

## Translation Procedures of the Indonesian Subtitles of English Idiomatic Expressions Found in *Inside Out*

Jasmine Julie Kusuma<sup>1</sup>, Julia Eka Rini<sup>2</sup>

English Department, Faculty of Languages and Literature, Petra Christian University, Siwalankerto 121-131, Surabaya 60236, INDONESIA

Email: everla2ing.fan@gmail.com, jerini@petra.ac.id

### ABSTRACT

This thesis focused on studying the subtitles of idioms found in the movie, *Inside Out* (2015), specifically the idioms uttered by Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust. The writer used the following theories by Newmark (2001) to analyze the data—Translation Procedures to sort out the translations, and Translation Criticisms to evaluate the appropriateness of the translations. Through this study, the writer aimed to find the most frequently used translation procedure for idioms in *Inside Out*, and the appropriateness of its translations. After analyzing the data, the writer concluded Functional Equivalent as the most frequently used translation procedures for idioms found in *Inside Out* by producing 23 out of 39 translations. Functional Equivalent also produced mainly appropriate translations with 20 translations being appropriate. In conclusion, Functional Equivalent is the most recommended procedure to translate idioms, because it produces referentially and pragmatically accurate, semantically adequate, and natural translations.

**Key words:** Translation, Subtitles, Idioms, Translation Procedures

### INTRODUCTION

In this global era, good subtitles are a must for a film to be properly understood. However, subtitling is not an easy feat. According to Bannon (2010), subtitling is not just translating words from the source language into the target language. Subtitling also translates various features in the films, such as the culture and emotions portrayed by the characters. Such instances occur when a subtitler has to translate idiomatic expressions, more commonly known as idioms, from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL).

According to Newmark (2001), idioms are “groups of words whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of their constituent words.” Idioms are heavily influenced by culture. Therefore, they differ from one country to another. It is not easy to translate idioms considering that in order to translate idioms properly, subtitlers need to possess sufficient background knowledge on both the source language and target language, as well as their cultures. With that being said, the writer becomes intrigued to specifically analyze the subtitles of idiomatic expressions in films.

In analyzing the Indonesian subtitles of the English idioms found in an animated Hollywood movie, *Inside Out*, the writer chose to analyze English-Indonesian in particular as a result of the writer’s fluency in both languages. As for the reason why the writer chose *Inside Out*, first, it is because the writer is fond of the movie due to its moral message, and how cleverly it was delivered in the movie. Second, it is because the movie contains a number of idioms, which are rather tricky to translate.

When watching the movie, the writer comes across quite a number of idioms. It makes the writer wonder whether the idioms could be understood well by the Indonesian audience. Therefore, the main problem that was discussed in this paper was regarding the fact that *Inside*

*Out* is a foreign movie that contains a number of idiomatic expressions, which are not easily understood by non-native speakers who possess different cultural backgrounds. That is why the writer feels the need to analyze the subtitles of idioms in this movie, and determine the quality of the subtitles.

The most important thing in translating idioms is first, to be pragmatically accurate; phrases in both the SL and TL have the same effect on the readers in both languages. Second, it is also important to be referentially accurate; phrases in both the SL and TL refer to the same object in the real world. A successful transfer of the function of an idiom from the SL to the TL is indicated by the naturalness of the subtitles in the target language, as if the characters in the film are actually speaking the subtitles. Thus, it is important to apply translation procedures that can convey the intended message of the idiom well. Through this study, the writer aims to identify the translation procedures that the translator uses to translate the idioms in *Inside Out*. The writer is also going to determine the most frequently used translation procedure among them, and whether its translations are appropriate or not based on the aforementioned criteria. In order to achieve this, the writer is going to analyze the subtitles using Newmark's Translation Criticisms and Translation Procedures.

According to Newmark (2001), a comprehensive criticism of a translation has to cover five steps. However, the writer only uses the third step, Comparing the Translation with the Original, and the fourth step, The Evaluation of the Translation, for her study. The writer excludes the first step, Text Analysis, and the second step, The Purpose of the Translator, because the writer does not intend to analyze the translation of the film as a whole but solely focuses on selected utterances from the film, which are idioms uttered by Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust. Therefore, it is not necessary to conduct a whole-text analysis and determine the translator's purpose which represent the text as one entity. The writer also excludes the fifth step, The Future of the Translation, because according to Newmark, it is only needed in the case of serious text, such as novels and poems. This step is also used to assess the work's potential importance within the target language culture, meaning to determine whether the text is worth translating or not. Since the object of the writer's study is a film, the writer does not find it necessary to go through the last step. In the case of popular film, such as *Inside Out*, it is obvious that translation is necessary for it to be able to be marketed in foreign countries (Newmark, 2001, p. 186 – 189).

Comparing the translation with the original as the criticism should consist of a discussion of translation problems and not quick recipes for a "correct" or a better translation. The example given by Newmark (2001) is why, for instance, the translator within the contest preferred 'less intensely' to 'less acutely' or 'with less intensify' for 'vivre avec moins d'acuite'; why he preferred 'uncharted territory' to 'terra ignota' for 'terra ignoia'? (Latin tags are probably more familiar to French than to English educated readers); why was 'drastic statement' preferred to 'severe judgment' for 'judgement severe'? (It can be justified on the ground that French has no obvious one-to-one translations for 'drastic' or 'statement', and therefore, the translator was merely exploiting French lexical gaps.

In evaluating of the translation, the critic should assess the referential and pragmatic accuracy of the translation by the translator's standards. After considering whether the translation is successful in its own terms, the critic evaluates it by his/her own standards of referential and pragmatic accuracy. The critic has to avoid criticizing the translator for ignoring translation principles that were not established nor even imagined when he/she was translating. The main question here is the quality and extent of the semantic deficit in the translation, and whether it is inevitable or due to the translator's deficiencies. Further, the critic assesses the translation also as a piece of writing, independently of its original: if this is an 'anonymous non-individual text, informative or persuasive, one would expect it to be written in a natural manner - neat, elegant

and agreeable. If the text is personal and authoritative, one has to assess how well the translator has captured the idiolect of the original, no matter whether it is cliched, natural or innovative.

According to Newmark (2001, p. 81), there are a total of seventeen translation procedures. The following are the main characteristics of each procedure: 1) transference basically does not translate the SL and stays as a foreign word in the TL. This procedure is used when it is important for the SL not to be translated, for example, “laptop”; 2) naturalization is rather similar with transference, however, the difference lies in the fact that naturalization converts the SL word to the normal morphology (word-forms) in the TL, for example, “computer” to “*komputer*” in Bahasa Indonesia; 3) Cultural Equivalent replaces a cultural word in the SL with a TL one. For example, “salted fish” to “*ikan asin*”; 4) Functional Equivalent translates cultural words to a culture-neutral word, for example, “page turner” to “*buku yang bagus*”; 5) Descriptive Equivalent explains the meaning of cultural word in several words; it focuses more on describing the cultural word compare to functional equivalence which focuses on transferring the function/meaning, for example, “*Samurai*” to “Japanese aristocracy from the eleventh to the nineteenth century”; 6) Componential Analysis compares an SL word with a TL word with a similar meaning that, of course, is not an obvious one-to-one equivalent, by showing first their common and then their differing sense components, for example, “forgive” and “pardon” is similar but they have their differing features. However, they are both translated into “*memaafkan*” in Indonesian. To show the difference, using Componential Analysis, the translation for “pardon” in Indonesian will be “*memaafkan seseorang tanpa menyalahkannya.*” “*Memaafkan*” is the common component, and “*tanpa menyalahkan*” is the differing sense component what sets apart pardon from forgive; 7) Synonymy, is applied for a SL word where there is no one-by-one equivalent, and the word is not important in the text; 8) Through-translation is the literal translation of common collocations, names of organizations and components of compounds. It is used only when they are already recognized terms, for example, “first name” to “*nama depan*”; 9) Shifts or transposition, requires a change in the grammar from SL to TL, for example, “good day” to “*hari yang indah*”; 10) Modulation, reproduces the message of the ST in the TL text in conformity with the current norms of the TL, because of the dissimilar perspectives in the SL and the TL. There are various modulations, such as ‘Abstract to concrete’ which translates a general SL term to a specific TL term, for example, “sleep in the open” to “*tidur di bawah bintang-bintang,*” and ‘Negated contrary’ which changes the form of the source text into the opposite form in the target text, from positive form to negative form or vice-versa, for example, “he looks familiar” to “*dia terlihat tidak asing*”; 11) Recognized Translation, uses the officially or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term. For example, “United Nations” to “*Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa*”; 12) Compensation, compensates the loss of meaning in one part of a sentence in another part. This procedure is especially useful when it comes to wordplay: if the translator cannot directly adapt a pun, for instance, which tends to happen quite often, then they will try to create another play on words in another part of the text (Albir, 2001); 13) Expansion, uses more words in the TL for re-expressing an idea or reinforcing the meaning of a SL word because the lack of a concise correspondence in the TL, for example, “the child cried for the toy” is translated to “*anak itu menangis karena ingin dibelikan mainan tersebut*”; 14) Paraphrase, explains the meaning of the cultural word much more detailed than that of descriptive equivalent. It is used when it is impossible to find a direct or near-equal translation, therefore requires a detailed explanation of what the SL word(s) mean, or when translating difficult terms that needs to be thoroughly explained in layman terms; 15) Omission, omits words which are considered inappropriate or unnecessary in the TL; 16) Couplets, combine two different procedures. Couplets are used when it is not enough to translate only using one translation procedure; 17) Notes, Additions and Glosses are used for supplying additional information in the forms of footnotes, endnotes, glossaries. They can be used inside the text, and here they should be enclosed by brackets. They can also be used as notes in the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter. Additional information can also be written as glosses at the end of the book, with the help of number

references.

## METHOD

The approach of the study is qualitative research. The writer analyzes the data using Newmark's Translation Criticisms and Translation Procedures. In this study, the writer's objective is to find out the quality and appropriateness of the Indonesian subtitles of the idioms found in *Inside Out*. Therefore, to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of the translation properly, the writer chooses qualitative approach because she needs to do an in-depth analysis on the subtitles.

The data gathered was in the form of idioms as well as their subtitles. The sources of data were utterances spoken by Riley's five representative emotions consisting of Joy, Sadness, Anger, Disgust, and Fear taken from *Inside Out*.

The writer started the data analysis by comparing the original idioms to the translated version using table 3.1. The writer used table 3.1 to answer the first research question about the types of procedures that are used from Newmark's Translation Procedures. Next, the writer used three-digit numbering system to indicate the frequency of each translation procedure. The first digit indicated the 17 different types of Translation Procedures, while the second digit indicated the frequency of each type of translation procedure. The third digit was added only when the translation is appropriate. In the "Classification" column, the writer wrote whether the translation is appropriate or not. In the "Notes" column, the writer evaluated whether the translation was good or not, and elaborated why she decided it as so in accordance with Newmark's criteria of an appropriate translation—referentially and pragmatically accurate, semantically adequate, and natural. The writer also offered a better translation for the ones she deemed inappropriate.

Table 1. The classification of the subtitles of idioms in *Inside Out* based on Newmark's Translation Procedures.

No.	Context	Source Language	Target Language	Translation Procedures	Classification	Notes

After completing table 1, the writer made use of table 2. The table is used to answer the second question regarding the most frequently used translation procedure for idioms found in *Inside Out*.

Table 2. Summary of the Whole Findings

No.	Translation Procedure	Frequency	Classification		Percentage	
			Appropriate	Inappropriate	Appropriate (a)	Inappropriate (b)

Notes:

$$\frac{\text{Frequency of Appropriate Translation}}{\text{Appropriate} + \text{Inappropriate Translation}} \times 100\% = a$$

$$\frac{\text{Frequency of Inappropriate Translation}}{\text{Appropriate} + \text{Inappropriate Translation}} \times 100\% = b$$

In the table, the writer listed all the translation procedures used in *Inside Out*, and the frequency of each procedure. The writer divided the total numbers into two categories which consisted of appropriate and inappropriate translation according to Newmark's Evaluation of the Translation. The writer also counted the percentage of occurrence to determine whether each translation procedure produced mainly appropriate or inappropriate translations. For this research, the writer wanted to show the readers which translation procedure(s) would be recommended to translate the idioms collected from *Inside Out* judging from the most frequently used translation procedures, as well as the translation procedures which managed to produce the most number of appropriate translations. This knowledge is needed so that people become capable of choosing the most suitable Newmark's translation procedure(s) to translate idioms effectively and properly.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the seventeen Translation Procedures that Newmark listed, the writer deduces that only six procedures are applied by the subtitler of "Inside Out" to translate the idioms found in the film. They are Synonymy, Modulation, Couplet, Functional Equivalent, Cultural Equivalent, and Omission.

The writer manages to identify three translations that utilized Synonymy as their translation procedures. One example that is considered inappropriate is the translation of Fear's utterance, "Brain Freeze", into "*Otak Beku*." "*Otak beku*" does not convey the direct message of "brain freeze." According to Cambridge Dictionary (2013), the term "brain freeze" means "a sharp pain in the front or at the side of the head that people sometimes feel when they are somewhere very cold or when they have eaten something cold." Thus, when someone utters the said idiom, it does not mean that his/her brain is literally freezing. However, as "brain freeze" does not have a specific idiomatic equivalent in Indonesian, it can be translated using the onomatopoeic sound "*Cleng*" or only using the interjection "*aduh sakit*." Translating it into "*otak beku*" in Indonesian does not really convey the message of being in pain, the most suitable option is the one that can convey the main point of the idiom.

There are 23 translations that utilizes Functional Equivalent. Only 3 out of 23 are considered inappropriate. The following is an example of an appropriate translation by Functional Equivalent taken from the data:

Original Text:

Anger: Might **come in handy**, if this new school is full of boring useless classes, which it probably will be...

Subtitles:

Anger: *Mungkin akan berguna. Jika sekolah baru ini penuh mata pelajaran membosankan. Kemungkinan begitu.*

"Come in handy" cannot be translated into "*masuk bertangan*." The idiom also does not have an Indonesian idiomatic equivalent. Therefore, there is no other option but to only transfer the content of the idiom, meaning turning the idiom into regular utterance in Indonesian. The idiom "come in handy" essentially means "become useful" (McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs, 2002). This message can be understood clearly through "*akan berguna*." It sounds very natural in Indonesian, and can be perfectly understood by Indonesian audience in general.

The writer finds six translations that are produced using Modulation as their translation procedure. The writer concludes all of them to be appropriate translations. The following is an

example of an appropriate translation by Modulation taken from the data:

Original Text

Joy (cont'd): **Things couldn't be better!** After all, Riley's 12 now.  
What could happen?

Subtitles:

Joy: *Ini yang terbaik. Lagi pula, Riley 12 tahun sekarang. Apa yang bisa terjadi?*

This is the Negated Contrary type of Modulation. "Things couldn't be better" and "*ini yang terbaik*" carry the same meaning. The difference lies in the fact that the statement in the SL is in negative form while the statement in the TL is in positive form. This change is required to make the expression natural in Indonesian. If the idiom is translated literally into "*keadaan tidak bisa lebih baik lagi*," it will sound odd and unnatural in Indonesian. Therefore, modulation is the perfect procedure for this idiom, because it requires a perspective change. The translation produced is also an appropriate one. The subtitle manages to transfer the intended message to Indonesian as natural as possible.

There are three translations which are translated using Couplet. All are categorized as appropriate translations, and they all happen to use the same combination of Functional Equivalent and Shifts. The following is an example of an appropriate translation by Couplet taken from the data:

Original Text:

Joy: Ohhh! **A real page turner!**

Subtitles:

Joy: *Menarik untuk dibaca!*

The writer identifies the usage of Functional Equivalent because the translation consists of culture-free words. Unlike "real page-turner," "*menarik untuk dibaca*" is not an idiom. The writer also identifies Shifts in this example because of the change in grammar from the SL to the TL. In the SL the structure is article-adjective-noun, but in the TL the structure becomes adjective-preposition-verb. Considering that there are two translation procedures used, this one is categorized into Couplet. For this idiom, Couplet is necessary because it is not enough to simply translate it using one translation procedure. This is an appropriate translation as it successfully delivers the intended message from the SL to the TL.

The writer only manages to come across one idiom which is translated using Omission. It is an appropriate translation.

Original Text:

Joy: See? Fun already! You **lucky dog**, you're reading these cool things and I gotta go work. Life is so unfair.

Subtitles:

Joy: *Lihat kan? Asyik sekali! Kau beruntung. Kau membaca hal-hal seru. Aku harus bekerja. Hidup tidak adil*

This is categorized into omission because this translation omitted the word "dog." This is a good example of an idiom which should be translated using Omission. "Dog" is omitted in the TL because the use of the word "anjing" in Indonesian for a person is degrading. It does not serve a positive connotation as it does in the SL. Therefore, it is better to omit the said word.

According to the data compiled, the writer deduces Functional Equivalent as the most frequently used translation procedure with 23 out of 39 translations are translated using the procedure. With 20 out of 23 translations being appropriate, it also shows that Functional

Equivalent produces the most number of appropriate translations of idioms found in *Inside Out*.

Therefore, Functional Equivalent is the most recommended translation procedure for translating idioms. In most cases, it is best for idioms to be translated into culture-neutral words. This is due to the fact that idioms are culturally influenced. Many languages possess idioms unique to their own, making it oftentimes difficult to find equivalents in other languages. In this case, it is best to deculturize idioms into culture-neutral words or in other words, regular set of words. This makes it easier for the target audience to understand idioms which heavily reference culture, for example, “page turner,” which means “a very good book.” An equal cultural term does not exist in Indonesian, therefore, to make it understandable, it has to be deculturalized. Using Functional Equivalent, the term will be translated into “*buku yang menarik untuk dibaca*.” This is to ensure that the intended message can be translated as clearly as possible in the target language, so that it can be generally understood by the target audience. However, there are also some instances in which Functional Equivalent cannot be used to translate certain idioms, for example, when a change of perspective from the SL to the TL is required. In this case, Modulation is the recommended translation procedure. Cultural Equivalent, and Couplet are also other recommended alternatives for translating idioms.

The usage of Synonymy to translate idioms, on the other hand, is not recommended. The problem with synonymy, is that it translates an idiom into the closest synonymy of its equivalent, making it likelier to cause undertranslation. Taken from the mistake in the findings, the translator translates “you are getting it” into “*kau mulai bisa*.” Which fails to deliver the intended message. “You got it” should be translated into “*kau mengerti*,” which is the functional equivalent of “you got it.” Instead the translator writes it as “*kau bisa*.” The writer believes that the translator mistook “you got it” as “you got this,” because in the case of “you got this,” it does mean “you can do it/this.” The translator has to be very sure that an idiom does not have a direct equivalent in the TL be it in form, meaning, or both before deciding that it needs to be translated using Synonymy. Because as shown in the findings, Synonymy can be inaccurate or even misleading.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that only six out of Newmark’s seventeen Translation Procedures are used by the translator to translate the idioms in *Inside Out*— Synonymy, Modulation, Couplet, Functional Equivalent, Omission, and Cultural Equivalent. The writer considers that Modulation, Couplet, Functional Equivalent, and Cultural Equivalent as the recommended translation procedures for translating idioms considering the majority of the translations they produced in *Inside out* are categorized as appropriate based on Newmark’s criteria of an appropriate translation derived from the fourth step of Translation Criticisms, Evaluation of the Translation. On the other hand, the writer would not recommend Synonymy, because it is likely to mislead the target audience. As for Omission, the writer could not gather enough data considering that only one idiom used Omission. However, the writer would agree that in some cases, it is necessary to translate idioms using Omission to avoid offending the target audience, as shown in the example above.

The result of the analysis also indicates Functional Equivalent as the most frequently used translation procedure which produces the most appropriate translations. Many languages possess idioms unique to their own, making it oftentimes difficult to find equivalents in other languages. In this case, it is best to convert idioms into layman’s terms. This makes it easier for the target audience to understand idioms because the intended message can be translated as naturally as possible into the target language using everyday language. Thus, the writer comes to a conclusion that Functional Equivalent becoming the most frequently used procedure proves Newmark’s three criteria in evaluating the appropriateness of translation: referential and

pragmatic accuracy, extent of semantic deficit, and naturalness.

As for the other seven procedures, the writer is not able to determine whether they are recommended for translating idioms because the translator does not apply them. However, through the theory of Translation Procedures, the writer deduces that there are indeed some procedures which are not suitable to translate idioms, for example, Transference and Naturalization. Idioms need to be translated using translation procedures which prioritize the transfer of meaning compared to form. The aforementioned procedure will not be able to produce translations which are pragmatically accurate, semantically adequate, and natural.

## REFERENCES

- Ammer, C. (2003). *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms by Christine Ammer*. Retrieved from <http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com>
- Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (2013). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Farlex Dictionary of Idioms. (2015). Retrieved from <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>
- Mashhady, H., Pourgalavi, M. & Fatollahi, M. (2015). *Newmark's Procedures in Persian Translation of Golding's Lord of the Flies*. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies*. 3(1), 57-69. Retrieved from <http://www.eltsjournal.org>
- McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs. (2002). Retrieved from <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/>
- Newmark, P. (1988). *Pragmatic translation and literalism*. *TTR : traduction, terminologie, rédaction*, 1 (2), 133–145. <https://doi.org/10.7202/037027ar>
- Newmark, P. (2001). *A Textbook of Translation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- Saeed, J. (2016). *Semantics*. 4th edition. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schauffler, S. (2015). Wordplay in Subtitled Films – An Audience Study. In Zirker A. & Winter-Froemel E. (Eds.), *Wordplay and Metalinguistic / Metadiscursive Reflection: Authors, Contexts, Techniques, and Meta-Reflection* (pp. 229-244). Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter. Retrieved from [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbkk30h.13](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbkk30h.13)