spaniard was crying while selling them.

Salary… A Pole was crying while he was drinking it throgh.

A German was crying while he was giving [them] back.

The Language Observatory of the University of Warsaw



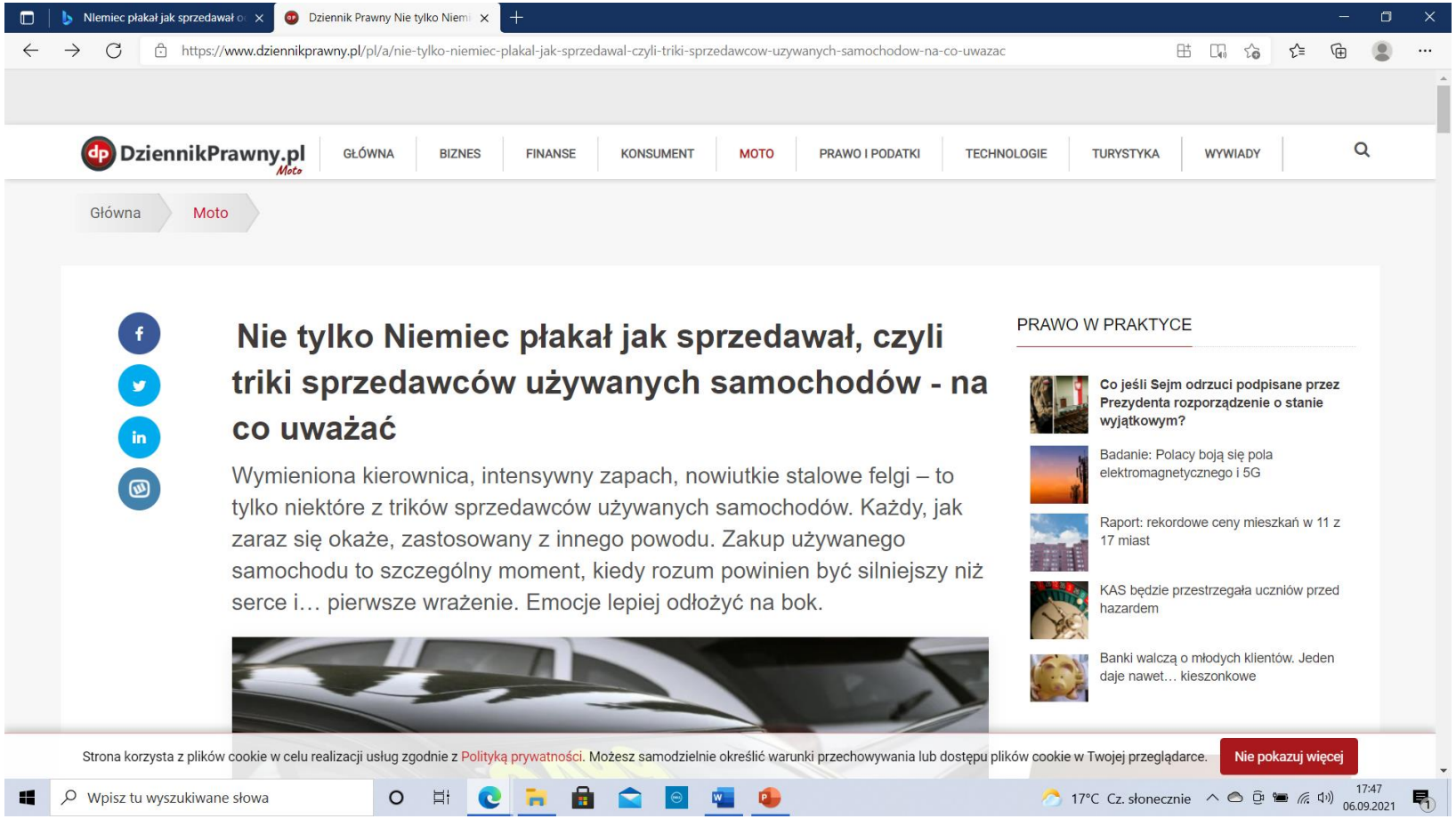
Systematic equivalence

- Niemiec płakał, jak sprzedawał – a phrase used a situation in which a person has bought a second-hand car which turns out to be of low quality
- Informal, ironic, humorous
- Based on the belief that many Poles buy second-hand cars from Germans, because they cannot afford brand new ones, and car dealers used a variety of arguments to persuade them into buying the old ones. It is also motivated by the image of good quality German cars and the observation that Germans take care of their vehicles.

Examples

- "Panie, Niemiec płakał jak sprzedawał", "Tym to i do ślubu nie wstyd zajechać", czy "Poprzedni właściciel tylko w niedziele do kościoła odpalał" - to klasyki padające z ust handlarzy. Ci, którzy mieli już styczność z kupowaniem samochodu doskonale znają słynne teksty.
- „Sir, a German was crying while selling it”, „It’s not a shame to drive it to the wedding” or „The previous owner drove only to church on Sunday” – classic arguments used by car dealers. Those, who have has some experience in buying a car know such phrases too well.

Not only the German was selling while selling, i.e. second-hand car dealers' tricks – what to pay attention to



A Chinese was crying while selling [it].

A German was phoning about buying it back.

Additional information

- Mirek/Mietek/Janusz (handlarz)
- Niemiecka chemia
- Niemiecka jakość/solidność
- Niemiec to robił etc.

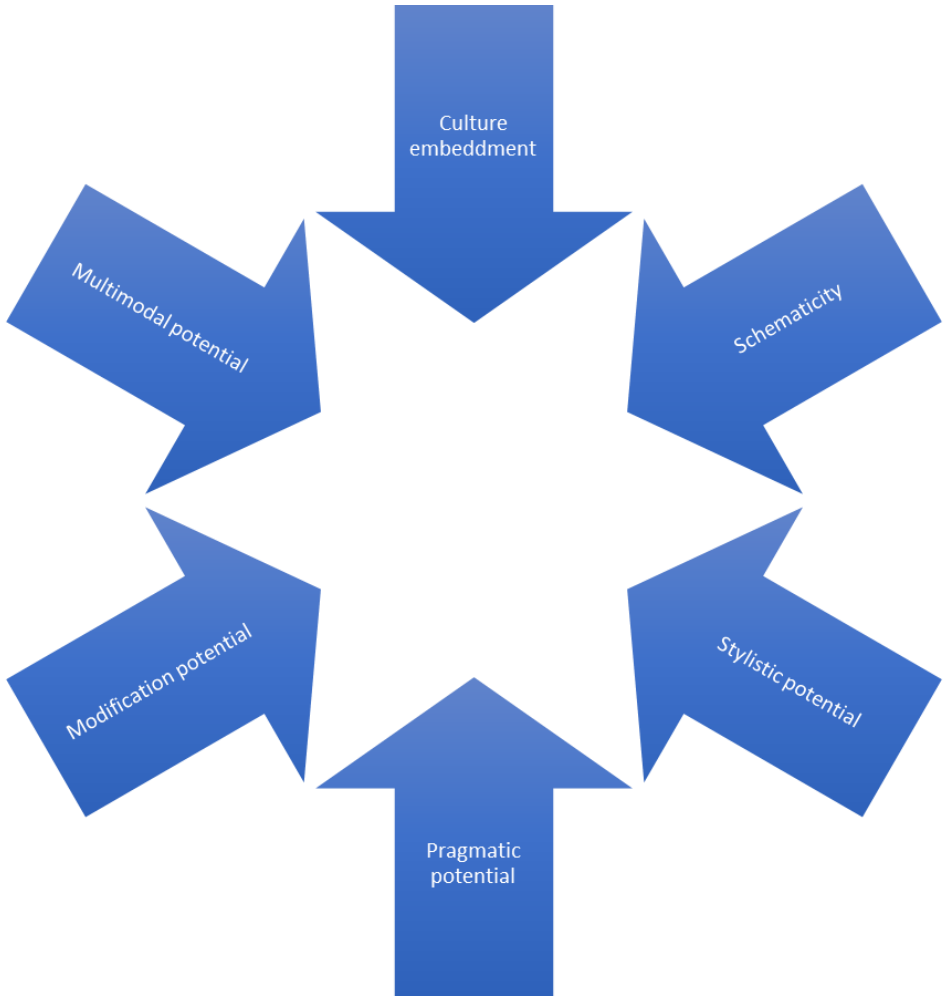
Phraseological pattern

- _____ płakał, jak _____ *ironic, humorous*
- A person was doing sth
- Common: nationalities, jobs

- Low quality
- Poor results
- Feeling sorry about parting with sth

- Everyday language, Internet communication, journalese, media language

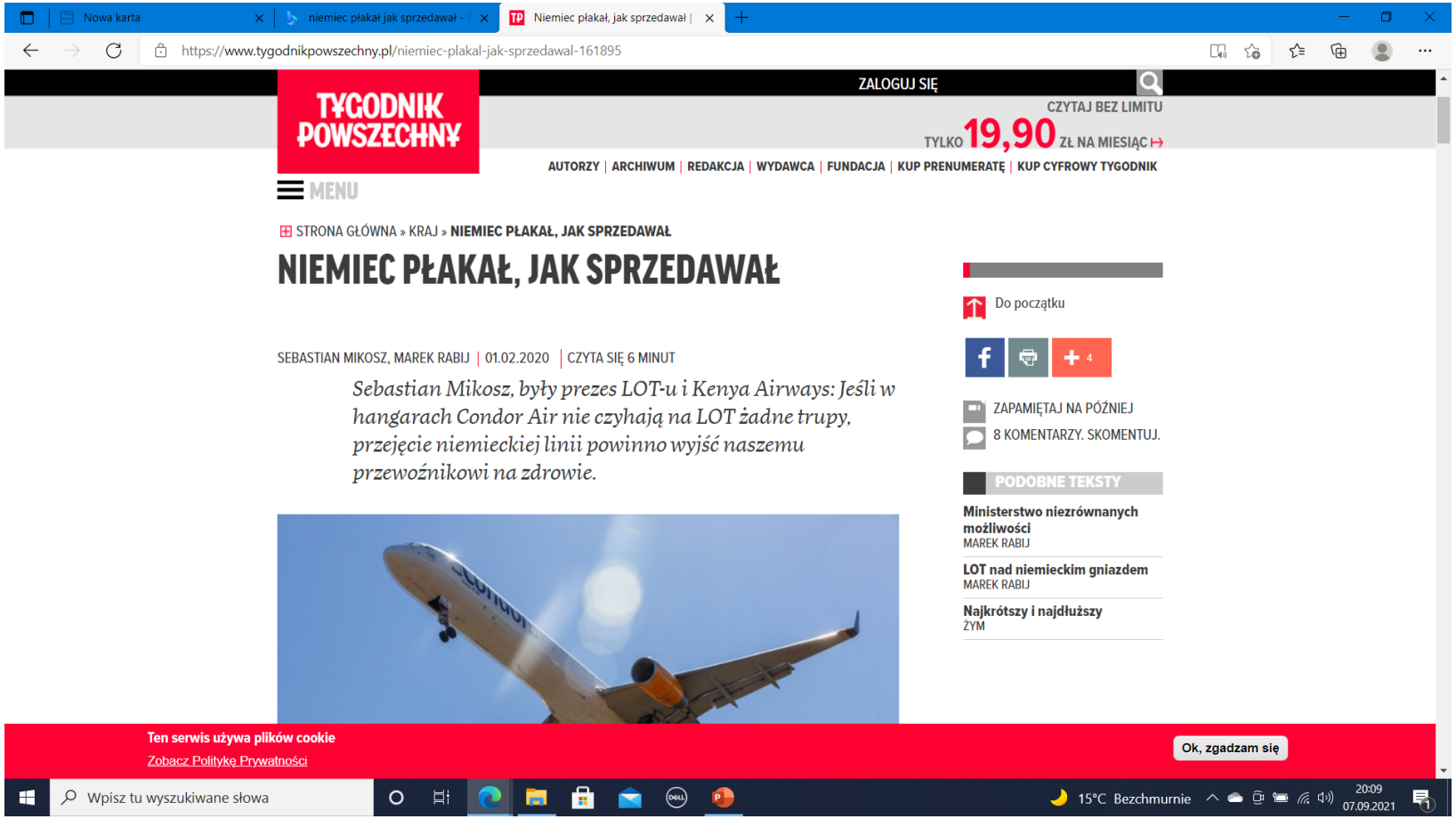
Translation & Phraseodidactis



Translational dominant

- Humour
- Irony
- Novelty
- Cultural reference
- Slogan-like speech

Compensation



Conclusions

- The phraseme *Niemiec płakał, jak sprzedawał* as an example of culture embedded unit with great modification and multimodal potential.
- The units has developed its semantic and functional potential, filling in a stylistic and pragmatic gap.
- Apart from linguistic specificity, its intextual use and multimodal potential is an important property from a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspective.
- As a lacunary unit, it requires an extended description in bilingual lexicography and special attention in the sphere of translation and phraseodidactics.

Thank you very much!