# TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN NOVEL TO ALL THE BOYS I'VE LOVED BEFORE

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#### Abstract

This research aims to analyze the translation strategies, syntactically and semantically, used by the translator from English to Indonesian and the translation quality assessment. Theories by Chesterman, and Nababan et al., along with other theories, were used to discover the answer in the analyzing process. The methods applied are descriptive qualitative and focus group discussion (FGD). The results of the translation strategies shows, the majorly used syntactic strategies is unit shift, whereas the most employed semantic strategies are paraphrase followed by trope change. Translation quality assessment wise, ten data shows less accuracy level and the overall data indicates high accuracy level, high acceptability level, and high readability level.

Keywords: Translation Analysis, Idiomatic Expressions, Novel

# **INTRODUCTION**

Humans use language to communicate to other human beings in order to express their feelings and fulfill their needs in their daily life. With specific language people could understand each other, however the variety and differences of language may sometimes make it difficult for people to communicate. Therefore, translation is a way of settling for the difficulties of communication. According to Catford (1965), "Translation may be defined as follows : the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" That being so, translating is not only a replacement of language but it is also a transfer on meaning by the same message. Translating is not an easy task to do, especially when translating an idiomatic expression, translators must deal with the hardship of cultural diversity between the source and target language to convey equivalent meaning. Not to mention that idioms cannot be translated literally, Baker (2018) stated that, "...in the case of idioms, often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components." In other words, idioms are a unique form of words that the meaning cannot be taken literally.

Aside from the difficulties that occurred when translating an idiom, translators have conquered the distress that resulted in plenty of research on idiomatic translation. Furthermore, there are many earlier studies that examined idiomatic expressions in novels and movies, two of them are chosen to be provided here. First, a research conducted by Fadwati A. (2021) this study examined idiomatic expressions translation strategy in the *Fast and Furious: Hobbs and Shaw's* movie, using Baker's theory. It is concluded that the most frequent translation strategy used is translation by paraphrase (37.8%) and using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form (36.4%). Next, an article made by Yahya and Islami (2019) using the *Iron Man* movie, they investigate idiomatic translation strategies based by Baker and Molina & Albir, and analyze the types of idioms using theory by Fernando. The result showed the most frequent strategy applied is paraphrasing. Moreover, the types of idioms are classified into pure idioms 25%, semi idioms 23%, and literal idioms 51%. The similarity between those previously mentioned and this



present study are the research topic that is idiomatic translation strategies. The differences are, the theory used in analyzing the data, they used Baker's while this study used Chesterman's, and the analysis of the translation quality assessment being done.

This particular study aims to analyze the classification of translation strategies limited to syntactic and semantic approaches using Chesterman (2016) as the main theory and other theories to support such as Newmark, Catford, Nida & Taber, and Folley & Hall. Then, the translation quality assessment in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, using theory by Nababan et al. (2012). The novel *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* by Jenny Han and the Indonesian translated version by Airien Kusumawardani under the same title, was chosen as the source data, since the novel contains numerous idiomatic expressions. The writer's curiosity and interest in the novel and in idiomatic expressions became the reason why the writer wished to investigate whether or not the idioms from the source language are maintained in the target language.

#### **Literature Review**

#### **Translation Strategies**

Based on Chesterman's (2016) theory, there are three translation strategies namely, Syntactic, Semantic and Pragmatic. This study only uses syntactic and semantic strategies nevertheless. Syntactic strategies shown in the analysis comprises: unit shift, phrase structure change, scheme change. The Semantic strategies shown in the analysis consist of: distribution change, paraphrase, and trope change.

Using a term from Catford (1965), Chesterman (2016) explained **Unit Shift** as, "The units are: morpheme, word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph. A unit shift occurs when a ST unit is translated as a different unit in the TT..." Next is **Phrase Structure Change**, "This strategy, or rather group of strategies, comprises a number of changes at the level of the phrase, including number, definiteness and modification in the noun phrase, and person, tense and mood in the verb phrase. The unit itself may remain unchanged,...but its internal structure changes." (Chesterman, 2016) Lastly, **Scheme Change** which has four types, Chesterman (2016) stated, "...the kinds of changes that translators incorporate in the translation of rhetorical schemes such as parallelism, repetition, alliteration, metrical rhythm etc..." The types are: a) *ST Scheme*  $X \rightarrow$ *TT Scheme* X, the scheme in the ST remains the same scheme in the TT. b) *ST Scheme*  $X \rightarrow$  *TT Scheme* Y, the ST scheme changed to another scheme in the TT. c) *ST Scheme* X  $\rightarrow$  *TT Scheme* X, adding scheme in the TT.

Moreover, the first in semantic strategies is **Distribution Change**, Chesterman (2016) stated, "...a change in the distribution of the "same" semantic components over more items (expansion) or fewer items (compression)." Another one is **Paraphrase**, "The paraphrase strategy results in a TT version that can be described as loose, free, in some contexts even undertranslated. ... This is a typical strategy for the translation of idioms, for instance, for which no corresponding idiomatic expression can be found in the TL." (Chesterman, 2016) Finally, a **Trope Change**, Chesterman (2016) elucidated, "...set of strategies, applies to the translation of rhetorical tropes (i.e. figurative expressions)." The four types of it are: a) *ST trope*  $X \to TT$  trope X, "...a ST metaphor is retained as a metaphor in the TT." b) *ST trope*  $X \to TT$  trope Y, "...an ST metaphor might be translated as one based on a different tenor, or as some other trope altogether." c) *ST* trope  $X \to TT$  trope  $\emptyset$ , "...the figurative element is dropped altogether." d) *ST trope*  $\emptyset \to TT$ trope X, "...a trope is used in the TT but not in the ST."



# **Translation Quality Assessment**

Nababan et al. (2012) suggests that there are three aspects of translation quality consisting of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. Each aspect has scores, the higher the score the better the translations are, vice versa.

Table 1

	Translation Accuracy Assessment Instrument		
Translation Category	Score	Quality Parameter	
Accurate	3	Word meaning, technical term, phrase, clause, sentence or source text is translated accurately into target text; no meaning distortion occurs.	
Less Accurate	2	Most word meaning, technical term, phrase, clause, sentence or source text is translated accurately into target text. Yet, meaning distortion still occurs or double meaning translation ( <i>taksa</i> ) or meaning omission that breaks intact message.	
Not Accurate	1	Word meaning, technical term, phrase, clause, sentence or source text is translated inaccurately into target text or deleted.	

Accurate	L	distortion still occurs or double meaning translation ( <i>taksa</i> ) or meaning omission that breaks intact message.
Accurate	1	Word meaning, technical term, phrase, clause, sentence or sou is translated inaccurately into target text or deleted.

Table 2
Translation Acceptability Assessment Instrument

Translation Category	Score	Quality Parameter
Acceptable	3	The translation looks natural; technical terms are commonly used and are familiar for the reader; phrase, clause and sentence have followed Indonesian language rules.
Less Acceptable	2	The translation looks natural in general; yet there is a little problem in the use of technical terms or a little grammatical error.
Not Acceptable	1	The translation doesn't look natural or seem like a translation work; technical terms are uncommon and unfamiliar for the reader; phrase, clause and sentence do not follow Indonesian language rules.

Table 3 Translation Readability Assessment Instrument

Translation Category	Score	Quality Parameter
Readable	3	Word, technical term, phrase, clause, and sentence or translation text is easily understood by the reader.
Less Readable	2	The translations are commonly understood by readers; yet some parts have to be read more than once to understand the translation.
Not Readable	1	Translation is difficult to understand by readers.



#### METHOD

Descriptive qualitative method, is the method of this research. Qualitative research is descriptive, that means the analyzed data and its findings are in the forms of descriptions, instead of numbers. In the procedure of collecting and investigating the data, several steps taken are: first, reading the novel *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, both English and Indonesian version. Second, identifying and highlighting the idiomatic expressions in the English novel. Third, collecting all findings. Fourth, selecting the most interesting idiomatic expressions to be analyzed. Fifth, classifying the datas based on Chesterman's theory, then, the data are elaborated on how the translation strategy is applied to idiomatic translation from SL into TL. Finally, the supporting theories are applied to the analyzed data.

In addition, there are two methods of data collection here, content analysis and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Content analysis was used to find the translation strategies applied in the research and the data are in the form of phrases and sentences. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used to gather information and comments from the raters about the translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The writer provided the raters with scales adapted from translation quality assessment by Nababan et al. (2012)

# **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### Results

The findings from 113 data collected are: First, in terms of the translation strategies, the writer found 8 syntactic strategies applied, which are: 54 Unit Shift, 13 Clause Structure Change, 13 Literal Translation, 12 Cohesion Change, 10 Phrase Structure Change, 6 Scheme Change, 3 Transposition, and 2 Level Shift. Then, 5 semantic strategies used were discovered, those are: 65 Paraphrase, 42 Trope Change, 2 Distribution Change, 2 Abstraction Change, and 2 Antonymy. Lastly, after the Focus Group Discussion, the raters indicated the result of the translation quality assessment shows only 10 data are scored less accurate, all in all, other datas shows a high level accuracy, high level acceptability, and high level readability.

#### Discussion

As stated in the results above, there are 113 data, 6 of them are analyzed fully in discussion.

01/BILB/ENG/SL/P7	",I was tempted to go ahead and spill the beans,"
01/BILB/IND/TL/P13	"aku tergoda untuk lebih dulu <b>memberitahukan tentang apa yang terjadi</b> antara Margot dan Josh."

Syntactically, the implicit verb phrase "spill the beans" in the SL is translated explicitly into a verb phrase "*memberitahukan tentang apa yang terjadi antara Margot dan Josh*" in the TL. It anaphorically refers to "…"I broke up with Josh tonight. After dinner."" Foley & Hall (2003) stated, "Referring back in a text to a previously mentioned item is known as 'anaphoric reference'…" (p.328) Here, there is a **phrase structure change**, "This strategy, …comprises a number of changes at the level of the phrase, including number,…" (Chesterman, 2016, p.93). A three-word phrase in SL is translated into a nine-word phrase in TL. Therefore, there is an **overtranslation**, Newmark (1981) said that, "A semantic translation tends to be more complex,… It tends to overtranslate, to be more specific than the original, to include more meanings in its search for one nuance of meaning." (p.39).

Semantically, **distribution change** was used since an expansion occurs in the translation, from SL implicit expression to TL explicit statement. "This is a change in the distribution of



the "same" semantic components over more items (expansion)..." (Chesterman, 2016, p.100). Nida and Taber (1982) called this an **expansion**, they explained, "Hence, if one is obliged to be somewhat more explicit in the receptor language than in the source language, the translation will inevitably tend to be longer." (p.164). The idiom 'spill the beans' means "reveal secret information, especially unintentionally or indiscreetly." (*Oxford Dictionary of Idiom*, 2004, p.272) and according to *KII* (2008), "to spill the beans" means, "*membuka rahasia*" (p.57). In *TBI* (2008), the synonym for '*membuka*' is '*mengungkapkan*' (p.81), '*mengungkapkan*' also means '*memberitahukan*' (p.66).

In terms of the quality of translation according to Nababan et al. (2012), the raters gave the accuracy score 2, the acceptability score 3, and the readability score 3.

	02/BILB/ENG/SL/P13	"she screams at the drop of a hat."
Г	02/BILB/IND/TL/P25	"Dia bisa <b>tiba-tiba</b> saja berteriak."

Grammatically, the expression "...**at the drop of a hat**..." in SL is a prepositional phrase and in the TL "...*tiba-tiba*..." is an adverb. The syntactic strategy applied here is **unit shift** because the unit changes from phrase to word, Chesterman (2016) stated, "A unit shift occurs when a ST unit is translated as a different unit in the TT" (p.93). Catford (1965) explained **unit shift** as, "...changes of rank – that is, departures from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL." (p.79) The reduplication word "*tiba-tiba*" in Indonesian language is a new lexical item, Moeliono et al. (2017) stated, "*Pada tataran morfologi pengulangan menghasilkan leksem dan wujud kata baru*." (p.117) they also asserted that, "*adverbia yang berupa pengulangan kata dasar : tibatiba*" (p.250).

Semantically, the idiom in SL is translated into a non-idiom in the TL. Since it is undertanslated, the strategy used here is **paraphrase**, Chesterman (2016) stated, "This is a typical strategy for the translation of idioms,...for which no corresponding idiomatic expression can be found in the TL." (p.101) Newmark (1988) addressed this translation method as **idiomatic translation**, he explained, "Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms..." (p.47). The meaning of the idiom 'at the drop of a hat' is "without delay or good reason" (*Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*, 2004, p.86). In *KII* (2008), the idiom 'at the drop of a hat' means, "*dgn segera*" (p.200), and according to *TBI* (2008) the word '*segera*' is synonymous to '*mendadak*' and the other synonym for '*mendadak*' is '*tiba-tiba*' (p.116).

From the quality of the translation according to Nababan et al. (2012), the raters gave the accuracy score 3, the acceptability score 3, and the readability score 3.

03/BILB/ENG/SL/P47	"So you used me to <b>save face</b> ?"
03/BILB/IND/TL/P100	"Jadi kau memanfaatkanku untuk <b>menyelamatkan harga dirimu</b> ?"

From the grammatical structure, the expression "save face" is a two-word phrase and the TL "*menyelamatkan harga dirimu*" is a three-word phrase, as a result there is an expansion. The syntactic strategy employed here is **phrase structure change**, as stated by Chesterman (2016), "This strategy,...comprises a number of changes at the level of the phrase, including number,..." (p.93). Newmark (1981) explained **overtranslation** as, "A semantic translation tends to be



more complex,... It tends to overtranslate, to be more specific than the original, to include more meanings in its search for one nuance of meaning." (p.39).

Semantically, the strategy applied here is **trope change**, according to Chesterman (2016); *ST* trope  $X \rightarrow TT$  trope  $\emptyset$ , "Here the figurative element is dropped altogether." (p.103). Because there is no such expression in the TL, the translator doesn't retain the expression. Method proposed by Newmark (1988), **idiomatic translation**, "...reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original." (p.47). The idiom 'save face' means, "retain respect; avoid humiliation" (*Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*, 2004, p.100). According to *KII* (2008), the idiom 'to save face' means, "*menjaga hargadiri/ nama baik*." (p.229). The synonym for the word '*menjaga*' is '*memelihara*', and '*memelihara*' also means '*menyelamatkan*' (*TBI*, 2008, p.364) The '-*mu*' in TL is a second person pronouns in Indonesian language, Moeliono et al. (2017) stated, "*Pronomina persona adalah pronomina yang dipakai untuk mengacu pada orang*." (p.330) they later explained, "*Pronomina persona kedua tunggal mempunyai beberapa wujud*, *yakni engkau*, ... dan -mu." (p.334)

For the assessment of the translation quality from Nababan et al. (2012), the raters gave the accuracy score 3, the acceptability score 3, and the readability score 3.

04/BILB/ENG/SL/P61	"And I won't walk you to class or buy you flowers." "I get the picture."
04/BILB/IND/TL/P129	"Dan aku tidak akan mengantarmu ke kelas atau membelikanmu bunga." "Aku <b>mengerti</b> ."

Syntactically, a shift from phrase "get the picture" to word "*mengerti*", thereupon, the translation strategy applied here is **unit shift**, "A unit shift occurs when a ST unit is translated as a different unit in the TT" (Chesterman, 2016, p.93). The theory to assist is **unit shift** from Catford (1965), he stated that, "...changes of rank – that is, departures from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL." (p.79)

In terms of meaning, the idiom "...get the picture" is translated into a non-idiom "...mengerti". For that reason, the semantic strategy used is paraphrase, Chesterman (2016) explained, "...in some contexts even undertranslated....This is a typical strategy for the translation of idioms,...for which no corresponding idiomatic expression can be found in the TL." (p.101). As stated by Newmark (1988) this type of translation is called idiomatic translation, he explained, "Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms..." (p.47). The idiomatic expression 'get the picture' means "Understand a situation" (*Oxford Dictionary of Idioms*, 2004, p.218). According to *KII* (2008), "to get the picture" means "*dpt memahami*" (p.429). The word 'memahami' is synonymous to "2 mengerti" (*TBI*, 2008, p.348).

Translation quality assessment given by the raters, taken from Nababan et al. (2012) accuracy score 3, next acceptability wise score 3, and the readability score 3.

05/BILB/ENG/SL/P26	"The last thing I need is Josh <b>giving me a hard time</b> for reading a trashy book"
05/BILB/IND/TL/P56	"Hal terakhir yang kubutuhkan adalah Josh yang <b>mengejekku</b> karena



membaca sebuah buku norak..."

Syntactically, **unit shift** strategy is employed here. Chesterman (2016) stated, "A unit shift occurs when a ST unit is translated as a different unit in the TT" (p.93). Because the SL "giving me a hard time" is a phrase and is translated into a word "*mengejekku*" in the TL. This shifting, according to Catford (1965) is **unit shift**, "...changes of rank – that is, departures from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL." (p.79). The '-*ku*' in "*mengejekku*" is a first person pronoun in Indonesian language, as stated by Moeliono et al. (2017), "*Pronomina persona adalah pronomina yang dipakai untuk mengacu pada orang*." (p.330) "...*bentuk pronomina, khususnya yang bermakna tunggal, ada yang berupa kata utuh dan ada yang berupa bentuk terikat, seperti ku-, -ku*..." (Moeliono et al., 2017, p.330)

Semantically, the expression "...giving me a hard time..." in the SL is undertranslated into "...mengejekku..." in the TL. The semantic strategy used here is paraphrase, Chesterman (2016) stated that, "This is a typical strategy for the translation of idioms,...for which no corresponding idiomatic expression can be found in the TL." (p.101). This theory is similar to Newmark's (1988) translation method; idiomatic translation, he stated, "Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms..." (p.47). The idiom 'give sb a hard time' means, "to deliberately make a situation difficult and unpleasant for sb" (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2015, p.694). According to *KII (2008)* 'Unpleasant' means "tak enak/ menyenangkan" (p.619) The TL "mengejekku" is used to convey the feeling of unpleasantness because it cataphorically refers to the following phrase "...for reading a trashy book..." Foley & Hall (2003) explained, "...to refer to something later in the sentence...This is known as 'cataphoric reference"" (p.328).

In terms of translation quality assessment, from Nababan et al. (2012), the raters gave scores 3 for accuracy, 3 for acceptability, and 3 for readability.

	06/BILB/ENG/SL/P19	"But today, <b>so far so good.</b> "
Г	06/BILB/IND/TL/P41	"Dan hari ini, s <b>ampai detik ini, semuanya lancar.</b> "

Grammatically, the phrase "...so far so good" in the SL and in the TL "...Sampai detik ini, semuanya lancar", both has a rhyming sound of 'S-S' so both are alliteration, therefore, the syntactic strategy used is scheme change; ST Scheme  $X \rightarrow TT$  Scheme X since the alliteration in the SL remains in the TL. Chesterman (2016) stated that, "...if the ST scheme is judged to be relevant to the translation task, it can be (to some extent) preserved (e.g. ST alliteration  $\rightarrow$  TT alliteration): in fact, no change." (p.97). The aesthetic value which is the sound in alliteration is endure, Newmark (1988) called this method as semantic translation, he stated, "Semantic translation differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (that is, the beautiful and natural sound) of the SL text,..." (p.46)

Semantically, the idiom in SL was dropped in the TL, it signifies that **trope change** is applied; ST trope  $X \rightarrow TT$  trope  $\emptyset$ . Chesterman (2016) said, "Here the figurative element is dropped altogether." (p.103). Newmark (1988) on **idiomatic translation**, "Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original." (p.47). The idiom 'so far, so good' means, "progress has been satisfactory, up to now" (Oxford Dictionary of Idioms, 2004, p.102). And in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2015), 'so far, so good' means,



"...things have been successful until now..." (p.544) The word '*ini*' in TL is a general indicator, "Dalam bahasa Indonesia terdapat dua kata penunjuk umum, yakni '*ini*' dan '*itu*". (Moeliono et al., 2017, p.311)

For the score of translation quality, for the accuracy the rates gave 3, the acceptability 3, lastly, the readability scored 3.

# CONCLUSION

Concluding the results and discussion section, the researcher found 8 syntactic strategies and 5 semantic strategies used in translating the novel entitled *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* and it's Indonesian translated version. For the syntactic strategy, the recurrent strategy applied is Unit Shift, while for the semantic strategy the frequent strategies used is Paraphrase followed by Trope Change. The common translation strategies that show less accuracy level are Cohesion Change (syntactic) and Paraphrase (semantic). Overall, the translation strategies from the data collected shows high accuracy level, high acceptability level and high readability level. Eventually, it could be said that the idiomatic expressions in the source language were not preserved at all in the target language.

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