

# **AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION STRATEGY OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN “ONWARD” MOVIE SUBTITLE**

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**Abstract:** *From the difficulty and necessity to mastering English as it is almost useful in every life aspect nowadays, the writer decides to conduct this study to examines the translation strategy of idiomatic expressions in Onward movie subtitles. It is a descriptive qualitative method one, aiming to find out the types of idiomatic expressions and the strategy employed to translate it. The two objectives are answered by applying Adelnia and Dastjerdi’s (2011) theory and Baker’s (2011) theory consecutively. The findings shows that colloquialism is the most frequent form of idiomatic expression that appears, with 150 (41,6%) total findings. Phrasal verbs come close in the second place with 145 (40,2%) total findings, Slang comes in third place with 64 (17,7%) total findings. Meanwhile, proverbs and allusions tied for last place, with only one finding for each of them. In total, the subtitle of Onward movie contains 361 idiomatic expressions. The second research question is about how the idiomatic expressions in Onward movie’s subtitles are translated. The results identify 212 (57,9%) occurrences of paraphrase as the strategy used to interpret the idiomatic expressions present in the movie, making it the most commonly used strategy. Contrary to this, the translator never uses borrowing from the source language or the omission of a play on idioms as their strategy to translate idiomatic expressions in the movie. The differences in culture of both languages may be the biggest factor of why the translator chooses to use paraphrasing to translate the idiomatic expressions in Onward movie subtitles.*

**Key Words:** *Translation Strategy, Idioms, Movie.*

# ANALISIS MENGENAI STRATEGI TERJEMAHAN EKSPRESI IDIOMATIK DALAM SUBTITLE FILM “ONWARD”

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**Abstrak:** Menilai dari kesulitan dan pentingnya penguasaan Bahasa Inggris yang terlihat semakin dibutuhkan dalam hampir setiap aspek kehidupan, penulis memutuskan untuk mengadakan penelitian ini untuk mengkaji tentang strategi terjemahan ekspresi idiomatik yang terdapat dalam *subtitle* film *Onward*. Penulisannya menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, bertujuan untuk menemukan jenis dari ekspresi idiomatik dan strategi yang digunakan untuk menerjemahkannya. Kedua objektif dijawab dengan mengaplikasikan teori milik Adelnia and Dastjerdi (2011) dan Baker (2011) secara berurutan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa “*colloquialism*” adalah bentuk ekspresi idiomatik yang paling sering muncul dengan total 150 (41,6%) penemuan. “*phrasal Verb*” berjarak dekat di urutan kedua dengan total temuan 145 (40,2%), “*slang*” berada di urutan ketiga dengan 64 (17,7%) total temuan. Sedangkan “*proverbs*” dan “*allusions*” seri di urutan terakhir dengan hanya satu penemuan untuk masing-masingnya. Totalnya, subtitle dari film *Onward* menghasilkan 361 total penemuan ekspresi idiomatik. Objektif kedua yaitu mengenai bagaimana ekspresi idiomatik dalam *subtitle* film *Onward* tersebut diterjemahkan. Hasilnya mengidentifikasi 212 (57,9%) kemunculan “*paraphrase*” sebagai strategi yang digunakan untuk menginterpretasikan ekspresi idiomatik yang ada dalam film, menjadikannya strategi yang paling umum digunakan. Bertentangan dengan ini, penerjemah tidak pernah menggunakan “*borrowing from the source language*” atau “*omission of a play*” sebagai strategi mereka dalam menerjemahkan ekspresi idiomatik dalam film. Perbedaan budaya dari kedua bahasa kemungkinan adalah faktor terbesar mengapa penerjemah memilih menggunakan metode “*paraphrase*” dalam menerjemahkan ekspresi idiomatik pada *subtitle* film *Onward*.

**Kata Kunci:** Strategi Terjemahan, Idiom, Film.

## INTRODUCTION

Humans rely on verbal exchanges for nearly every aspect of their existence, and language is the primary medium through which people communicate. According to statistics published by Babble Magazine (2021), 1.35 billion people are able to communicate in English, with 360 million having English as their native tongue. Translation is the act of conveying what is meant of the source language into the target language, and ensuring the information from the source language remains unaltered. To produce a decent translation, one must develop a number of skills, including linguistic comprehension of both source and target languages, writing skills, grammatical usage, a good sense of semantic analysis, and sociocultural awareness.

The most important details in this text are that idioms are a group of fixed words or combinations of words with meaning that cannot be translated word for word, and that a translator must be extra careful in identifying and translating the idioms since an English idiomatic expression usually has more than one meaning when translated into Indonesian. Measuring the importance and necessity for non-native speaker to learn more about idiomatic expressions in a comfortable way, movie was chosen as the object since it was one of the media that serves as a source of idioms.

Movies are an excellent tool for learning and improving language skills, as they are accurate representations of real-life situations. To complete this research, the researcher will use the original subtitle (English) and compare it with the Indonesian subtitle. Subtitles are words that emerge at the bottom part of the screen and translate what is said in a movie into a foreign language. Without understandable subtitles, viewers will be confused and possibly misinterpreted what was said in the movie they are watching.

Thus, the researcher specifically chose *Onward* Movie because it is accessible to a general population and contains a sufficient quantity of idiomatic expressions to be studied more deeply. The writer then decided to make an attempt on this research entitled “An Analysis of Translation Strategy of Idiomatic Expressions in *Onward* Movie”.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher employs qualitative research and descriptive statistics to conduct the study. Ary (2010: 424) specifies that the focus of the qualitative researcher is on textual or visual data rather than numerical or statistical information. Descriptive method is used to describe the findings of the research which were the types of idioms along with the strategies used in translating idiomatic expressions that are found in *Onward* movie subtitles. In this research, the researcher collects, classifies, analyzes the data, and at last, draws a conclusion based on the data acquired. However, even though this research is primarily qualitative research, quantification is also needed to support the qualitative findings. In this research, the researcher also includes quantification in the forms of tables with percentages for each type and strategy used to translate idiomatic terms in *Onward* movie subtitles, demonstrating the quantitative results of the study.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Types of Idiomatic Expressions

This section explains the answer to the first objective, which is about the different types of idioms according to Adelnia and Dastjerdi's (2011) theory, which divides idioms into five categories: slang, colloquialism, allusions, proverbs, and phrasal verbs along with its example.

#### a. Colloquialism

Colloquialism is an expression of informal speech or writing (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 880). In addition, Barzegar (2008) adds that colloquialism is a more formal way of speaking than slang, and it varies from formal regular speech in pronunciation, choice of words, and sentence arrangement.

Excerpt 1 (00:06:44,480 → 00:06:46,440)

Source Language: I'm just **gonna** get some food **on the way** to school.

Target Language: Aku **akan** cari makanan **di perjalanan** ke sekolah

In excerpt 1 above, Ian was about to go to school but stopped half way when Barley suddenly appeared in front of him. In the data above, according to online dictionary thefreedictionary.com, "Gonna" is the contraction of *going to*, a casual way to say the verb in spoken English. Meanwhile, "on the way" means moving toward a place. The idiom is usually used in informal speech or writing.

#### b. Proverbs

A proverb is a shortcut to making the words we speak sound more concrete and understandable since it is an expression that has been popularly used and passed down for generations (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 880). Oftentimes, proverbs can also reflect the cultural values of a certain nation, making them hard to translate into another language.

Excerpt 2 (00:31:03,220 → 00:31:06,240)

Source Language: filled with a motley horde **willing to risk life and limb**

Target Language: dipenuhi gerombolan yang **siap pertaruhkan nyawa**

The excerpt above is a debating conversation that happened between the Manticore and Ian where they tried to reach an agreement for the Manticore to lend them the map. The Manticore, as the owner of the map, initially did not agree to the idea of lending the dangerous map to anyone, especially to two random kids at that. But after some talk and debate, she finally remembered who she was and started questioning what she became. According to online dictionary thefreedictionary.com, the phrase "willing to risk life and limb" means to do something that might cause severe injury or death which to put it simply can also mean ready to put yourself in physical danger to the point of death.

#### c. Slang

Slang is the use of terms and expressions that are not regarded to be a part of accepted language usage. Frequently used to convey inappropriate or somehow taboo words (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 880).

Excerpt 3 (00:03:56,800 → 00:03:58,800)

Source Language: You said they seem pretty **rockin'**

Target Language: Katamu mereka **asyik**.

Excerpt 4 is a dialogue between Ian and his mom. Before Ian leaves for school, his mother is overjoyed at the prospect of throwing him a birthday party. She suggests that Ian invite his friends from science class by attempting to imitate the way Ian talks about his friends. According to online dictionary thefreedictionary.com, the word “rockin’” means to be excellent or awesome, the sort of compliment to give to someone who’s outstandingly cool. Usually used in daily conversation, informal occasions.

#### d. Allusions

Allusion is defined as figurative language that incorporates a direct or indirect reference to a preexisting place, event, myth, work of literature, or piece of art. The description it makes usually does not appear to be in detail since the writer expects the reader to have enough knowledge to spot it (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 880).

Excerpt 4 (01:30:21,240 → 01:30:26,720)

Source Language: Whoa! Watch it! **Bullseye!**

Target Language: Awas! **Tepat!**

The above excerpt was coming from the sprite that flies around the Manticore’s tavern having fun playing darts with the likes of them. According to Cambridge online dictionary, bullseye is the circular center of the object aimed at in games such as darts or archery. People who scream bullseye happily when hitting an object must only mean they have successfully hit whatever object they aimed for right in the center precisely and not the actual bull’s eye.

#### e. Phrasal Verbs

A phrasal verb is a mixture of a verb and a preposition, or adverb, or both adverb and preposition, with distinct meanings from the words it is composed of (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 880).

Excerpt 5 (00:03:32,120 → 00:03:34,760)

Source Language: Don’t **wipe off** my kisses

Target Language: Jangan **hapus** ciuman ibu

The finding above is considered as a phrasal verb because it is a combination of the verb “Wipe” and an adverb “Off”. The situation during the dialog was when Ian’s mom gave him a motherly kiss first thing in the morning along with a birthday greeting for Ian, the birthday boy. According to online dictionary thefreedictionary.com, “Wipe off” means to clean something on the surface by rubbing it.

## 2. Strategy of Translating Idiomatic Expressions

After identifying the different kinds of idiomatic expressions found in the subtitles of *Onward* movie, Baker's (2011) theory is applied to determine the approach taken in translating those idioms, the six types are: paraphrase, borrowing the source language, using an idiom of similar meaning and form, an idiom of

similar meaning but dissimilar form, omission of a play on idiom, and omission of an entire idiom.

**a. Paraphrase**

Whenever the translator gets stuck trying to locate an exact match in the target language or has different stylistic preferences, they may employ this strategy (Baker, 2011). Consequently, this mostly gives us the idiom's meaning from the source language rather than the actual idiom itself, an unavoidable sacrifice to the artistic form in order to keep the information from alternating. The findings show that the strategy of translating idiomatic expressions by paraphrasing is discovered in all categories of idiomatic expressions found in *Onward* movie.

Excerpt 6 (00:05:31,240 → 00:05:32,680)

Source Language: Rest your haunches **for a minute**

Target Language: Istirahatlah **sebentar**

The situation in the dialog above was when a police officer paid Ian's house a visit after a series of public facility destruction caused by Barley were asked to sit and wait in the living room. "For a Minute" in the dialog above does not necessarily mean a whole 60 seconds but refers to an unspecified short period of time. The translator has chosen the closest word in the target language, if the translator has translated it with literal translation, it will be "untuk satu menit" which does not sound natural and rather strange in the given context.

**b. Omission of Entire Idiom**

Some idioms may be left out of the translated text for stylistic or linguistic reasons, or because there is no direct translation into the target language. If leaving something out won't change the meaning of the translated text, this tactic can be employed.

Excerpt 7 (00:16:31,160 → 00:16:33,440)

Source Language: **Hold on**, your dad was an accountant

Target Language: Ayahmu seorang akuntan

In the excerpt 12, the phrasal verb "Hold on" is entirely omitted from the translated text. The text can actually be translated as *tunggu dulu* in the target text, but the translator chooses not to since it does not make significant change for the whole sentence even if it were to be omitted.

**c. Similar Form and Meaning**

This strategy simply converts an idiom from the source language to the intended language. Both idioms must have the same interpretation and lexical item.

Excerpt 8 (00:23:37,960 → 00:23:41,120)

Source Language: I am **gonna** meet my **dad**.

Target Language: Aku **akan** bertemu **ayahku**.

The finding above shows that according to online dictionary [thefreedictionary.com](http://thefreedictionary.com), "Gonna" is the contraction of *going to*. And "Dad" is a colloquial version of the word father. Both the words are translated by using similar form and meaning strategy since the idioms in both the source

language and the target language represent the same meaning and there is no change in its form of lexical items.

#### **d. Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form**

The number of total findings that only reach 0.8% demonstrates how infrequently the translator of the *Onward* movie uses this strategy. To apply this strategy, the translator needs to use different lexical items in the target language to express more or less the same idea as the original text (Baker, 2011).

Excerpt 10 (00:13:42,360 → 00:13:44,240)

Source Language: **I'll bet good money** you can't get it to work.

Target Language: **Taruhan** kau takkan bisa membuatnya berfungsi.

The phrase "I'll bet good money" on the excerpt 10 above can mean you're very confident about something to the point you would lay your money to prove your word. The translator used the term "taruhan" as the translation version in the target language which has the same meaning but different lexical items.

Compared to the relevant previous study done by other scholars, some similarities were found. Maulida (2019) and Dian (2017)'s results study also shows that phrasal verbs is the highest in percentage among the other types. Meanwhile for the second objective, Rosa (2017) and Fikriya (2018)'s findings reveal that paraphrase is the most used strategies. This can be concluded as the same challenges translators had to face when reproducing text in Indonesia. There are idioms in the form of phrasal verbs in English, but not in Indonesia. This phenomenon forces the translator to use paraphrase as the method for translating these words to Indonesia, as it is nearly impossible to find an exact match for the entire sentence's meaning without sacrificing the word's naturalness

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

Out of all five types of idiomatic expressions defined by Adelnia and Dastjerdi (2011), all those five types can be found in the *Onward* movie. With 361 total findings of idiomatic expressions, 150 are colloquialism, 145 are phrasal verb, 64 are slangs. Meanwhile, the data for allusions and proverbs are only one for each of them. Second objective, which is about the strategies used to translate the idiomatic expressions, resulted in paraphrase as the highest percentage of strategy that was used by the translator with 212 total findings. Using idioms of similar meaning and form took the second place with 121 total findings, followed by omission of the entire idioms with 30 total findings, and lastly using idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form with only 3 total findings. Borrowing from the source language or the omission of a play on idioms were never used by the translator in doing their job to translate the idiomatic expressions found in *Onward* movie subtitles.

## Recommendation

The researcher plans to suggest the following recommendation based on the findings of this study. By reading this journal, the students are expected to learn many types of idioms and its context in order to improve their English skills. Sensitivity and ability to detect an idiom from normal phrase can only be improved when you familiarize yourself with it. Using media like a movie or a novel to engage the learner's interest can help create an enjoyable, upbeat environment to study. Translators are expected to expand their knowledge in languages and cultures of both the source and target languages. Some languages are rich with cultures and contexts that somehow hinder their true meanings. Thus, it is important for translators to be as knowledgeable as possible, to always refer to the right context, and to always check the dictionary. And lastly, for future researchers, this study can be used as a reference. It will be wonderful for them to conduct research that covers a broader scope with unidentified linguistic cases that may not have been known yet and make it useful not only for scholars but also for people in general.

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