

AN ANALYSIS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION TRANSLATION IN *SCHOOL OF ROCK* MOVIE

Ryan Andhika Pratama and Gheza Damara

Independent Researchers, Yogyakarta

pratama.ryan17@gmail.com and gheza001@gmail.com

*correspondence: pratama.ryan17@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.37147/eltr.v2i1.95>

received 30 October 2017; accepted 5 December 2017

Abstracts

English native speakers express their feelings and condition using idiomatic expressions. Idiomatic expressions in English cannot be translated literally in the target language. Furthermore, idiomatic expressions translation can be found in movie dialog as a subtitle. This research answers one research problem, which is the idiomatic expressions translation in *School of Rock* movie. The instruments of this study are the English subtitle and the Indonesian subtitle of *School of Rock* movie.

Keywords: idiomatic expressions, translation, *School of Rock*

Introduction

Translation is a process of transferring a meaning from source language to target language (Newmark, 1984). One example of translation's product is subtitling. Translating subtitle is different from translating any written form such as article, novel, magazine, considering the timing of the plot and the length of the subtitle itself appeared on screen. Larson (1984) says there are two different types of translation, which are literal translation and idiomatic translation. Literal translations are form-based translations which attempt to follow the form of the source language. Idiomatic translations are meaning-based translations which make every effort to communicate the meaning of the source language text in the natural forms of the target language.

English has idiomatic expressions which English speakers used to express their feelings and condition using idiomatic expressions. Seidl and McMordie (1980) say that idiomatic expressions are used in formal and informal situations. Idiomatic expressions in formal situations can be found in lectures, academic essays and business report. Informal idiomatic expressions can be found in literatures, music, and movies.

The researcher often found movies containing idiomatic expression in its dialog. *School of Rock*, an American music comedy released in 2003 is one of the examples. Mike White and Richard Linklater worked together in writing and directing this movie. Jack Black was the main character in this movie as Dewey Finn. *School of Rock* had gross over

than \$131 million. *School of Rock* has been rated as Parental Guidance under 13 years old (PG-13) category. Even though it is still in the translated subtitle, the researcher still found the idiomatic expression which is cannot be translated directly into the literal meaning in the target language. In some ways, idiomatic expressions in target language subtitle was translated without considering the exact meaning in the target language and the target audience.

The purpose of this research was to find whether the Indonesian subtitle in the movie entitled *School of Rock* especially in the field of idiomatic expressions is acceptable or not based on Larson's (1984) theory of ideal translation. The researcher chose this movie because *School of Rock* contains many idiomatic expressions in the dialogs. The researcher did this research because there are many Indonesian subtitles on the internet for *School of Rock*. The internet offers many websites to download subtitles freely and one of the examples is www.Subscene.com. The researcher found the subtitle for *School of Rock* from www.Subscene.com and the researcher chose one of the best from many Indonesian subtitles in www.Subscene.com, which contains the least errors in Indonesian language style. It is expected that, this research could give contribution to people in the English Language Education Study Program to get better understanding of translating idiomatic expressions.

Literature Review

In this section, the researcher provided related theories for further discussion on the problem. The theories are about idiomatic expressions and translation.

Idiomatic Expressions

Idiomatic expressions are daily expressions that used by English speakers. As Cooper (1999: 233) says, "An idiom is an expression whose meaning cannot always be readily derived from the usual meaning of its constituent elements." Idiomatic expressions are phrases which have a different meaning with the words' individual meaning (Poole, 1999). Lewis (2002) as cited in Burger (2008) also adds then an idiom is a relatively fixed expression where the meaning of the whole is not transparent from the meanings of the constituent words. Although there are various definitions of idiomatic expressions, all of them share common features. The researcher could say that idiomatic expressions are different from the actual literal meaning.

There are some examples of idiomatic expressions. The first one is the idiom 'feeling blue' in a sentence 'he is feeling blue'. 'He is feeling blue' does not have a meaning that the person feels his color is blue. The literal meaning is the person feels sick. Another example was taken from the movie *School of Rock* "we're on the bill". The meaning is not literally 'we are on the bill', the meaning is 'we passed the audition; and our name is going to be displayed on the list of performers'. The term "idiomatic" refers to "expressions which have different meaning from the literal meaning of the words that making up the respective expressions (Lombardo, Haaman, Morley & Taylor, 1999). According to Poole (1999) idiomatic expressions are phrases, which have a different meaning with the words' individual meaning. Jackson (1996) proposes three characteristics of idioms, which are;

the meaning of idiomatic expression is its constituent word, the meaning is idiomatic, and idioms are fix expressions. The words' positions in idiomatic expressions are also odd, illogical, and even grammatically incorrect (Seidl and McMordie, 1980). In conclusion, the lines of the words in idiomatic expressions form meanings which have no relation with the words themselves.

Other characteristics of idioms are from Fernando and Flavell as cited on Cedar (2008). The first characteristic is the meaning of idiom is not the compositional function of its constituent. The second is idiom has literal counterparts but the expression should not be interpreted literally. The third is idiom is institutionalized.

There are two categories based on its closeness in structuring the meaning proposed by Chaer (1986). The first is pure idioms and the second is semi idioms. Another categorization came from Fernando (1996); he categorizes idioms into three categories. The first and the second categories are similar to Chaer's categorization. However, for the third category, Fernando proposes literal idioms. Pure idioms are an idiom, in which the elements to constructing idiom have lost the lexical meaning, and become non-literal (Chaer, 1986). Fernando's statement that "pure idioms are non-literal" was agreed by Chaer's definition of pure idioms. Semi idioms are idioms in which the elements to construct idiom still have literal meaning in a part of the elements constructing the idioms (Chaer, 1986). Fernando (1996) adds that it can be said to have one or more literal constituents and one with non-literal sub sense. The third one is literal idioms. Literal idioms allow little variation, thus it can be considered to be transparent (Fernando, 1996).

Translation

Translation is the process of transferring a message from one language to the target language (Newmark, 1988). The examples of translation are subtitling, dubbing, and interpreting. Subtitle is a transcription of a dialog in a movie and appears simultaneously within the movie (Baker, 1998). Dries (1995) also states that subtitle delivers one language into target language, in a form of spoken dialog into a written text. Dubbing is different from subtitling; dubbing is the oral form of subtitling. In dubbing, according to Orero (2004), there are some factors to be considered such as lip kinetics and intonations. Interpreting is in the middle of subtitling and dubbing. Interpreting is done directly when the conversation has ended.

In the case to get the correct meaning in the target language, Larson (1984) proposes three criteria of an ideal translation. The first one is Accurate (A). The purpose of Accurate (A) is reproducing the same meaning and maintaining the message of conversation from source language to target language. The need to check the accuracy of the translation because sometimes translator made some mistakes in the analysis of the source language or in the transfer process and a different meaning result. The second is Clear (C). Clear (C) means to express all aspects in acceptable forms and clear meanings, so that it is understandable for target language audiences. The last is Natural (N). Natural (N) has the meaning to use natural expressions with appropriate kind of texts occurs in target language.

According to Larson (1984), a good translation is the one, which has two out of three from these criteria, Accurate (A), Clear (C), and Natural (N). Therefore, the translation which has those two out of three criteria is considered as an ideal translation.

Method

The researcher used document analysis method for the study. Document analysis method is being used when someone wanted to analyze a physical document in form of written or visual material in order to identify the specific data (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen, 2010). The documents in this study were in form of visual material, which were English subtitle and Indonesian subtitle of School of Rock movie.

The researcher followed three steps of analyzing a document in this study. Creswell (2007) presented these three steps as follows:

1. Preparing and Organizing.

In the first step, the researcher downloaded both English and Indonesian subtitles of School of Rock from www.Subscene.com. After that, the researcher watched School of Rock twice, one with the English subtitle and one with Indonesian subtitle. The researcher watched School of Rock twice to list both the idiomatic expressions in English and Indonesian subtitle.

2. Coding.

The second step was to list the idiomatic expressions in the movie. The researcher made a list of idiomatic expressions in the movie both in English and Indonesian subtitles. The researcher only chose those which consist of idiomatic expressions. The purpose of listing was to choose the idiomatic expressions to be analyzed.

3. Representing the Data.

In the final step, the researcher made a table from the list of idiomatic expressions in the movie. The table was used to help the researcher to analyze the translated idiomatic expressions. Larson (1984) suggests analyzing the subtitle by these criteria: The first is accurate (A). Accurate means reproducing the same meaning and maintaining the message of conversation from source language to target language. The second is clear (C). Clear is to expressing all aspects in acceptable forms and clear meanings, so that it is understandable for target language audiences. The last is Natural (N). Natural means using natural expressions with appropriate kind of texts occurs in target language.

In analyzing the translation product, the researcher use comparison with the source language method and comprehension test method which are proposed by Larson (1984). The researcher compared the translation products several time meticulously. The purpose of this comparison is to check for the equivalence of information content. The purpose of this checking to make sure the researcher knows whether all the information had been included, nothing omitted, nothing added, and nothing different. After that, the researcher made another comparison of source language and the target language. The purpose of the second checking was to make sure if there were any problems or potential problems. At first, the researcher found out some misanalysis because the accurate (A) criteria should be the first to occur in the ideal translation. The misanalysis happened because the researcher

misinterpreted the accurate (A) criteria and jumped into the next two criteria (clear and natural). The researcher compared both the subtitles side by side to make it easier to analyze.

After the analysis, the researcher tested the comprehension of the subtitles. The purpose of the comprehension test was to understand whether the subtitles were completely understood by someone who have not seen the previous subtitles or not. The comprehension test was designed to find out whether the subtitles were communicate to the audiences or not. The researcher also asked another person to conduct the test to get a new look at the subtitles.

The researcher reported the data in form of list of the both of the idiomatic expression translations. The list was made side by side, English subtitle and Indonesian subtitle to make it easier for the readers to understand the data. The researcher also put the list of ideal translation criteria in the data, so the readers would know each idiomatic expressions translation has what criteria in it. On the right side of the criteria there are the categorization of the idiomatic expressions translation, which are Ideal-acceptable translation (I-acc), Acceptable translation (Acc), Unacceptable translation (Unacc), and Failed translation (F)

Finding and Discussion

In this section, the researcher discusses the finding for answering the research problem about acceptability of idiomatic expressions translation in *School of Rock* movie. The data was taken by comparing the idiomatic expressions in English and Indonesian subtitles. The result of measuring was gained based on Larson’s (1984) theory of ideal translation. In this theory, an ideal translation was achieved if the translation itself had Accurate (A), Clear (C), and Natural (N) criteria.

A translation was classified as an ideal acceptable (I-Acc) if it had all the three criteria; which are Accurate (A), Clear (C), and Natural (N). A translation was classified as an acceptable (Acc) translation if it had only two out of three criteria. Then a translation was classified as an unacceptable (Unacc) translation if it only passed one of the three criteria. Furthermore, a translation is failed (F) if it does not has any single criteria.

The following table shows the result of the findings in idiomatic expressions translations:

Table 2.1. The List of Percentage Idiomatic Expressions Translations in *School of Rock* Movie

No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Ideal-Acceptable (I-Acc)	91	63%
2.	Acceptable (Acc)	28	19.5%
3.	Unacceptable (Unacc)	10	7%
4.	Failed (F)	15	10.5%
	Total	144	100%

These are two examples of Ideal-Acceptable (I-Acc) translation.

Excerpt from 01:01:11 → 01:01:13

English Subtitle
We're on the bill

Indonesian Subtitle
Kita lolos

Example 2.1. Ideal-Acceptable (I-Acc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (1)

From the excerpt above, Dewey already convinced the manager of *Battle of the Band* to let *School of Rock* performs in the event. Dewey tells his students that they were on the list of performers. The plot took when Dewey brought his students to the concert hall where *Battle of the Bands* will be held. Tomika, one of Dewey's back-up singers felt uncomfortable because she thought that her appearance will not be appreciated by audiences. Dewey convinced Tomika to ignore her appearance because she has a beautiful voice. After Dewey convinced Tomika, he went back to his students to find out Freddy, his drummer had been missing. Dewey looked out for Freddy just to find that his drummer was in a van playing cards with another band. Freddy's action made the *School of Rock* miss their chance to perform in the audition. Dewey realized his band could not play in the *Battle of the Bands*, he tried to convince the jury to let his band entered the competition.

Excerpt from 01:27:33 → 01:27:36

English Subtitle
Just one second

Indonesian Subtitle
Hanya sebentar saja

Example 2.2. Ideal-Acceptable (I-Acc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (2)

The excerpt above was from Rosalie's dialog to the students' parents. Rosalie who faced the angry parents in her office excused herself to calm her mind. The plot took after the students' parents found out that Dewey was not a teacher. In Rosalie's office, students' parents demanded explanations of Dewey's position in the school's staff. Rosalie who overwhelmed by angry parents' questions, thought she needed a little time to calm her mind.

Those two translations were classified as ideal acceptable translations because it was accurate (A), clear (C), and natural (N). The first translation was Dewey's dialog to his students, and the second translation was Rosalie's dialog to students' parents. The translator successfully delivered both translations in Indonesian subtitle. Those two translations were delivered the message accurately, natural in Dewey's and Rosalie's facial expressions, and clear to be understood by the audience. Those ideal acceptable translations of idiomatic expressions were 63% from the overall in the *School of Rock* movie. These are two examples of Acceptable (Acc) translation.

Excerpt from 00:04:43 → 00:04:44

English Subtitle
Rocking ain't no walk in the park, lady

Indonesian Subtitle
Nge-Rock bukan berjalan di taman, nona

Example 2.3. Acceptable (Acc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (3)

This excerpt was from Dewey's dialog to Patty. Dewey explained to Patty about how hard to play Rock music. The plot took after Patty forced Ned to asked Dewey to pay the share of the rent. Patty felt angry to Dewey because Dewey did not has a job to pay for his share of the rent. Patty asked Dewey to get a job. Dewey who threatened by Patty's demand told her that playing Rock music was his job, and explained that playing Rock music was not easy.

Excerpt from 00:35:22 → 00:35:25

English Subtitle

Summer, if you grade-grub,
I will send you back to the first
Grade.

Indonesian Subtitle

*Summer, kalo kamu ungit-ungkit nilai
lagi, aku bakal masukin kamu ke kelas
satu lagi.*

Example 2.4. Acceptable (Acc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (4)

This excerpt came from Dewey's dialog to his student in the class. One of his students in the class asked about their grading system from joining the *Battle of the Bands*.

Those two translations were classified as acceptable (Acc) translations, because the translations passed natural and clear criteria. The translator successfully delivered the message but it was not accurate, because the message only had Dewey's natural expression and the audience could clearly understand the message. The overall acceptable (Acc) translations of idiomatic expressions in the movie are 19.5%.

These are two examples of Unacceptable (Unacc) translation.

Excerpt from 00:47:41 → 00:47:43

English Subtitle

Someone was in your grill

Indonesian Subtitle

Seseorang yang mengintrogasimu

Example 2.5. Unacceptable (Unacc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (5)

This excerpt came from Dewey's dialog to one of his student. Dewey wanted to motivate his student to have some passion in creating a rock music, because earlier in the movie his student was forbade by the parent to play rock music.

For this excerpt which was unacceptable translation, the researcher would like to recommend one ideal-acceptable translation. The ideal-acceptable translation is "*seseorang yang mencampuri urusanmu*". The translation is considered as ideal-acceptable because the translation itself is accurate in the form of the target language, clear for the readers in the target language to be understood, and natural in way of expressing it in the target language. Also, the word '*mengintrogasimu*' was not the correct form in the target language. The correct form is '*menginterogasimu*'.

Excerpt from 01:40:49 → 01:40:52

English Subtitle
Moment of truth

Indonesian Subtitle
Saat-saat kejujuran

Example 2.6. Unacceptable (Unacc) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (6)

This excerpt came from the plot where the announcer wanted to announce the winner of *Battle of the Bands*. After the performance of *School of Rock*, the announcer announced the winner of *Battle of the Bands*, that was *No Vacancy*.

For this excerpt also, the researcher would like to recommend an ideal-acceptable translation in the target language. The ideal-acceptable translation is '*saat yang ditunggu-tunggu*'. 'Moment of truth' has a meaning which 'there is the moment where we are waiting for so long'. The words 'moment of truth' appeared where something will be told, and usually came up with a truth. In this case, the word '*kejujuran*' did not represent the meaning that 'the moment we are waiting for will be revealed'. The word '*ditunggu-tunggu*' delivered the meaning more accurately, clearly, and naturally.

The first translation only had natural (N) criteria, thus, it was classified as unacceptable (Unacc) translation. The translation itself only delivered the natural expression of Dewey and did not deliver the accurate and clear meaning. On the second translation, it only had clear (C) understanding but did not have accurate and natural meaning. The audience simply would understand the translation, thus the accuracy and the natural expression of the meaning were not delivered. The translator unsuccessfully delivered the translations, because the translations had only passed one of three criterias. Furthermore, the percentage of unacceptable idiomatic expressions translations was 7% of the overall in the *School of Rock* movie.

These are two examples of Failed (F) translation.

Excerpt from 00:07:13 → 00:07:16

English Subtitle
Wannabe corporate sell-outs

Indonesian Subtitle
Penjualan wannabe corporate

Example 2.7. Failed (F) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (7)

This excerpt came from Dewey's dialog to his former band, *No Vacancy*. Dewey was furious about he was getting replaced by another man named Spider to play with *No Vacancy*.

The researcher would like to recommend '*para pengejar perusahaan rekaman*' for the target language subtitle. The researcher's translation is more acceptable because it delivers the meaning from the source language accurately, clearly, and naturally.

Excerpt from 00:15:53 → 00:15:55

English Subtitle

Indonesian Subtitle

I've got vision up the butt

Vision up the butt

Example 2.8. Failed (F) translation in the Subtitle Excerpt (8)

This excerpt came from Dewey's dialog to Ned in the dining room. Dewey asked Ned to regroup with him and entered the *Battle of the Bands*, but Patty forbade Ned to join Dewey's band.

The researcher would like to recommend 'aku punya banyak ide menarik' because the translator did not translate the idiomatic expression from the target language. The translation 'aku punya banyak ide menarik' delivered the meaning for the target language.

The first translation showed that the translator only translated the half of the idiomatic expression. Thus, the translation was classified as failed (F) because the translator only translated the half part and the translation itself did not delivered any meaning at all. The second translation was also failed (F) because the translator did not translate the idiomatic expression. The translator only copied the original English subtitle. Furthermore, those two translations were fail because they did not pass any single criteria. The percentage of failed (F) translations in the *School of Rock* movie was 10.5

Conclusion

Based on the finding the researcher found on *School of Rock's* idiomatic expressions translation, the researcher concluded that the translation was acceptable for the kids under 13 years old. 82.5% of the idiomatic expressions translation in *School of Rock* movie had two out of three criteria of ideal translation proposed by Larson (1984); accurate (A), clear (C), and natural (N). The 82.5% percentage of idiomatic expressions translations were from Ideal-Acceptable (I-Acc) translations, 63%, and Acceptable (Acc) translations, 19.5%.

The researcher also found there were failures in the translation; however, the translation was suitable for the audience because the message from English culture was delivered well in Indonesian. There are some errors in the subtitles, however, kids under 13 years old still could understand the message in the Indonesian subtitle. The percentage of failed idiomatic expressions translation was 17.5%. The percentage of failed translations was taken from Unacceptable (Unacc) translation which was 7% and from Failed (F) translations which was 10.5%.

References

- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Razavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to research in education* (8thed). Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Ayto, J. (2010). *Oxford dictionary of English idioms* (3rded.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baker, M. (1992). *In other words*. London: Routledge.
- Baker, M. (1998). *Encyclopedia of translation studies*. London: Routledge.
- Brenner, G. (2003). *American idioms handbook*. New York: Webster's New World.
- Burger, S. (2008). *Stepping into the minifield of idioms*. Retrieved on October 14, 2016 from <http://homepage.mac.com/jefftenant/wefla/welfpaper>.

- Cedar, P. (2008). *Learner's recognition of Thai-English idiom counterparts*. Retrieved on October 14, 2016 from http://clabu.bu.edu/resources/payung_handout.doc.
- Chaer, A. (1986). *Kamus idiom Bahasa Indonesia*. Ende-Flores: Nusa Indah.
- Cooper, J. (1999). *Cognitive processing in second language acquisitions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cresswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches* (2nded.). Santa Barbara: Sage Publication. Inc.
- Dries, J. (1995). *Dubbing and subtitling: guideline for production and distribution*. Thousand Oaks, CA: European Linguistic for the Media.
- Fernando, C. (1996). *Idioms and idiomacity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jackson, H. (1996). *Words and their meaning*. London: Penguin Group.
- Larson, M. (1984). *Meaning based translation*. New York: University Press of America.
- Lombardo, L. Haarman, J. & Morley, T. (1999). *Massed-medias linguistic tools of interpreting media disclosure*. Milan: Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere, Economia, Diritto.
- Munday, J. (2006). *Introducing translation studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Orero, P. (2004). *Topics in audiovisual translation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins B. V.
- Poole, C. (1999). *Introduction to linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Seidl, J. & McMordie, W. (1980). *English idioms and how to use them*. Jakarta: PT. Intermedia.
- University of Oxford. (2005). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (7thed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.