

Analysis of Translation Methods for Idiomatic Phrases in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Beatrice Stephanie¹, Muhammad Zaki Pahrul Hadi²

¹Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Hukum Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

²Sastra Inggris, Universitas Bumigora, Indonesia

Email: beatrice5070@gmail.com¹, zakupahrul@universitasbumigora.ac.id²

ABSTRACT:

Among works of fiction, idiomatic phrases are some of the most complicated problems in translation. Idioms are a significant part of every language whose metaphorical meanings cannot be directly conveyed through translation. The idioms help maintain most of the subtlety and unique cultural characteristics that define a language. This paper elaborates on the translation of idiomatic phrases in the novel "Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows" by J. K. Rowling by reflecting upon various methods that the translator may employ while rendering English idioms into Indonesian. The data for this research was obtained through a descriptive qualitative approach, where this research was conducted on how translators retain or alter the meaning of idiomatic expressions from the novel in question in the target cultural context. The research determined that translators use literal translation, idiomatic translation, and paraphrasing, among the other techniques, which best allow them to be as faithful as possible to the original meaning and fit into the culture they are targeted for. The present study calls attention to the problems idiomatic translation poses and the role of culture in literary translation.

Keywords: *Analysis, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Idiomatic Phrases, Novel, Translation Method.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Translation is a complicated process and involves something more than just changing meanings from one language to another. It has to take in-depth knowledge of the cultures related to both source and target languages. One of the most outstanding challenges translators facing is related to dealing with idiomatic expressions, which are phrases whose meanings cannot be obtained directly from the literal meanings of their parts. Idioms are inherently linked with the cultural background of the language they are borrowed from, which makes their appropriate translation a very demanding task. Most of the time, it is impossible to retain the very substance of the original idiom when translating it into another language.

The novel "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" by J. K. Rowling is the last one in the widely famous series of Harry Potter novels, and it is well appreciated not only for its thrilling plot but also for its distinctive language expression which covers enormous quantities of idiomatic sayings reflecting particular features of English culture. Translation of idiomatic expressions into Indonesian is unique because the translator has to pay great attention to the literary and cultural importance of the idioms, as well as to the clarity and relevance of idiomatic expressions for Indonesian readers.

Idioms pose a special problem in translation because they can be often implicit rather than literal. When an idiom is badly translated, the original meaning could be distorted, or important cultural subtleties missed completely. Therefore, translators must make skilful choices of appropriate translation techniques to preserve faithfulness to the source text and cultural and linguistic acceptability in the target language.

In expanding the context, this research then tries to look at the challenges posed in translating idiomatic expressions in “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows” from English into Indonesian. The study will seek to answer some key questions as to what kinds of idiomatic expressions exist in the original text, what methods used are by the translator, what the effects of these methods on the idioms' meanings will be, and how far the translations will be accurate and acceptable to Indonesian readers.

It will account for the idiomatic phrases in the English version of the novel, analyse the techniques used in translation, see how far the applied techniques influence the meanings of the idioms when translated into Indonesian, and find out if the idioms already translated into Indonesian are appropriate for Indonesian readers while preserving the cultural and figurative core of the original language.

Most of the studies regarding translation research have been widely discussed, especially the translation of idiomatic phrases. According to (Newmark, 2003), translation is a matter of transferring a message from its original language into the intended or desired language. This is considering the meaning and style meant. As he asserts, to interpret the idioms correctly in the target language, a translator has to be aware of the context and culture in both languages. This view is supported by (Larson & Taniran, 1988), who states that *“a translator must retain the meaning, even if the form in the target language needs to be altered to ensure the source language meaning remains intact.”* Furthermore, the application of translation techniques will yield not only precise translations but also those that are acceptable and readily comprehensible to the consumers of the target text (Hadi et al., 2020, 2024; Hadi & Suhendra, 2019).

(Baker, 2018) stresses that applicable translation methods are indispensable to ensure translation of meaning conveyed by idioms is presented faithfully, bearing in mind that idiomatic meaning in the source language may be significantly different from that conveyed by its translation. According to her, direct translation of idioms will not work given the cultural and linguistic differences. Along the same line, (Budiman et al., 2011) underlined the difficulties that translators face very often while searching for idiomatic collocations' equivalents, especially for those expressions impregnated with rich cultural meaning.

(Cacciari & Glucksberg, 1991) highlighted the importance of considering the meaning of the constituent words of idioms in order to gain a deeper understanding of and facilitate the accurate translation of these complex linguistic units. This study states that idioms are complex linguistic

units, where the overall meaning cannot always be derived from the literal meaning of its constituent words. However, it also shows that the meanings of individual words in an idiom are not entirely irrelevant to determining the relationship between an idiom and its usage context. This suggestion is related to translation, as translators can use an understanding of the literal meaning as a foundation to construct translations that are contextually appropriate.

Other research has also emphasized different methods that were applied while translating idioms. In one current study, researchers (Putri & Rejeki, 2021) discussed strategies for translation adopted in rendering idioms in the novel *The Girl on The Train*; paraphrasing came out as the most used strategy. The various strategies employed include using idioms of similar meaning but dissimilar form, idioms partially similar in meaning, borrowing idioms as such from the source language, and ignoring the existence of any idiomatic expression. The research is important in that it has shown various techniques that can be employed to adapt an idiom to fit the cultural context of the target language.

Similarly, other studies have explored how idiom translation strategies can vary across different texts and cultural contexts. In the study on translating idioms in the novel *Edensor*, (Premasari & Widodo, 2021) found different ways to translate idioms in literature. They said it is important to consider the cultural meaning of idioms in the original language when translating them. A related study by (Sandi & Andina, 2024) in translating Marie Arnold's novel "I Rise" noted that "*translators must have the deep cultural knowledge and understand the cultural origin in which the idioms exist to transfer their meanings accurately and acceptably to the target language.*" Indeed, Sandi and Diah noted that the similar meaning but dissimilar form method was the preferred method when the idioms dealt with strong cultural contexts.

On the other hand, (Hartono, 2012) mentions in his paper presented to *Jurnal Prosodi* that translation methods chosen for idioms must bear cultural compatibility between source and target languages. In Hartono's opinion, idioms without direct equivalents should be dealt with by paraphrasing. Similarly, (Wisudawanto, 2018) projects that special techniques are required for translating idiomatic expressions lest the intended message gets lost or altered.

Additionally, (Kurniawan et al., 2024) assessed the idiomatic translation in the Netflix *Notting Hill* film subtitles and found that the translators most of the time relied on paraphrasing methods. This work provides good insights into the translation of movie idioms, emphasizing the importance of paraphrasing. It has also explained some problems and complexities while preserving idiomatic meanings from one language to another.

In addition to paraphrasing, (Nida & Taber, 1974) proposed the theory of dynamic equivalence, which emphasizes aligning meaning and effect in the target language rather than preserving the structure or form of the source language idiom. They argue that a good translation

not only conveys the lexical meaning but also the emotional impact intended by the original author.

These studies provide a crucial foundation for understanding idiom translation methods in literary works, particularly in culturally rich novels such as Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. Guided by the theories and approaches discussed, this research aims to identify and analyse effective idiom translation methods in the novel, ensuring that the meaning and cultural nuances of the source language are well conveyed to readers in the target language.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research shall be conducted using a qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative descriptive method is primarily concerned with providing a comprehensive summary of an event in the everyday terms of those events (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This method is relevant as it helps to provide an in-depth understanding of idiom translation strategies in different cultural contexts. An attempt is made herein to analyse data related to the translation methods of idiomatic phrases in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, which have been gathered through this research. A qualitative descriptive approach thus came into being because the approach endeavours to give a detailed description of the phenomena especially when analysing the translation of idiomatic phrases and how their meanings are transferred from the source language (English) to the target language (Indonesian). This approach therefore will allow the researcher to analyse words, expressions, and the context in which idioms are used within the novel. The data used in this research consists of idiomatic phrases taken from the novel Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows by J.K. Rowling, in both the English version and its Indonesian translation. The idioms selected for the data are distinctive expressions with contextual meanings that cannot be translated literally. The primary data sources are the original English text and its Indonesian translation published by Gramedia.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The novel Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows is a fantasy novel J. K. Rowling. It is the seventh and the last novel in the series of Harry Potter. It was first released in 2007 and has been translated into various languages, including Indonesia. Srisanti translated this novel in 2008.

The analysis result shows that there are 398 idioms found in this novel. Tabel 3.1 below illustrates the frequency of method used by the translator in translating the idiomatic phrases.

Tabel 3.1. Method in Translating Idiomatic Phrases

No.	Translation Method	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Literal Translation	38	9,55%
2	Idiomatic Translation	26	6,53%
3	Paraphrasing	334	83,92%
	TOTAL	398	100%

The translation methods shown in table 3.1 are Literal Translation, Idiomatic Translation, and Paraphrasing. The most frequently used translation method is paraphrasing (83,92%). Paraphrasing can be seen as an appropriate method for stylistic reasons and idiomatic reasons, to keep the context of the original form while still being acceptable to the target readers.

To examine the application of these methods in practice, the research data was taken from Chapters 1 to 5, where sentences containing idioms were selected for analysis.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
The two men appeared <i>out of nowhere</i> , a few yards apart in the narrow, moonlit lane. For a second they stood quite still, wands directed at each other's chests; then, recognizing each other, they stowed their wands beneath their cloaks and started walking briskly in the same direction. (p.1)	Kedua laki-laki itu <i>muncul begitu saja</i> , berjarak beberapa meter di jalan kecil disinari cahaya bulan. Sesaat mereka berdiri diam, tongkat sihir terarah ke dada yang lain; kemudian saling mengenali, mereka menyimpan tongkat di balik jubah mereka dan mulai berjalan cepat ke tujuan yang sama. (hal.11)

One of the idiomatic phrases in the source text (ST) is "**out of nowhere**", which means something that appears suddenly without warning. This idiom is commonly used in English to describe an unexpected event. If translated literally, this phrase would not convey the same meaning in Indonesian.

In the target text (TT), the phrase "out of nowhere" is translated as "**muncul begitu saja**". The translator uses paraphrasing to maintain fluency and clarity in Indonesian, as the idiom "out of nowhere" in English does not have a direct equivalent that would be easily understood by Indonesian readers. This translation retains the idiomatic meaning and is still acceptable to Indonesian readers, allowing the translator to convey the intended nuance from the source language without losing its cultural essence or meaning.

ST	TT
"I have been careless, and so have been thwarted by luck and chance, those wreckers of all but the <i>best-laid plans</i> . But I know better now. I understand those things that I did not understand before. I must be the one to kill Harry Potter, and I shall be." (p.7)	"Selama ini aku ceroboh, jadi, aku digagalkan oleh keberuntungan dan kesempatan, mereka menghancurkan segalanya kecuali <i>rencana yang tersusun paling sempurna</i> . Tetapi aku tahu lebih baik sekarang. Aku sudah mengerti hal-hal yang tidak kumengerti sebelumnya. Akulah yang harus membunuh Harry Potter, dan itu akan kulakukan." (hal.18-19)

The idiomatic expression "**best-laid plans**" originates from the English proverb "*the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry*", which out of necessity even means the best-placed and planned schemes can turn sour because of some single unforeseen factor. This idiom is often used in describing how well-thought-out plans can still go wrong since, quite often, things are beyond our control.

The equivalent of the "best-laid plans" in the target text is "**rencana yang tersusun paling sempurna**". The translator indirectly uses the idiomatic equivalent translation method. It tries to represent the meaning of the original idiom, but it does not reflect the original idiom itself. The term "rencana yang tersusun paling sempurna" conveys the idea that the plan is highly organized and well-prepared, similar to the concept of "best-laid plans" in English, even though it does not use an equivalent idiom in Indonesian.

ST	TT
"Why do the Malfoys look so unhappy with their lot ? Is my return, my rise to power, not the very thing they professed to desire for so many years?" (p.9)	"Kenapa keluarga Malfoy tampak tidak bahagia bersama kelompoknya ? Apakah kembalinya aku, bangkitnya kekuasaanku, bukan hal yang justru mereka nyatakan sebagai keinginan mereka selama bertahun-tahun?" (hal.21)

The main idiom above is "**unhappy with their lot**", which is an expression meaning dissatisfaction with one's fate or current circumstance in life. Therefore, it cannot be translated due to the nature of its meaning.

For the English phrase "unhappy with their lot" the translation in the target text is "**tidak bahagia bersama kelompoknya**". The translator followed a literal translation method by translating "lot" as "kelompok." However, this translation does not convey the original idiomatic meaning. While the original idiomatic meaning reflects dissatisfaction with fate or life circumstances, the translation shows dissatisfaction within a relationship or group.

By this translation, the context is changed from dissatisfaction with fate to unhappiness within a community or group. Indonesian readers cannot understand the exact meaning intended in the source. They may think that the Malfoy family is unhappy with the group or alliance they are participating in, while in fact, the original text meant that they are not content with their current situation, although they got what they wanted.

ST	TT
<p>"You took your time!" roared Vernon Dursley when Harry appeared at the top of the stairs. "Get down here, I want a word!" (p.30)</p>	<p>"Kau sengaja berlambat-lambat!" raung Vernon Dursley ketika Harry muncul di pundak tangga. "Turun sini, aku mau bicara!" (hal.49)</p>

An interesting phrase may be underlined in the text above: **"You took your time!"** The sentence is an idiom, one of those most current in English. "Take your time" normally refers to "don't rush" or "do it at your own pace". However, in that situation, the phrase "You took your time" is ironically used by Vernon Dursley in order to blame Harry for being too slow.

The method followed by the translator is paraphrasing. The translation **"Kau sengaja berlambat-lambat!"** has successfully carved the essence of sarcasm and criticism found in the original idiomatic phrase. The translator understood that "take your time" in this context is used in the negative sense to imply that Harry is considered slow, rather than as a positive statement. This translation effectively communicates the original meaning; it has maintained the sense of impatience and criticism intended in the source language.

ST	TT
<p>"Let's have no more arguments. Time's wearing on. I want a few of your hairs, boy, now." (p.49)</p>	<p>"Mari kita jangan bertengkar lagi. Waktunya sudah sempit. Aku perlu beberapa helai rambutmu, Nak, sekarang." (hal.74)</p>

The idiom found in the text above is **"Time's wearing on"**, which means time is passing or running out. It indicates a sense of urgency as time becomes increasingly limited.

In the target text, the phrase "Time's wearing on" is translated as **"Waktunya sudah sempit"**. The translator employs a paraphrasing method to convey the meaning of the idiom in the context of Indonesian. This translation emphasizes urgency, which is the core of the idiom's meaning. The translator opts to deliver the message more directly by using a more familiar phrase in Indonesian, effectively highlighting that time is running out and there is pressure to act promptly.

ST	TT
<p>"I'm George," said the twin at whom Moody was pointing, "Can't you even tell us apart when we're Harry?" "Sorry, George—"</p>	<p>"Aku George," kata si kembar yang ditunjuk Moody. "Apakah kau tak bisa membedakan kami bahkan setelah kami jadi Harry?" "Sori, George—"</p>

<p>"I'm only <i>yanking your wand</i>. I'm Fred really—" (p.53)</p>	<p>"Aku cuma <i>bercanda</i>, aku sebetulnya memang Fred—" (hal.77-78)</p>
---	--

The idiom in the text above is "**yanking your wand**", which indicates that Fred is joking. This phrase is an adaptation of the idiom "yanking your chain", where the translator must understand the humor and the playful nature of the context within the magical world.

In the target text, this phrase is translated as "**bercanda**". The translator uses a literal translation method by removing the metaphorical element of the idiom and replacing it with a more straightforward equivalent that is easily understood in Indonesian.

The translation, "Aku cuma bercanda", effectively conveys the core meaning of the idiom: Fred is not being serious and is merely joking around. However, this translation loses the creative and idiomatic nuance of the original text, particularly the element of "wand," which is relevant to the magical context of the Harry Potter universe. The translator sacrifices the humorous nuance tied to "wand" for the sake of clarity in the target language.

ST	TT
<p>"Harry, <i>give us a hand!</i>" called Hagrid hoarsely from the door, in which he was stuck again. Glad of something to do, Harry pulled him free, then headed through the empty kitchen and back into the sitting room, where Mrs. Weasley had staunched his bleeding now, and by the lamplight Harry saw a clean, gaping hole where George's ear had been. (p.73)</p>	<p>"Harry, <i>bantu kami!</i>" seru Hagrid parau dari pintu, tempat dia terjepit lagi. Senang ada yang dikerjakan, Harry menariknya lepas, kemudian masuk melalui dapur kosong dan kembali ke ruang keluarga, tempat Mrs Weasley dan Ginny masih merawat George. Mrs Weasley sudah berhasil menghentikan pendarahannya, dan dalam cahaya lampu Harry melihat lubang bersih menganga di tempat telinga George tadinya berada. (hal.104)</p>

The phrase "**Give us a hand**" is a very common idiom in English, meaning to assist. It is not a literal request to hand over a physical hand but rather a call for help in a task or situation. In the target text, "Give us a hand" is translated as "**bantu kami**", which is a literal translation of its idiomatic meaning. The translator employs a literal translation approach by avoiding the use of idiomatic expressions and opting for a more straightforward equivalent.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that translators in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows use various techniques to convey the meaning of idioms in the translated text. Techniques such as paraphrasing and literal translation are used for idioms that have no direct equivalent in

Indonesian, such as 'You took your time!' and 'Give us a hand!'. While these techniques are effective in preserving meaning and context, some cultural nuances of the original idiom are sometimes lost. In idioms specific to the wizarding world, such as 'I'm only yanking your wand,' the translator sacrifices idiomatic elements in order to maintain the core message, such as humour, while maintaining the storyline and characterisation.

Overall, the translator managed to maintain the meaning and emotional context of the source text, even though some idiomatic or cultural elements were not translated directly. This reflects a communicative approach that prioritises the target audience, ensuring the text remains fluent and easy to understand. However, this study recommends the use of equivalent local idioms in some cases to maintain the cultural nuances and humour of the original text. A more creative approach to translating humour can also help create a similar effect for Indonesian readers without compromising the core meaning.

REFERENCES

- Baker, M. (2018). *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. Routledge.
- Budiman, R., Suhendra, Y., Hidayat, R. S., & Darmojuwono, S. (2011). Teori dan masalah penerjemahan. *Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka*.
- Cacciari, C., & Glucksberg, S. (1991). Understanding idiomatic expressions: The contribution of word meanings. In *Advances in psychology* (Vol. 77, pp. 217–240). Elsevier.
- Hadi, M. Z. P., & Suhendra, E. (2019). Analisis Ideologi dan Teknik Penerjemahan Pada Teks Terjemahan Mahasiswa STIBA Bumigora Tahun Akademik 2017/2018. *Humanitatis Journal on Language and Literature*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30812/humanitatis.v6i1.562>
- Hadi, M. Z. P., Suhendra, E., & Miswaty, T. C. (2020). THE USE OF TRANSLATION IDEOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES IN INDONESIAN VERSION OF AGATHA CHRISTIE'S ENDLESS NIGHT NOVEL. *Humanitatis: Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(2), 231–250.
- Hadi, M. Z. P., Yuliarsi, I., Pratama, H., & Yulianti, Y. (2024). Literacy in translation: between strategic competence and AI assistance. *Proceedings of Fine Arts, Literature, Language, and Education*, 830–839. <https://proceeding.unnes.ac.id/icoella/article/view/3788>
- Hartono, R. (2012). Model dan Prinsip-prinsip Penerjemahan Idiom dan Gaya Bahasa dari Bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa Indonesia. *Prosodi*, 6(1).
- Kurniawan, I. K. A., Sudipa, I. N., & Indriani, K. S. (2024). The Translation Of Idioms In The Netflix Subtitle Of The Film Notting Hill. *Indonesian Journal of Science, Technology and Humanities*, 2(1), 20–25.
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(4), 255–256.
- Larson, M. L., & Taniran, K. (1988). *Penerjemahan berdasar makna: Pedoman untuk pepadanan antarbahasa*. Arcan.

- Newmark, P. (2003). *A textbook of translation*.
- Nida, E. A., & Taber, C. R. (1974). *The theory and practice of translation* (Vol. 8). Brill Archive.
- Premasari, A. A., & Widodo, P. (2021). Translation strategies of idiomatic expressions in the novel Edensor. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 4(2), 64–69.
- Putri, D. I., & Rejeki, S. (2021). Types of idioms and strategies in translating idioms in the novel *The Girl on The Train* by Paula Hawkins. *Journal Albion: Journal of English Literature, Language, and Culture*, 3(2).
- Sandi, F. A. K., & Andina, D. M. (2024). Analisis Strategi Penerjemahan Idiom Pada Novel “I Rise” Karya Marie Arnold. *Jurnal Humaya: Jurnal Hukum, Humaniora, Masyarakat, Dan Budaya*, 4(1), 63–75.
- Wisudawanto, R. (2018). Penerjemahan Idiom: Masalah dan Teknik Penerjemahannya. *Jurnal Pariwisata Indonesia*, 14(2), 58–64.