THE COMPARISON OF STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATING IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN A FANSUB AND THE OFFICIAL SUBTITLE OF GAME NIGHT MOVIE (2018)

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ABSTRACT

Characters in a movie often use idioms in various situations to express certain ideas. However, translating idioms can be challenging for translators making the movie subtitle. This descriptive-qualitative research aims to examine the types of idioms that appear in Game Night movie (2018) and compare the strategies used in the fansub and the official subtitle of the movie in translating idiomatic expressions. The data analyzed in this research consist of all the idioms that appear in the movie and their Indonesian translations. The results of this study show that English phrasal compounds constitute the most frequently used type of idiom. Meanwhile, the most used translation strategy in both the fansub and the official subtitle is the translation by paraphrase strategy. Despite the application of the same strategy, there are still some differences in the translations of the same idioms between the two subtitles. Meanwhile, other translation strategies are used in different frequencies. Overall, the study finds the official subtitle to be more communicative than the fansub translation.

KEYWORDS: Idiom, Translation Strategies, Fansub, Official Subtitle, Game Night.

INTRODUCTION

Idiomatic expressions are groups of words that have figurative or hidden meanings behind them. They are usually found in several literary works, such as anthologies, prose, etc. However, idiomatic expressions can also be found in a movie. In the movie, the characters of the movie often use idioms in various situations to express ideas. However, translating idiomatic expressions is challenging for translators. Before translating, the translators have to know the meaning of the idioms in the source language first. Moreover, idioms are culture-bound. They contain unique features of the language and culture (Zhang, 2009). Thus, they affect the subtitling process of a movie as well. The translators have to use the appropriate strategy to translate the idioms in the movie so that the meaning of the idioms in the Source Language (SL) can be transferred into the Target Language (TL) as a whole.

Nowadays, a new practice of subtitling which is well-known as fansubbing has become popular. Initially, a fansub was known as a fan-produced subtitled version of Japanese animated shows (Cintas & Sanchez, 2006). However, today the term fansub also refers to any subtitle for any film or show that is translated by fans. Fansubbers typically produce their subtitles and release them on the internet for free download. Thus, fansubs can be regarded as
amateur or non-professional translations. Most fansubbers do not produce subtitles to get profit, but they do it to improve their skill in translation and for the satisfaction of others and themselves (Francis et al., 2013). Different from a fansub, the official subtitle of a movie is produced for a commercial need. An official subtitle is the one that can be found on theatrical movies, DVDs, or legal streaming services like Netflix. Even though nowadays people can create a subtitle and upload it on a specific platform on the internet, they also have to pay attention to their translation ability, including their ability to recognize and translate idiomatic expressions because some idioms may have no direct equivalents. In fact, there is still found in the fansub that the meaning of the idioms in the SL is often not transferred well to the TL, so it causes confusion to the audience. As a result, the audience loses the real meaning of the whole sentences uttered by the characters in the movie. Therefore, an understanding of idioms translation is important for subtitles producers, including the fansubbers.

Several studies on the translation of idiomatic expressions have been conducted albeit with different focuses. Some studies (Buditama, 2018; Novianna, 2018; Tyasrinestu & Ardi, 2020) focus on finding the types of idiomatic expressions and the translation strategies used in the movie subtitle to translate the idioms. Those studies mostly use Baker’s (1992) theory and find that the most frequent translation strategy used to translate idiomatic expressions is translation by paraphrase. Some of the studies (Buditama, 2018; Tyasrinestu & Ardi, 2020) also analyze the types of idioms using Hockett’s (1958) theory. The studies find English phrasal compounds to be the type of idioms that mostly appear in the movie. Similar to the current study, the previous studies above analyze the translation of idiomatic expressions. However, different from the current study, the previous studies focus on one version of subtitle only, commonly the official subtitle. In fact, studies that analyze and compare the official subtitle and the fansub translation of a movie at the same time are still scarce. Therefore, the difference between the translation strategies used in a fansub and the official subtitle of a movie in conveying the message of idiomatic expressions is worth to be analyzed.

This study focuses on analyzing the types of idioms that appear in Game Night (2018) movie and the strategies that are used in the fansub and the official subtitle of the movie to translate those idioms. Game Night (2018) is an American comedy-mystery movie written by Mark Pereza. It was directed by John Francis Daley and Jonathan Goldstein, and it was released in February 2018. This movie is about a group of friends who often meet for playing games at night. Unfortunately, the game is getting real when one of them is getting kidnapped, and they have to be involved in a real-life mystery. The movie is chosen for this study because of the frequent uses of idiomatic expressions in the conversations between the characters. The use of idioms may reflect the casual relationship between the characters. Also, the types of idioms used by the characters sometimes vary, which seems to reflect their different occupational backgrounds. Furthermore, there are unique translations found both in the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie that makes it interesting to be analyzed. Therefore, this research particularly aims at answering the following questions:

1. What are the types of idioms that appear in Game Night movie?
2. What are the strategies used by the translator to translate the idiomatic expressions in both fansub and official subtitle translation of Game Night movie?

To answer these questions, the study analyzes the data using a descriptive qualitative
method. The study is structured as follows. First, the researcher collects and classifies the data. Then the researcher presents the findings and results of the types of idioms that appear in the movie. Next, the researcher explains the translation strategies that are used in the fansub and the official subtitle of the movie and compares the strategies and the meaning transferred. After the results are given, the researcher completes this study by giving conclusions and suggestions for further research.

Several theories can be used to analyze idiomatic expressions in a movie. However, this research uses a theory that was proposed by Hockett’s (1958) to analyze the types of idioms in Game Night movie and a theory by Baker (2018) to analyze the translation strategies used in the two subtitles to translate the idioms.

1. Types of Idioms

There are several theories that discuss the types of idioms. However, the researcher uses the theory proposed by Hockett (1958). According to Hockett (1958), idioms can be classified into six sub-classes, which are substitutes, proper names, abbreviation, English phrasal compounds, figures of speech, and slang.

1.1 Substitutes

According to Hockett (1958), substitutes are divided into two kinds, which are anaphoric substitutes and numbers. “Anaphoric substitutes are almost by definition forms which turn up in each new context with new idiomatic value” (Hockett, 1958). The sentence “He brought a new friend” is the example. The readers do not exactly know what the word “he” in the sentences refers to, whether it is a human, an animal, or even a ship, until further notice. On the other hand, numbers show a similar variant of a certain reference (Hockett, 1958). The example is the sentence “Hello, 911”. There is no further explanation of “911”, but it actually refers to the American emergency telephone number. The same idea of an emergency service number might be represented by different numbers in different cultures, such as “112” for British and Indonesian contexts.

1.2 Proper Names

Hockett (1958) has stated that naming is a certain recurrent idiom-creating event. Naming can be used for people, places, individual animals, spirits, or vehicles. Proper name is a symbol that indicates an entity of which there is only one. The example is a sentence “She went to the Beauty Box to buy new makeup products”. The “Beauty Box” here is a proper name. Translators cannot translate it as “a box containing beauty goods” and cannot literally translate it into “kotak kecantikan” in Indonesian because it is the name of a place. The translation should preserve the proper name “Beauty Box” as well.
1.3 Abbreviation

Abbreviation is the use of a part for a whole (Hockett, 1958, p. 313). There are several arrangements of abbreviative idiom formation in English, which are replacing a long word by its initial, stressed, or syllable. For instance, the word “CEO” is the abbreviation of “Chief Executive Officer”. Another example is the word “gents”. It is the abbreviation of the word “gentlemen”. “CEO” indicates the initials of the words, while “gents” indicates the stressed syllable of the word “gentlemen”.

1.4 English Phrasal Compounds

Phrasal compounds can be divided into compound verbs, compound nouns, and compound adjectives. Compound verbs can be formed by combining a verb with a preposition, with an adverb, or with both. An example of a compound verb is “watch out”. Compound nouns can be formed from several combinations, which are verbs and nouns, nouns and nouns, adjectives and nouns, or prepositions and nouns, such as the word “headquarters”. Compound adjectives also come from multiple types of combinations, which are prepositions and adjectives, adjectives and adjectives, or nouns and adjectives. The example of a compound adjective is the word “well-behaved”.

1.5 Figures of Speech

Figures of speech can be found in prose, poetry, and everyday speech. Hockett (1958) has stated that figures of speech are related to idioms formation. An example of figure of speech is the sentence “I love you to the moon and back”. This sentence is uttered to express strong affection for the other. If someone says this sentence, s/he wants to show that her/his love is greater than the huge distances between the Earth and the moon.

1.6 Slang

Hockett (1958) has told that whenever slang word is found, its idiomatic nature is obvious. According to Holmes (1992), slang is a pattern of youth speech. It means that people can discover slang words in teenagers’ conversations around the world because slang words are widespread. An example of an English slang word is “sick”. “Sick” here is slang for the word cool, awesome, or the best.

2. Strategies to Translate Idioms

In translating idioms, some translators might experience several difficulties (Baker, 2018). Therefore, the translators have to choose the most suitable strategy to translate idiomatic expressions. Baker (2018:77) has proposed a theory on idioms translation strategies. He has been stated that there are six strategies to translate idioms.
2.1 Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form

The first strategy is used to translate the idioms in the SL by using idioms in the TL which conveys the same meaning. Moreover, the idioms in the TL must consist of equivalent lexical items (Baker, 2018:77). This kind of match can occasionally be accomplished. For example:

SL: My friend is a big head. He thinks that he can manage all the things
TL: Temanku besar kepala. Ia pikir ia bisa mengatur semua hal.
(My friend is a big head. He thinks that he can manage everything)

The idiom “a big head” means someone who is arrogant and thinks that s/he is very clever and knows everything. It can be translated into “besar kepala” in the TL because both of them have the same literal and figurative meanings and even the same structure.

2.2 Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar form

Baker (2018: 79) has provided another strategy because not all the idioms in the TL have the same lexical items as the idioms in the SL. Thus, this strategy requires the idioms in the TL which have similar meanings to the idioms in the SL but have dissimilar lexical items. For example:

SL: My life is hanging by a thread.
TL: Hidupku di ujung tanduk. (My life is on the tip of the horn)

The idiom “hanging by a thread” means “to be in a very dangerous situation or state”. It has the same meaning as the Indonesian idiom “di ujung tanduk” even though the form of both idioms is dissimilar. The SL idiom is in the form of a verb phrase while the TL idiom is a noun phrase.

2.3 Borrowing the Source Language Idioms

The strategy is associated with idioms that have a certain context that the original form of the idioms must not be changed. It is a common strategy in dealing with culture-specific items when it is not unusual for idioms to be borrowed in their original form in some contexts (Baker, 2018). For example:

SL: Let’s go to Out of This World.
TL: Ayo pergi ke Out of This World
(Let’s go to the Out of This World)

The idiom “out of this world” refers to a space gallery in the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester (UK). This idiom has the meaning “fantastic”, but it also has the
concrete meaning “from another galaxy” referring to what a visitor might see in there (Baker, 2018). The Indonesian translation above borrows the English idiom because it is a name of a place and has specific context, so it must be still in its original form.

2.4 Translation by Paraphrase

According to Baker (2018: 81), this strategy is the most common way of translating idioms when there are no idioms in the TL that have the same meaning as the idioms in the SL. It is also used when it looks unsuitable to use idioms in the TL because of language style preferences. For example:

SL: My mom asked me to try riding a motorcycle, but I had cold feet.  
TL: Ibuku memintaku untuk mencoba mengendarai motor, tapi aku takut.  
(My mom asked me to try riding a motorcycle, but I am afraid)

The idiom “cold feet” means “fear of doing something”. It does not have an equivalent or similar idiom in the TL. If it is translated literally, it becomes “kaki dingin”, which does not convey the real meaning of the idiom in the SL. Thus, it is paraphrased into the word “takut” so that the meaning of the word “cold feet” can be transferred well.

2.5 Translation by Omission of a Play on Idioms

According to Baker (2018:85), this strategy involves rendering only the literal meaning of an idiom in a context that allows for a concrete reading of an otherwise playful use of language. For example:

SL: Let’s crash a party in my neighbor’s house.  
TL: Ayo hancurkan pesta di rumah tetanggaku.  
(Let’s destroy a party in my neighbor’s house)

“Crash a party” has an idiomatic meaning “to attend a party without being invited”. However, the expression “crashes a party” here plays on the idiomatic meaning as well as the concrete meaning. This play on idiom is difficult to reproduce in the TL, so the translation omits the idiomatic meaning of the idiom.

2.6 Translating by Omission of the Entire Idioms

In some cases, idioms might be omitted in the TL. According to Baker (2018:86), the sixth strategy is often applied when a close match cannot be found in the TL, and the SL idioms are difficult to be paraphrased. Besides that, stylistic reasons also matter in this case. For example:
SL: She might *get up the juice* to hug me  
TL: *Dia mungkin akan memeluk saya*  
(He might hug me)

The idiom “*get up the juice*” means “*to build up the courage*”. There is no idiom in the TL that has the same meaning as the SL idiom. This idiom cannot be easily paraphrased as well. Stylistic preference might also be the reason why the idiom is not paraphrased. Thus, this idiom can be omitted, and the sentence is translated into “*dia mungkin akan memeluk saya*” which only means “she might hug me”.

Both theories above focus on the idiomatic expressions that appear in a discourse. Before analyzing the translation strategies used by the translator, it would be better to understand the types of idioms that appear in the movie first. The types of idioms might affect the translator to use a certain strategy in translating those idioms. Finding an idiom of similar meaning and similar form in the TL might be great. However, there are still several aspects that need to be considered, such as stylistic preference, register, and rhetorical effect (Baker, 2018).

This research used a descriptive qualitative method. The process of descriptive qualitative research involved emerging questions and procedures, collecting and analyzing data, building particulars to general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2003). To do the analysis, the researcher used several dictionaries as the instruments. The main dictionary that was used by the researcher was idiom dictionaries, such as Mc-Graw Hill’s Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs and The Free Dictionary by Farlex. The researcher also used the fifth edition of *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* to analyze the translation. The other dictionaries were online dictionaries, such as Cambridge Dictionary and Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

This research used all the English idiomatic expressions of a movie entitled *Game Night* and their translations in Indonesian as the data. The researcher chose to use American idioms dictionary because this movie was an American movie. There were two translation versions used in this research, which were from a fansub and the official subtitle. The SL was English, and the TL was Indonesian. The original language of the movie was obtained from the script of the movie which was available on Script.com. The fansub was available on Subscene.com, while the official subtitle was the one available on Netflix. In collecting the data, the researcher used several techniques. First, the researcher watched the movie. Then the researcher found the script of the movie and downloaded the Indonesian subtitle from Subscene.com for the fansub version. Next, the researcher downloaded the movie on Netflix to get the official subtitle. After that, the researcher collected all of the idioms in the movie. Last, the data was put into categories and written down on the table.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed them by using several techniques as well. First, the researcher categorized the data based on the types of idioms. Next, the researcher elaborated the meaning of the idioms both from the SL and the TL. The literal back translations of the Indonesian subtitles were provided in this paper to help illustrate the changes occurring in the translations and the differences between the source text and the two versions of subtitle. After the meaning of the idioms was explained, the researcher analyzed and compared the strategies that are used by the translators of the fansub and the official subtitle to
translate the idioms. The strategies used might affect the message delivery of the idioms. Thus, we could know which subtitles that could convey the same message to the TL.

ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the findings and the analysis of this research are presented. This research uses the framework proposed by Hockett (1958) to categorize the types of idioms that the researcher found in the Game Night movie. The framework proposed by Baker (2018) is used to categorize the translation strategies used in the fansub and the official subtitle to translate all the idioms.

1. Types of Idioms

This subchapter analyzes the types of idioms found in the Game Night movie and the comparison of translations from the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie as well as the translation strategies. Based on the findings, there are 136 idioms in Game Night movie. All the types of idioms based on Hockett’s (1958) framework can be found in this movie. The frequency and the percentage of the idiom types are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Idioms</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substitutes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper Names</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Phrasal Compound</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure of Speech</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slang</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>136</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table above, it can be seen that the type of idiom which mostly appears in the source material is English phrasal compounds. They account for 53.68% (73 out of 136 data) of the entire data. The second type of idiom that mostly appears in the movie is slang, which can be found in 34 data or represents 25% of the data. The least frequent type is substitutes. It is only found in 1 data or represents 0.73% of the data. The examples of each type of idioms are given below along with the explanation. TL 1 indicates the fansub, while TL 2 indicates the official subtitle.
1.1 Substitutes

There is only one data of substitutes found in the *Game Night* movie. The kind of substitutes that appear in this movie is number. The example and the explanation can be seen below.

Datum 16 (00:05:15,000 - 00:05:17,390)

**SL:** 'Cause I'm only 5'2".

**TL 1:** *Karena tinggiku cuma 158 cm.*
(Because my height is only 158 cm)

**TL 2:** *Karena aku hanya 1,5 meter*
(Because I'm only 1.5 meters)

The idiomatic expression of the excerpt above is uttered by Dr. Chin when she asks about Brooks to Max and Annie. At first, she asks whether Max’s brother wants to grab a cup of coffee with her or not. Then she asks “Now, is he a tall fella? 'Cause I'm only 5'2’”’. From the six categories of idioms proposed by Hockett (1958), “5'2’”’ is categorized as a number substitute. The symbol ( ’ ) signifies feet, and the symbol ( ” ) signifies inches. In English, feet and inches are used more often to measure height and length.

The translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use the same translation strategies, which is translation by paraphrase. In the fansub, the idiomatic expression “5'2’”’ is translated into “158 cm”, while in the official subtitle, it is translated into “1,5 meter”. The two translators choose to paraphrase the idiom as such because centimeter and meter units are more commonly used to measure height in Indonesian instead of feet and inches. In the fansub, the translator adds the word “tinggiku” to emphasize that the character is talking about height. Adding the word “tinggiku” does not change the meaning of the sentence. However, it can give a sense of redundancy. In the official subtitle, the translator does not add any other words because the audiences are expected to know what it refers to from the context of the conversation. However, the two translations can convey the same message as the source text.

1.2 Proper Names

There are two proper names that appear in *Game Night* movie, which are the names *Boomer* and *Max*. The proper names are the name of the characters. Both the fansub and the official subtitle of the movie only use one translation strategy to translate both idioms, which is borrowing the source language idiom. The example is given below.

Datum 100 (01:03:02,943 - 01:03:06,977)

**SL:** That’s my Boomer.

**TL 1:** *Ini baru Boomer ku.*
(That's my Boomer)

**TL 2:** *Ini Boomer petarung ku.*
(That’s Boomer my fighter)
The idiom is uttered by Marlon Freeman who has a Faberge egg. When Max and his friends want to steal the Faberge egg in a house party held in Marlon Freeman’s house, there is a battle contest. Marlon Freeman has a fighter who wins the contest, named Boomer. When Boomer has defeated his opponent, Marlon Freeman says, “That’s my Boomer”. “Boomer” is categorized as a proper name. It is not translated because it is a label.

The two translators used the third translation strategy which is borrowing the source language idiom. The idiom “Boomer” in the SL has a specific context, so the original form of the idiom must be preserved. The word “Boomer” is the name of one of the characters in the movie, so it cannot be translated into “a transient worker” or “the one that joins a rush of settlers to a boom area”. The translation of this word should still be “Boomer”. Thus, the two translations can convey the same message as the expression in the SL because the expression is unchanged.

1.3 Abbreviation

There are two abbreviations that can be found in the Game Night movie. Those abbreviations are the words “legit” and “CEO”. The two abbreviations are replacing a long word with its initial and its most stressed syllable. The fansub of the movie uses two translation strategies to translate the idioms, which are borrowing the source language idiom and translation by paraphrase. On the other hand, the official subtitle of the movie only uses translation by paraphrase strategy to translate the two idioms. The example can be seen below.

Datum 63 (00:21:51,080 -00:21:52,150)

SL: They use legit actors
TL 1: Mereka gunakan aktor asli
   (They use real actor)
TL 2: Mereka memakai aktor resmi
   (They use an official actor)

The idiom “legit” is expressed by Brooks when he gives explanations about the game that he and his friends are going to play. He says that he has found a company that has played this kind of game and uses legit actors. “Legit” is a colloquial abbreviation of the word “legitimate”. The pattern of the abbreviation is using the most stressed syllables of the original word. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word “legit” is the abbreviation or the informal form of the word “legitimate” which means “accordant with the law or with established legal forms and requirements”. In daily conversation, people prefer to use the word “legit” instead of “legitimate” because it is more casual and often used in informal situations.

The translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use the same translation strategies, which is translation by paraphrase. In the fansub, the idiomatic expression “legit” is translated into “asli” (real), while in the official subtitle, it is translated into “resmi” (official). The two translators choose to paraphrase the idiom because the TL does not have any equivalent idioms that can convey the same message with the idiom “legit”. They decided to paraphrase it in
order to make the audience of the TL simply understand the message directly.

According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia fifth edition, the word “resmi” means “stipulated or approved by the government”, whereas the word “asli” means “genuine; pure; not a copy”. Thus, the word “resmi” from the official subtitle can be the better equivalent for the idiom “legit” because the meaning is quite similar.

1.4 English Phrasal Compounds

This is the type of idioms that mostly appears in Game Night (2018). For this type of idioms, the fansub and the official subtitle of the movie mostly use translation by paraphrase strategy to translate the idiom expressions. However, the official subtitle also uses Baker’s second strategy. The example of this type of idioms will be given below.

Datum 25 (00:10:14,720 - 00:10:17,189)

SL: We didn’t all meet our soulmate when we were 10 years old
TL1: Tak semua bertemu dengan jodohnya saat berusia 10 tahun
(Not all people meet their match when they were 10 years old)
TL2: Kami tak bertemu belahan jiwa pada usia 10 tahun
(We didn’t meet our part of soul when we were 10 years old)

The idiom of the sentence above is the word “soulmate”. This expression is uttered by Ryan when he and Michelle talk about him who needs validation in dating an Instagram model. He tries to say that he does not meet his partner at the age of 10 years like Michelle and his husband. The word “soulmate” is a compound noun formed from the combination of two nouns. The word “soulmate” is made from the words “soul” and “mate”. “Soul” is a part of a person that consists of mind, thought, and feelings, while “mate” means a partner. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the word “soulmate” means “a romantic or sexual partner, who you have a special relationship with, and who you know and love very much”.

The translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use different translation strategies. The translator of the fansub uses translation by paraphrase strategy. On the other hand, the translator of the official subtitle uses the strategy of using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. In the fansub, the idiomatic expression “soulmate” is translated into “jodoh” (mate or life partner), while in the official subtitle, it is translated into “belahan jiwa” (a part of soul).

According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia fifth edition, the word “jodoh” means “a suitable person to become someone’s spouse” while “belahan jiwa” means “a lover or wife”. From the definition, “jodoh” is still a candidate for someone’s lover or spouse, while “belahan jiwa” has already become a lover. Both the translations from the fansub and the official subtitle are acceptable for the audience of the TL. However, the one in the official subtitle can be the better equivalent because the meaning is more similar to the SL idiom.
1.5 Figures of Speech

In the *Game Night* movie, there are 24 data of figures of speech that can be found. The characters of the movie often use figures of speech in their daily conversation. The explanation of figure of speech can be seen from the example below.

Datum 60 (00:20:54,000 - 00:20:56,993)

**SL:** You can't always judge a book by its past covers, can you?

**TL 1:** Kau tak bisa selalu menilai buku dari sampul lamanya, ya kan?

(You can’t always judge a book by its past cover, can you?)

**TL 2:** Jangan menilai buku dari sampul lamanya, bukan?

(Don’t judge a book by its past cover, right?)

The idiom is uttered by Ryan when he introduces his date, Sarah, to Max and Annie. When they get to know each other, Ryan says, “So you can’t always judge a book by its past covers, can you?” According to Mc-Graw Hill’s Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs, “can't (or don't) judge a book by its cover” means “do not draw a conclusion about someone or something just from outward appearances”. Thus, the meaning of the expression has no correlation with any kind of book. However, the word “book” here symbolizes someone or something. The words “always” and “past” in the idiom above are just additional words to support the context. “Can't (or don't) judge a book by its cover” is a very well-known idiom in English. Furthermore, there is an Indonesian idiom that has similar meaning and lexical items with that idiom.

The translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use Baker’s first strategy to translate the idiom, which is using an idiom of similar meaning and form. In the fansub, the idiomatic expression “can't always judge a book by its past cover” is translated into “tak bisa selalu menilai buku dari sampul lamanya” (can’t always judge a book by its past cover), while in the official subtitle, it is translated into “jangan menilai buku dari sampul lamanya” (don’t judge a book by its past cover). The meaning of the two translations is basically the same. Even though there are little differences in the word choices, the two translations still convey the same meaning. Both the translators from the fansub and the official subtitle are able to find the best equivalent for the idiom in the SL. However, the translator of the official subtitle decided to use the more common version of the idiom which is using the word “jangan” and omit the word “selalu”. It might be because of a stylistic reason. In this case, the translator might expect that the audiences are more familiar with the common version of the idiom because it sounds more natural.

1.6 Slang

Slang words here are the second type of idioms that often appears in *Game Night* (2018). It is because slang words are often used in informal situations and daily conversation. Slang words are mostly being paraphrased or even omitted by the translators of the fansub and
the official subtitle of the movie. However, there is one slang translated using the strategy of borrowing the source language idiom, which is the word “bingo”. The strategy used by the fansub while the official subtitle chooses to paraphrase that word. Other examples of a slang word that appear in the movie will be given below.

Datum 71 (00:26:42,000 -00:26:43,434)

SL: He’s packing heat!
TL 1: Dia mau menembak!
(He wants to shoot!)
TL 2: Dia bersenjata!
(He’s armed!)

The story begins when Brooks tries to fight back two criminals who are attacking him. He decides to pull out the gun that he hides in his socks to shoot the criminals, but the gun is unintentionally kicked by the criminals. Then one of his friends, Ryan says “Watch out! He is packing heat”. The expression “packing heat” originated from the words “pack heat”. This expression cannot be translated word for word because it is a unity. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word “pack” itself means “to make into a compact bundle”, while “heat” means “a condition of being hot”. However, the idiom “packing heat” has nothing to do with something hot or a compact bundle. Based on Merriam-Webster Dictionary, it is a US slang word that means “to carry a gun”. Both the translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use Baker’s fourth strategy to translate this idiom, which is translation by paraphrase. “Packing heat” is translated into “mau menembak” (want to shoot) in the fansub, while in the official subtitle, it is translated into “bersenjata” (armed). The two translators choose to paraphrase the idiom because there is no idiom found in the TL that can convey the same message with the idiom “packing heat”.

Even though the translations from the fansub and the official subtitle have a different meaning, “mau menembak” and “bersenjata” are quite related to each other, where the former constitutes a verb that correlates with the condition depicted by the latter adjective. However, since the idiom “packing heat” is more focused on the act of carrying a gun instead of shooting, the translation “bersenjata” can be considered as the best equivalent for the idiom.

Datum 115 (01:09:45,511 - 01:09:47,681)

SL: Everyone holds on a goddamn second!
TL 1: Semuanya tunggu!
(Everyone waits for a second!)
TL 2: Semuanya diam sebentar!
(Everyone keeps silent for a second!)

The expression is uttered by Ryan when he is caught stealing an important item at a house party. The owner of the item is angry and tells his fighters to catch Ryan. Before Ryan
is caught, he says, "everyone holds on a goddamn second", and then he runs away. According to The Free Dictionary by Farlex, the word “goddamn” is used to express extreme displeasure or anger. This slang is matched with the context because Ryan is in a displeasure situation. In this context, the word “goddamn” is also used to intensify the expression uttered by Ryan.

The translators of the fansub and the official subtitle of this movie use the same translation strategies, which is translation by omission of the entire idiom. It is because there is no idiom in the TL that has a similar meaning and function as the idiom “goddamn” in that context, and it is also not possible to paraphrase the idiom. Moreover, in some cases, the word “goddamn” is used as a swear word that is considered offensive and rude. Thus, it might be another reason why both translators decided to omit the word. Even though the translators of the fansub and the official subtitle omit the idiomatic expressions, it does not change the message of the whole sentence. The intensity of the utterance can also still be seen from the tone of voice and the facial expression shown by Ryan.

2. Translation Strategies Used in the Fansub to Translate the Idioms

This subchapter discusses the translation strategies used by the fansub to translate the idioms in *Game Night* movie. The frequency of the translation strategies used can be observed on the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using an idiom of similar meaning and form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing the source language idiom</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by paraphrase</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>86.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by omission of a play on idiom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by omission of the entire idiom</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>136</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table, the most frequent translation strategy used in the fansub of *Game Night* movie is the translation by paraphrase, found in 118 out of 136 data or around 86.77%. It is
followed by translation by omission of the entire idiom strategy that accounts for 7.35% of data. The third most frequent strategy is borrowing the source language idiom, found in 4 out of 136 data. Then it is followed by using an idiom of similar meaning and form strategy and using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form strategy, each of which is only found in 2 data or represents 1.47% of the data.

The strategy of translation by paraphrase is used to translate almost all types of idioms, except proper names. For proper names, the translation chooses to use the third translation strategy by Baker (2018), which is borrowing the source language idiom. However, the strategy of borrowing the source language idiom is used to translate not only proper names but also abbreviations and slangs. Besides using the third strategy, the translator also uses the strategy of translation by paraphrase to translate abbreviations. For the English phrasal compounds, almost all the data are translated using translation by paraphrase strategy. The dominant translation strategy to translate figures of speech and slangs is also translation by paraphrase. However, there are several slang words that are translated using the strategy of translation by omission of the entire idiom. This strategy is used to translate slang words that are considered offensive. After all, all the idiomatic translation strategies suggested by Baker (2018) are used by the translator, except the strategy of translation by omission of a play on idiom. It is because there are no play on idioms found in the movie.

3. Translation Strategies Used in the Official Subtitle to Translate the Idioms

This subchapter analyzes the translation strategies used by the official subtitle to translate the idioms in the movie. The frequency of the translation strategies is displayed in the table. This table helps us to know which one is the most used strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using an idiom of similar meaning and form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing the source language idiom</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by paraphrase</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>85.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by omission of a play on idiom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation by omission of the entire idiom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the table, the translation by paraphrase is used 116 times. It accounts for 85.30% of the overall data. Translation by paraphrase strategy is followed by the translation by omission of the entire idiom, which accounts for 10.29% of data. The other three strategies, which are using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, and borrowing the source language idiom, are found in only 2 of 136 data.

Based on the findings, the most frequent translation strategy used in the official subtitle of the Game Night movie is also the strategy of translation by paraphrase. In fact, it is the only strategy used to translate the first type of idioms, which is substitutes, because there is only one data of this type of idioms. However, in translating proper names, the translator does not use this strategy. In this case, the translator uses the third translation strategy suggested by Baker (2018), which is borrowing the source language idiom. Unlike in the fansub, the strategy of borrowing the source language idiom in the official subtitle is not used to translate the other types of idioms besides proper names. Meanwhile, abbreviations, which constitute the third type of idioms, are only translated using the strategy of translation by paraphrase. This strategy is used by the translator to translate the other types of idioms as well. Even though the strategies of using an idiom of similar meaning and form and using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form are used in translating English phrasal compounds and figures of speech in the movie, the translation by paraphrase strategy still becomes the most commonly used strategy. In the case of the slang words, the translator uses the strategy of translation by omission of the entire idioms besides the strategy of translation by paraphrase. The translator of the official subtitle does the omission more often than the translator of the fansub. It might be because of the stylistic preferences. However, the same with the fansub, the translation by omission of a play on idiom strategy is not found in any data.

From all the findings above, the significance of this research is to give an understanding to the people who are interested in the translation field that translating idioms is different from translating other words. Translators have to take consideration of the language style and register as well in choosing the suitable strategy to convey the meaning of the idioms to the TL. Besides that, translating idioms in a movie subtitle as an audiovisual translation might require different techniques and strategies from translating idioms in other kinds of text, such as novels. From this research, people can also know the comparison of the translation strategies used by the fansub and the official subtitle of a movie and how those strategies affect the transfer of meaning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that all the types of idioms according to the theory of Hockett (1958) can be found in the Game Night movie. The translation strategy that is mostly used in the fansub and the official subtitle is translation by paraphrase. Despite the application of the same translation strategy, there are still some differences on the translations of the same idioms between the official subtitle and the fansub. The frequency of the use of other strategies also shows differences. In addition to the strategy of translation by paraphrase, the translation by omission of the entire idiom strategy is frequently used by the official subtitle, while borrowing the source language idiom strategy is used more often by the fansub.
Finally, in the official subtitle, the overall translation sounds more natural and communicative compared to the fansub. It may be because the translator pays more attention to the context when the idioms are uttered, or there might be a more rigorous editing process.

The findings of this research can contribute to the translation studies, especially in providing deeper understanding related to the translation of idiomatic expressions in an audiovisual translation such as subtitles. Understandings of the idioms translation is necessary for everyone involved in the practice of subtitling. This research can give more explanations that different strategies used to translate idioms can affect the transfer of meaning. Although this research focuses more on the types of idioms that appear in the movie and the translation strategies used in two different subtitles to translate the idioms, the fact that the different translation strategies used might also affect the translation quality cannot be denied. Thus, the researcher recommends future research to conduct a study about the translation quality assessment based on the accuracy, readability, and acceptability of the different versions of subtitles with the same TL. The assessment can involve assessors or raters who are experts in the translation field or casual audience with various levels of SL mastery. From the assessment, the readers will know the translation strategy that has an important role in producing an accurate, readable, and acceptable translation and understand the subtitle that shows a good quality of translation.

REFERENCES


