

Techniques Used in Translation Phrasal Verbs in The Subtitle of “The Devil Wears Prada”

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the translation techniques applied to phrasal verbs in the subtitles of *The Devil Wears Prada*. The qualitative approach is employed to analyze the translation of phrasal verbs, using the primary theory by Molina and Albir's (2002). The study categorizes phrasal verbs into three types: intransitive, transitive separable, and transitive inseparable, with three examples from each category, consisting of nine verbs. The study identifies the use of six techniques from Molina and Albir's eighteen proposed methods: (1) one Reduction, 3 (three) Established Equivalent, 3 (three) Literal Translation, (1) one Modulation, (1) one Generalization, and (1) one Substitution. This study on translating phrasal verbs in *The Devil Wears Prada* provides key insights into the translation techniques used in the film, offering practical guidance for translators and advancing our understanding of cross-cultural adaptation in subtitling.

Keywords: Phrasal Verbs; Translation Techniques; The Devils Wears Prada

INTRODUCTION

Phrasal verbs are idiomatic expressions that combine a verb with a preposition or adverb to create a meaning different from the individual components (McArthur, 1992). Their complexity and nuanced meanings present unique challenges in translation studies (Cowie, 1998). This research examines how the subtitles of *The Devil Wears Prada* are translated, focusing specifically on the translation of phrasal verbs from English to Indonesian. The study employs the translation techniques framework proposed by Molina and Albir (2002), which provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing translation strategies. Molina and Albir's framework includes methods such as literal translation, borrowing, calque, transposition, modulation, equivalency, adaptation, compensation, amplification, and reduction. These techniques are essential for preserving the original meaning, style, and impact of the source text (Baker, 1992; Newmark, 1988).

Phrasal verbs are categorized into three primary types: intransitive, transitive separable, and transitive inseparable (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Intransitive phrasal verbs, such as "run out" in "We ran out of milk this morning," do not require an object and can have the adverb either positioned between the verb and particle or following the particle (Quirk et al., 1985). Transitive separable phrasal verbs, like "pick up" in "I'll pick up the shoes on my way home," allow for an object to be placed between the verb and particle (Thompson, 1996). Transitive inseparable phrasal verbs, such as "look after" in "She looks after her younger sister," require that the object follow the entire phrasal verb and cannot be inserted between the verb and particle (Baker, 1992).

The translation of these phrasal verbs is crucial in maintaining the film's dialogue integrity and character development, as they contribute significantly to the mood and narrative (Larson, 1984; House, 2015). Proper translation techniques are necessary to adapt these expressions to

the target language, ensuring that they convey the same impact and meaning as intended in the source language (Munday, 2008).

The study of phrasal verb translation in *The Devil Wears Prada* uncovers several areas for further research when compared to Ika Wahyu Maylani's (2017) work. While this study sheds light on translation techniques for film subtitling, it does not explore how idiomatic phrasal verbs are modified to meet the specific constraints of subtitling, such as spatial and temporal limitations. Furthermore, it does not examine how differences in culture and context between the source and target languages influence translation choices, nor does it address how the translator's skills and background affect translation precision. There is also a lack of research into how different translation strategies perform with various types of phrasal verbs and their application across different genres and media. This underscores the necessity for targeted research on subtitling phrasal verbs, aiming to improve our understanding of how translation techniques are adapted for cinematic contexts and to enhance cross-linguistic adaptation methods. Analyzing the subtitling of phrasal verbs in *The Devil Wears Prada* could offer significant insights into these aspects.

METHOD

This research employed qualitative methods to provide a detailed analysis of the data. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993: 380), qualitative research emphasizes in-depth exploration of materials, situations, activities, or relational qualities, offering a comprehensive description. The study analyzed phrasal verbs from the English-Indonesian subtitles of the film "The Devil Wears Prada," focusing on their usage within phrases, clauses, and sentences. Data was collected and analyzed using the approach described by Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The process began with organizing and streamlining the data, using sentences from the subtitles to address the research goals. Next, the data was presented in a clear and condensed manner to aid in drawing conclusions. The data reduction and display steps were tailored to the research objectives. Ultimately, conclusions were formulated and validated upon the completion of data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of translating English phrasal verbs into Indonesian reveals several translation techniques and their effectiveness. For intransitive phrasal verbs, the translation involves **Reduction** and **Literal Translation**. For instance, "...*go out*..." in "*Yeah, we're gonna go out to dinner.*" is left untranslated omitting the literal meaning but clarity is still well maintained. Similarly, "...*walk in.*" is translated as "...*tiba.*" reflecting a literal translation approach. Transitive separable phrasal verbs like "...*fit in*..." and "*Deal with*..." demonstrate the use of **Established Equivalents** and **Modulation**, respectively, adapting to target language norms. For example, "...*fit in*..." becomes "...*layak*..." and "*Deal with*..." is simplified to "*Hadapi*..." reflecting contextual appropriate translations. Transitive inseparable phrasal verbs, such as "...*whisk...away*..." shows the use of **Generalization** and **Substitution** strategies. "...*stick it out*..." is translated as "...*bertahan*..." an **Established Equivalent**, while "...*whisk...away*..." becomes "...*membawa*..." generalizing the concept. Finally, "...*in charge of*..." translates to "...*mengatur*..." through **Substitution**, aligning with functional equivalence principles. Overall, these strategies ensure that the translations convey the intended meaning effectively while adapting to linguistic and cultural contexts.

Discussions

1. Intransitive Phrasal Verb

SL: “Yeah, we’re gonna **go out** to dinner.”

TL: “*Kami akan makan malam.*”

The intransitive phrasal verb “...**go out**...” in the SL in which according to *KII* (2010, p.273), means “(pergi) **keluar**, is left untranslated in the TL, but the meaning is still clear. Therefore, **reduction** technique is used here. Molina and Albir (2002, p. 510) describe reduction as the process of omitting certain pieces of information from the source text when translating into the target text.

This kind of translation could also utilize one of Chesterman’s syntactic strategies known as the **Cohesion change**, in which the sentence in the SL is rendered elliptically in the TL. Further, he stated that “A cohesion change is something that affects intra-textual reference, ellipsis,...” (Chesterman: 2016, p.95 & 96). To elaborate on the meaning of the term, Ellipsis refers to the omission of grammatical elements that are usually necessary, based on the assumption that these elements are clear from the context and do not need to be explicitly stated. (McCarthy, 1996, p. 43)

SL: “I’m about to **walk in**.”

TL: “*Aku hampir tiba.*”

The intransitive phrasal verb “...**walk in**.” in the SL is translated into “...**tiba**.” in the TL in which according to *KII* (2010, p.635), ‘**walk in**’ means ‘**masuk**’. In *KBBI*, **masuk** v **1 datang** (pergi) ke... and according to *TBI datang 1 v tiba* (p. 122). Therefore, as the expression is recognized by a dictionary or the language being used, the **Established equivalent** by Molina and Albir is utilized here. They mentioned that “Using a term or expression that is acknowledged as equivalent in the target language by dictionaries or common usage” (2002, p. 510).

Nida (1964) identifies three types of modifications in translation: additions, subtractions, and alterations. These adjustments are necessary due to differences between languages, particularly when dealing with semantic mismatches or idiomatic expressions (p. 226). In addition, Baker (1992) also mention that it is frequently possible to find a target language idiom or fixed expression with a similar meaning to the source idiom or expression, even though it may use different lexical components (p. 74).

SL: When I **come back**, you can go

TL: “*Saat aku kembali, kau boleh pergi*”

The intransitive phrasal verb “...**come back**...” in the SL translated into “**kembali**” in the TL. According to *KII* (2010, p.128), “**come back**” means **kembali**. This aligns with the literal translation approach, confirming that the term “**kembali**” accurately reflects the meaning of “**come back**” in this context. Therefore, **Literal translation** is used here. Molina and Albir describe Literal Translation as a method in which the translator maintains the grammatical structure and vocabulary of the original text, resulting in a translation that closely resembles the form of the source material (2002, p. 45).

“In translating phrasal verbs, it is often effective to use a single, simple equivalent in the target language if it conveys the intended meaning. This approach maintains clarity and avoids

unnecessary complexity in the translation.” (Larson, 1984, p. 105). Also, Mona Baker (2008, p.20-21) describes literal translation, or direct translation, as involving the direct translation of the source text's words and phrases into the target language with minimal modification. Baker emphasizes that this approach aims to retain the exact wording and structure of the source text, although it may not always capture idiomatic or culturally specific nuances effectively.

2. Transitive Separable Phrasal Verb

SL: “I don’t **fit in** here”

TL: “*Aku tak layak bekerja di sini*”

The transitive separable phrasal verb “...**fit in**...” in the SL is translated into “...**layak**...” in the TL in which according to *KII* (2010, p.245), ‘**to fit in**’ 1 means ‘**cocok**’ Based on TBI *cocok a 3 layak*. (2008, p.109) Thus, since the expression is acknowledged by dictionaries or in current usage, the **Established Equivalent** by Molina and Albir is applied here. It is described as employing a term or expression that is acknowledged as an equivalent in the target language, according to dictionaries or common usage (2002, p. 510).

Furthermore, as stated by Nida & Taber (1969, p.162) “The translator often seeks out an equivalent term in the target language that conveys the same function or concept as the term in the source language. This approach ensures that the translation is understood in the target culture in the same way as the original text is understood in its own culture.”

SL: “**Deal with** it.”

TL: “**Hadapi** saja ”

The transitive separable phrasal verb “**Deal with**...” in the SL is translated into “**Hadapi**...” in the TL. Based on *KII* (2010, p.166), ‘**deal with**’ means ‘**menghadapi**’ and it has the prefix ‘**meng-**’ the meaning of prefix ‘**meng-**’ itself is an important affix in the formation of a verb in Indonesian as stated by Chaer (2006) “Prefix ‘**meng-**’ adalah afiks yang digunakan untuk membentuk kata kerja dari kata dasar.” (p.192-193) Based on the datum, prefix ‘**meng-**’ in the TL is eliminated. Therefore, this datum used the **Modulation** translation strategy by Molina and Albir for translating SL into TL. As they stated “Modulation consists of changing the perspective or form of the original text to better suit the target language’s norms and convey the meaning more effectively.” (2002, p.509)

Furthermore, Tarigan also stated that “In translation, certain affixes such as prefixes may be omitted if the target language has a more straightforward or contextually appropriate way of expressing the same meaning. This approach can lead to a more natural and fluent translation, even if it means simplifying the original structure.” (1994, p. 120).

SL: Id’ have to **whisk** you **away** right here and now

TL: *Aku harus membawamu pergi dari sini sekarang juga*

The transitive separable phrasal verb “...**whisk**...**away**...” in the SL is translated to “...**membawa**...” in the TL. LDOCE (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*) (2010, p.2000) ‘**whisk sb/sth away**’ ‘to take someone or something quickly away from a place’ which can be literally translated into ‘*membawa seseorang atau sesuatu dengan segera/cepat dari suatu tempat*’. Thus, the translation of ‘whisk away’ into ‘*membawa*’ is considered accurate or acceptable. ‘**whisk away**’ means ‘**membawa**’ The phrasal verb “**whisk away**” is a specific

idiomatic expression in English, which has been generalized in the TL as “*membawa*” to convey the broader concept of moving someone away. Therefore, **Generalization** is used here. Molina and Albir stated that (2002, p. 510) “Generalization is when a more general term is used in the target language to cover a broader concept from the source language.” This approach helps in capturing the essence of the action described by the phrasal verb while adapting it to the target language's more general expression.

Furthermore, as stated by Baker, M. (1992, p.63). “When dealing with idiomatic expressions, translation strategies often involve simplifying or generalizing the phrase to ensure that the intended meaning is conveyed clearly to the target audience.”

3. Transitive Inseparable Phrasal Verb

SL: “Yet I am *in charge of* her schedule”

TL: “*Aku mengatur jadwalnya*”

The transitive inseparable phrasal verb “...*in charge of*...” in the SL is translated into “...*mengatur*...” in the TL. Based on KII (2010, p.108) ‘*in charge of*’ means **10 ‘mengurus’**. According to TBI (2008, p.547) ‘*mengurus*’ from a base form ‘*urus*’ v 1 ‘*mengatur*’ As Molina and Albir stated (2002, p.514) “In many cases, the translation of idiomatic expressions or complex phrases requires the use of techniques such as substitution or adaptation to find a functional equivalent in the target language. This involves considering the semantic meaning of the expression rather than sticking strictly to a word-for-word translation.” Based on the expression before, this translation used **Substitution**. Molina and Albir stated that “Substitution is a technique where one element is replaced by another in the translation process. This often occurs when a direct translation is not possible or does not adequately convey the intended meaning or function of the original text.” (2002, p.49).

Furthermore, the translation can also be analyzed through the lens of **Functional Equivalence**, a concept discussed by Nida (1964, p.159). Nida emphasizes that translation should aim to achieve an equivalent effect in the target language, which aligns with how the term ‘*mengatur*’ was used in place of ‘*in charge of*’ to convey a similar functional meaning, even though the exact phrasing differs. This approach ensures that the translated text functions effectively within its new context.

SL: “I just have to *stick it out* for a year”

TL: “*Aku cuma perlu bertahan satu tahun*”

The transitive inseparable phrasal verb “...*stick it out*...” in the SL is translated to “...*bertahan*...” in the TL. According to KII (2010, p.556) ‘*stick it out*’ means *inf* ‘*bertahan*’. According to Longman Phrasal Verb Dictionary (2000, p.507) ‘*stick sth out*’ as ‘*to continue doing something that you find difficult or unpleasant for as long as possible or until it is finished*’. Therefore, translating ‘*stick it out*’ into ‘*bertahan*’ is accurate and appropriate, as it effectively conveys the concept of continue doing something that you find difficult. Thus, the phrasal verb “*stick it out*” is an idiomatic expression in English that, in the TL, has been rendered with an **Established Equivalent**. Molina and Albir (2002, p. 510) define Established Equivalent as a method where a term or expression in the target language serves the same purpose or conveys the same idea as in the source language, even if it is not a direct translation. This technique helps to preserve the original meaning of the idiomatic expression while ensuring that it remains natural and clear in the target language.

Furthermore, as noted by Newmark (1988, p. 81), “In translating idiomatic expressions, using an established equivalent in the target language is often the most effective way to convey the intended meaning while preserving the natural flow of the text.” This supports the use of *‘bertahan’* as an appropriate translation for “*stick it out*” in this context.

SL: “Have the brakes *checked on* my car”

TL: “*Periksakan rem mobilku*”

The transitive inseparable phrasal verb “...*checked on*...” in the SL is translated into “*Periksakan*...” in the TL. The word *‘periksakan’* has circumfix *PE-KAN*. The meaning of circumfix *PE-KAN* is a circumfix used to form verbs from base words (usually nouns or adjectives). It indicates an action directed towards something or someone. According to KII (2010, p.109) ‘...*checked on*...’ means *‘pengawasan’*. In KBBI, *‘pengawasan’* means n *penilikan dan penjagaan* (p.108) and word *‘tilik’* a base verb from of *penilkan* means n 2 *‘mengawasi; memeriksa’*. Consequently, since the expression is acknowledged by dictionaries or is common in the language, the **Established Equivalent** according to Molina and Albir is applied in this context. They further explain that ‘using a term or expression that is recognized (by dictionaries or current usage) as an equivalent in the target language’ is the approach taken (2002, p. 510).”

Further, Newmark (1988, p.83) stated that strategy where the translator uses a term or expression that is culturally or contextually appropriate in the target language, even if it deviates from the literal meaning of the source text.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of phrasal verbs utilizing Molina and Albir’s translation techniques in *The Devil Wears Prada* underscores the significance of various translation strategies in effectively conveying meaning across languages. By employing methods such as Reduction, Established Equivalent, Literal Translation, Modulation, and Substitution, the study highlights how these techniques preserve the original text’s context and intent while adapting to the target language’s norms. The findings demonstrate that generalization and established equivalents are particularly useful for translating idiomatic expressions, ensuring clarity and cultural relevance. This research not only provides practical guidance for translators but also enriches our understanding of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural adaptation in film subtitling, offering valuable insights for both theoretical and applied translation studies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the IKIP Siliwangi project for the support in the publication of this journal. I am also profoundly grateful to my supervisor, Evert H. Hilman, whose expertise and assistance were essential to the success of this research. Their support was key in meeting the research goals. I trust that this article will offer meaningful insights and be advantageous for future research.

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