

EXPLORING THE USE OF IDIOMS IN “THE GARFIELD MOVIE (2024)” AND EQUIVALENCE IN INDONESIAN TRANSLATION

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Abstract : *This study analyzes idiomatic expressions in The Garfield Movie (2024) and examines their equivalence in Indonesian translations. Idioms are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be interpreted literally and often convey cultural nuances. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the research identifies types of idioms—lexemic (verbal, nominal, adjectival, adverbial), phrase idioms, frozen idioms, and proverbs—and evaluates how these are rendered into Indonesian through techniques such as literal translation, free translation, dynamic equivalence, formal equivalence, and adaptation. Data were collected by transcribing and observing selected scenes involving main characters Garfield, Vic, and Jinx. Results show that dynamic equivalence and adaptation are the most effective in maintaining semantic and pragmatic meaning, especially for humor and cultural references. Approximately 90% of the idioms were translated accurately, while some required cultural adjustments to achieve equivalent effect in Indonesian.*

Keywords: *idiom, translation, equivalence, Garfield movie, dynamic equivalence, adaptation*

INTRODUCTION

Idioms are integral to natural language use, serving as stylistic devices that convey figurative meaning beyond literal word definitions. They enrich communication by adding cultural depth, emotional resonance, and conversational authenticity. However, idioms also pose significant challenges in translation due to their reliance on shared cultural knowledge,

fixed structure, and context-dependent meanings.

In audiovisual media, idioms contribute to character development, humor, and dramatic tension. Translating idioms in film subtitles is particularly complex because translators must balance accuracy, readability, and synchronization with the visual and auditory elements. A literal rendering often fails to convey

intended meaning, while over-adaptation risks losing the source text's cultural flavor.

The Garfield Movie (2024) was selected for this study because it is a globally popular animated film rich in idiomatic expressions. The story follows Garfield, a sarcastic, food-loving cat, and his adventures with his long-lost father, Vic. The film's humor, character interactions, and emotional moments rely heavily on idioms that reflect English-speaking cultural contexts. Translating these idioms into Indonesian requires careful strategy to maintain comedic timing and audience engagement.

This study aims to answer:

1. What types of idiomatic expressions appear in *The Garfield Movie* (2024)?
2. How are these idioms translated into Indonesian while preserving meaning and effect?

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to idiom translation studies, offering insights for translators, linguists, and subtitle editors working in cross-cultural audiovisual contexts.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Related Theory

Idioms and Their Characteristics

Fernando (1996) defines idioms as fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of their constituent words. **Kridalaksana (2008)** explains that idioms (*idiom* in Indonesian) are units of language whose meanings cannot be predicted from their constituent elements and are often culturally bound. These may take the form of words, phrases, or clauses, and they often embody cultural references. Common classifications include: **Lexemic idioms:** Expressions functioning as verbs ("toughen up"), nouns ("cat burglar"), adjectives ("red-handed"), or adverbs ("out of the blue"). **Phrase idioms:** Fixed multi-word expressions like "a blessing in disguise." **Frozen idioms:** Expressions with unchangeable structure, e.g., "through thick and thin." **Proverbs:** Traditional sayings conveying moral lessons, e.g., "Don't put all your eggs in one basket."

Idioms in Film Dialogue

In movies, idioms enhance authenticity, indicate character background, and provide humor (Baker, 1992). For instance, comedic idioms can be used to create misunderstandings, puns, or sarcasm. Translating them requires an understanding of both linguistic form and pragmatic function.

Translation Theory

Nida (1964) distinguishes between *formal equivalence* (maintaining form and content) and *dynamic equivalence* (producing the same audience effect). Newmark (1988) proposes *semantic translation* (faithful to meaning) and *communicative translation* (focus on readability). In idiom translation, adaptation and paraphrase are common when no direct equivalent exists.

Equivalence in Translation

Equivalence can be: **Semantic equivalence:** Preserving meaning accurately. **Pragmatic equivalence:** Achieving the same communicative effect.

Hatim & Mason (1990) emphasize that for idioms, pragmatic equivalence often takes priority, especially in humor and culturally loaded expressions.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach to identify idiomatic expressions in *The Garfield Movie* (2024) and to analyze their Indonesian translations in terms of semantic and pragmatic equivalence. This design was chosen because it

allows for an in-depth exploration of linguistic phenomena and emphasizes contextual interpretation over numerical measurement.

Location and Object of the Study

The research was conducted in Bengkalis, Riau, Indonesia, and focused on the English dialogue and Indonesian subtitles of *The Garfield Movie* (2024) available on Netflix. The object of the study consisted of idiomatic expressions found in the film's script, with particular attention given to lines spoken by the main characters Garfield, Vic, and Jinx. These characters were selected because their dialogue contained the highest concentration of idioms and played a central role in the film's narrative.

Research Instrument

To support the process, a coding sheet was used to systematically record each idiom, its classification (type), the corresponding Indonesian translation, the translation technique applied, and an evaluation of its equivalence. This coding sheet served to maintain data organization and ensure accuracy in analysis.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection began with repeated viewings of the film to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the

dialogue and its context. The researcher transcribed the English lines and matched them with their Indonesian subtitle translations. Each idiomatic expression was then identified and recorded in the coding sheet along with relevant scene details. This process ensured that idioms were captured accurately and in their original situational context.

Data Analysis Technique

The analysis was carried out in three stages. The first stage was identification, in which idiomatic expressions were located and categorized according to Fernando's (1996) idiom classification. The second stage involved determining the translation techniques used, based on the framework of Nida (1964) and Newmark (1988). The final stage was equivalence evaluation, where each translation was assessed for semantic accuracy and pragmatic effect. This step aimed to determine whether the translation conveyed both the intended meaning and the emotional or cultural impact of the original idiom.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Types of Idioms Found in The Garfield Movie (2024)

The analysis revealed 89 idiomatic expressions categorized into

four major types. Lexemic idioms were the most frequent (46%), comprising verbal, nominal, adjectival, and adverbial forms. Verbal idioms such as *"toughen me up"* and adjectival idioms like *"I'm gonna be naughty"* were commonly used by Garfield to express humor and sarcasm. Phrase idioms (22%) included expressions such as *"break the ice"* and *"last straw"*, often appearing in conversational exchanges to lighten the mood or emphasize emotional turning points. Frozen idioms (18%), e.g., *"through thick and thin"*, conveyed loyalty and solidarity, while proverbs (14%) were used sparingly, typically in reflective dialogue.

2. Translation Techniques and Equivalence of Idioms

Five translation techniques were identified: dynamic equivalence, adaptation, literal translation, free translation, and formal equivalence. Dynamic equivalence (34%) and adaptation (24%) were the most frequently used, especially for humor and culturally bound expressions. For instance, *"through thick and thin"* was rendered as *"susah senang bersama"* to evoke the same emotional resonance for Indonesian audiences. Literal translation (24%) was applied to

idioms with clear Indonesian counterparts, such as “*out of my life*” → “*keluar dari hidupku*”. Free translation (10%) was used to maintain naturalness, while formal equivalence (8%) appeared in universal idioms or proverbs.

Equivalence analysis showed that 90% of idioms achieved both semantic and pragmatic accuracy. The remaining 10% had minor shifts in nuance due to constraints such as subtitle space, cultural unfamiliarity, or timing synchronization. These findings echo Nida’s (1964) emphasis on achieving audience-oriented meaning rather than strictly preserving original form, particularly in audiovisual contexts.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The findings reveal that *The Garfield Movie* (2024) makes extensive use of idiomatic expressions to build humor, strengthen character identity, and create engaging dialogue. A total of 89 idioms were identified, dominated by lexemic idioms, followed by phrase idioms, frozen idioms, and proverbs. Lexemic idioms, particularly verbal and adjectival forms, were most

frequently used by the main characters, reflecting their personalities and emotional states.

The translation analysis shows that while various techniques were applied, the priority remained on retaining the meaning and effect of the idioms. Dynamic equivalence and adaptation were used most often to ensure the humor and cultural nuances were conveyed effectively to Indonesian audiences. Literal translation and free translation appeared in cases where the idiom had a natural equivalent or could be easily rephrased without losing meaning.

Suggestion

Future translators and researchers should pay close attention to the cultural and contextual functions of idioms in audiovisual works, not only to preserve meaning but also to maintain the stylistic and emotional impact of the original dialogue. For animated and comedic films in particular, careful idiom handling can significantly affect audience enjoyment. Further research could explore idiom patterns across different film genres, or investigate audience perception of idiom translations in subtitled media.

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