

Modulation in the Idiom Translation from English to Indonesian in the Novel *Rich People Problems*

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Abstract

Modulation is seen as two different points of view in a similar situation. This research describes the modulation in the translation of idioms in the novel *Rich People Problems*. The material objects of the research were the English novel *Rich People Problems* and its Indonesian translation. The idioms were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences found in the novels. The data-collecting process included reading and then underlining them. After the idioms were identified, their meanings were checked and verified using the idiom dictionaries. The idioms were analyzed by using the theory of Makkai (1972) and the modulation theory by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). Phrasal verb idioms were not dominantly shifted though they are mostly found in the translation of idioms. In addition, modulation can have both narrowing and widening meanings in the target language. On the other hand, modulation mainly occurs in sentences or idioms that take the form of sentences or clauses.

Keywords: Modulation, idiom translation, *Rich People Problems*.

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1. Introduction

As stated by Newmark (1998), the purpose of translation is meaning transfer from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). Catford (1965) further explains that translation intends to change the textual material from both languages. This can be concluded that translation attempts to regenerate the meaning from the source text (ST) to be adjusted in the target text (TT). Moreover, the translation of idioms has been a challenge. Idioms, also known as idiomatic expressions, cannot be predicted the meaning of the words or phrases that make them up (Adelnia & Dastjerdi, 2011; Ahmadi, 2017). The meaning of an idiom has a non-literal meaning making it challenging to transfer its meaning. Nevertheless, modulation might happen in the process of the translation of an idiom. The message and the meaning of the idiom cannot directly be transferred to the target language. Therefore, modulation is implemented. It is defined as one of the ways of the message in the textual material by changing the point of view (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). Modulation aims to deliver the meaning of the idiom so that the speakers of the target language understand the expressions and the language itself.

The research mostly found the types of structural shifts including phrases, words, units, and sentences (Aliurridha & Setiawan, 2019; Herman, 2014). Also, they investigated the quality of the translation whether the translation was acceptable, less acceptable, or unacceptable (Latifah, 2022). Besides, Liswahyuningsih et al (2020) discussed certain word classes such as phrasal verbs in translation. However, they have not been concerned with the modulation in translation from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). However, research on structural shift in idiom translation has been conducted previously that causes the level of phrase becoming word in the Japanese idiom translated to Indonesian in the novel *Oda Nobunaga* (Muliani, 2016). Based on the previous types of research, the focus of this study is on the meaning shift rather than a structural shift in the translation of idioms to complement the previous research. Moreover, modulation may accompany previous work on how they occur in translation.

It is further explained that non-native speakers would find idioms difficult to identify and recognize the meaning. The difficulties to recognize them could be varied. Those difficulties are familiarity with the idioms, the frequency of the idioms, and the similarity between the two languages (Hubers et al., 2020). Moreover, when the speakers do not understand the meaning of the intended idioms, they might fail to understand the content and the context of the idioms (Miller, 2020). Therefore, it is considered significant to conduct this research in search of modulation from both languages.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

1.2.1. Translation

The process of translation has the purpose to deliver an equivalent meaning from one language to another language. On the other hand, Catford (1965) states that the process of translation intends to change the textual material of both languages. Newmark (1998) argues that the process of translation is expected to get equivalent meaning in the target language by not changing the meaning from the source language. Nevertheless, the translation of idiom also means regenerating the meaning of idiom. There is also a need to switch everyday expressions that are not available in the source language to the target language (Newmark, 1988). However, idiom translation has been an issue for translators (Fitri et al., 2019). Moreover, translators have to understand the context of the use. Translators need to have cultural knowledge of the idioms (Putra & Novalinda, 2019). In addition, one of the main issues in the translation of idiom is identifying the idiom. For example, some idioms look obviously unrealistic (Newmark, 1998). The harder the idiom is to explain and understand a word or phrase, the easier it is recognized as the idiom.

There are dictionaries of idioms and phrasal verbs available to identify the idioms. However, there are still problems in the translation of idiom. Baker (2018) explains that idioms have no equivalence in the target language. In addition, idioms might have similarities but dissimilar situations from the source language. on the other hand, idioms might have literal and metaphorical meanings all at once. Instead, it is difficult to translate idioms by only looking at one-word components. Moreover, due to an unchangeable pattern and little variation to change, Baker (2018) also argues that the idiom structure cannot be changed. A part of idiom also cannot be deleted, added by a new word, or be substituted a word with another unrelated word.

1.2.2. Modulation

Modulation is defined as the distinction between two languages faced with the same situation but different ways of thinking by showing it in the form of expressions (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). As further elaborated by Vinay & Darbelnet (1995), messages cannot be transferred directly from the source language to the target language. On the other hand, this is inferred as the change of perspective. Therefore, modulation aims to convey meaning in a way that speakers of the target language can understand based on proper language style and expressions. Thus, it is proven that the results of translation can be different from the point of view of two different languages, even though the situation is similar. Furthermore, there are several types of modulations found in this research. For instance, modulation of abstract for concrete focuses on the change from an abstract concept to the concrete one on *the high and mighty* meaning behaving that someone is much more important than the other translated into “*orang kaya dan terhormat*”. Explicative modulation deals with the cause-effect, while

the change of symbol uses symbol to represent something. Muliani (2016) explains that language shifting from Japanese to Indonesian occurs in the novel *Oda Nobunaga* in the form of structural, word level, and unit shifts. However, the modulations have not yet been further explained.

1.2.3. Idiom

Some experts argue the definition of the idiom and its classification. Idioms are explained as words or phrases which have unrelated meaning to their structures and unpredictable lexical items and grammatical constructions (Kridalaksana, 2001; Chaer, 2012). In other words, idioms are made up of words and phrases that are different and have unpredictable meanings because of their structure. As detailed by O'Grady (1998), an idiom is defined as a unit that has a non-literal meaning from its parts and has a lexical component. The position of an idiom's constituents can never be substituted (Palmer, 1976). Therefore, the translators have to see the whole idiom to know its meaning.

It is found that native English speakers use idioms for communication but non-native speakers face difficulties in understanding the idioms because they have figurative meanings (Hanim & Hardjanto, 2021). On the other hand, idioms are the manifestation of beliefs, ideology, and culture from where the idioms come from. The wide range of language use in English includes idioms which have unpredicted meanings (Motallebzadeh & Tousi, 2011). Idioms are commonly used both in written and oral forms. Additionally, the idiom is considered unique, making it difficult to understand. These difficulties are multifaceted, as idioms are difficult to recognize and interpret. To classify idioms, this study uses the idiom classification of Makkai (1972). Phrasal verb idioms are characterized as a verb followed by one or two prepositions for example *take over*, *belt out*. Then, tournure idioms are recognized as a verb followed by an object that has a determiner and a noun such as *play your cards right*, *burst your bubble*. On the other hand, irreversible binomial idioms are constructed by two words within the similar part of speech and they are connected with a conjunction irreversibly such as *here and there*, *nor or never*. Lastly, incorporating idiom is identified as a noun preceded by an adjective like *blue blood*.

2. Method

This article implemented descriptive qualitative research (Taylor et al, 2015) which has the purpose to figure out the modulation of idiom translation used in the novel *Rich People Problems*. The data taken from both novels were in the form of idioms. The idioms include word, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The example of an idiom in the form of word is 'blueblood' translated into *bangsawan*. The examples of phrasal verb idioms are 'pull up' *tiba*, and 'turn up' *muncul*. The idioms that have clauses consist of the verb and the object are such as 'playing one's cards right' *memainkan kartumu dengan benar*, and 'making a

mountain out of a molehill' *membesar-besarkan*. The data of idioms in the form of sentences is 'the cat's out of the bag' *rahasia sudah terbongkar*.

The material objects are the novel *Rich People Problems* by Kevin Kwan (2017) in English and its translated novel in Indonesian. The novel consists of 436 pages in total published by Penguin Random House LLC that includes 56 chapters. The Indonesian version was translated by Cindy Kristanto (2017) entitled *Masalah Orang Kaya* with 476 pages. *Rich People Problems* is the final book of the bestselling international book from the trilogy of *Crazy Rich Asians* and ranked top three positions in the New York Times bestselling list. The story behind it has the intrigue of a rich family fighting against each other to inherit family wealth. Thus, it shows an abundance of daily conversations including the use of idioms. Knowing the popularity and success of this novel and the use of idioms found, therefore the novel was picked to represent the use of idioms in the literary work.

The data-collection technique consists of several steps. The first step is reading the novel and its Indonesian version to look for the idioms and underlining them (Sudaryanto, 1993). Secondly, the data were identified through the use of idiom dictionaries *McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs* (Spears, 2005) and *Oxford Dictionary of Idioms* (Siefring, 2004). After that, the idioms were classified into some idiom categories from Makkai (1972). After being categorized, the data were categorized and analyzed through the use of meaning shift or modulation by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). Then, the data were presented in the tables to show the modulations and the idiom classifications. Therefore, content analysis technique was applied to analyze the idioms and to describe and also quantity particular phenomena (Bengtsson, 2016; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

3. Finding and Discussion

There found some classifications in the idiom translation. These classifications are matched to the data of idioms found in this article. They are phrasal verb idioms, tournure idioms, irreversible binomial idioms, and incorporating idioms. Phrasal compound idioms and pseudo idioms are not found in the data. They are classified in the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). Below is presented the table of idiom types.

Table 1. Idiom Types

Idiom Types	ST	TT	Frequency
Phrasal Verb Idioms	(1) There were six cars, and the whole damn family was pouring out of them. (RPP, 77)	<i>Ada enam mobil, dan seluruh keluarga sial itu mengalir keluar dari mobil-mobil mereka.</i> (MOK, 84)	54 67.5
	(2) Astrid shook her head in disbelief as she stared at the	<i>Astrid menggeleng tak percaya saat dia</i>	

Idiom Types	ST	TT	Frequency	
	precious heirloom ring, covering her mouth with her right hand as tears began streaming down her face. (RPP, 116)	<i>menatap cincin pusaka yang berharga itu, menutup mulutnya dengan tangan kanan sementara air matanya mulai mengalir di wajahnya.</i> (MOK, 125)		
Tournure Idioms	(3) “And not to burst your bubble , but I have seen some rather unfortunate-looking mixed-raced babies,” Georgina insisted. (RPP, 44)	“Dan tanpa bermaksud menghancurkan harapanmu , aku pernah melihat bayi-bayi ras campuran yang kelihatan agak kurang beruntung.” Georgina mengotot. (MOK, 49)	18	22.5
	(4) “Alamak, bite your tongue , Nadine! Didn’t you know she just had a miscarriage?” Carol whispered. (RPP, 25)	“Alamak, jaga mulutmu , Nadine! Kau tidak tahu dia baru saja keguguran?” Carol berbisik. (MOK, 27)		
Irreversible Binomial Idioms	(5) She listened in silence, nodding her head every now and then . (RPP, 23)	<i>Dia mendengarkan tanpa bersuara, sesekali mengangguk.</i> (MOK, 24)	7	8.75
	(6) “Er, Astrid, I must be very...um, blunt with you. Your grandmother’s condition is extremely... touch and go ...at the moment. (RPP, 66)	“Ng, Astrid, aku harus sangat..mm, berterus terang padamu. kondisi nenekmu sangat ... tidak pasti ...saat ini.” (MOK, 72)		
Incorporating Idioms	(7) This guy she married looks like a true blueblood . (RPP, 122)	<i>Pria yang dinikahnya ini kelihatan seperti bangsawan sungguhan.</i> (MOK, 135)	1	1.25
Total			80	100 %

Phrasal verb idiom is identified as an idiom that consists of a verb and a preposition like the data (2) or it has two prepositions (1). On the other hand, a tournure idiom contains the verb and an object that has a determiner and a noun such as (3) and (4). However, the irreversible binomial idiom is constructed by two words within the same word class

connected with a conjunction in data (5) and (6). Accordingly, incorporating idiom has a noun preceded by an adjective for example (7) or vice versa. The data acquired, there included 80 idioms from the novels. Hence, the idiom classification is implemented to put them categorized. The data had been classified into 4 types. They are 54 phrasal verb idioms, 18 tournure idioms, 7 Irreversible binomial idioms, and one incorporating idioms. However, phrasal compound idioms and pseudo idioms are not found in the data. Based on the data of idiom types, the phrasal verb idiom is the most dominant type of idiom used with a percentage of 67.5. Then, the second-most-occurring idiom occurring is the tournure idiom accounting for 22.5 of the total number. After that, an irreversible binomial idiom appears on the data from 8.75. In addition, only one idiom of incorporating idiom is found giving it 1.25 overall.

Here is the result of modulation found in both novels. Another table below shows the shifts in meaning.

Table 2. *Modulations*

Modulations	ST	TT	Frequency	%
Abstract to Concrete	(8) That's the best news I've heard all week," Astrid said, closing her eyes for a moment. Slowly but surely, she was beginning to see her life with Charlie come into focus . (RPP, 86)	"Itu berita terbaik yang kudengar sepanjang minggu," kata Astrid, menutup matanya sejenak. perlahan tapi pasti, dia mulai melihat kehidupannya dengan Charlie menjadi lebih nyata . (MOK, 93)	6	31.57
	(9) He had of course been into many homes of the high and mighty , but nothing else came close to this. (RPP, 73)	<i>Tentu saja dia pernah dia pernah mengunjungi banyak rumah orang kaya dan terhormat, tetapi tidak ada yang mendekati ini.</i> (MOK, 80)		
Explicate Modulation	(10) "Colette? Hell, if I know. After she had Rachel poisoned, we made sure to steer clear of her. I wanted to press charges against her, you know? But Rachel	<i>"Collete? mana aku tahu? setelah dia meracuni Rachel, kami memastikan untuk tidak dekat-dekat dengannya. aku ingin menuntutnya, kau</i>	5	26.31

Modulations	ST	TT	Frequency	%
	wouldn't hear of it." (RPP, 90)	<i>tahu? tapi Rachel benar-benar menantang.</i> " (MOK, 99)		
	(11) "Mind you, each of them is still going to inherit from Ah Ma's financial holdings—so no one's going to be hurting for cash here." (RPP, 57)	<i>"Jangan lupa, mereka masing-masing akan mendapatkan warisan dari aset-aset finansial Ah Ma-jadi tidak akan ada yang berkekurangan uang dalam hal ini".</i> (MOK, 67)		
A component of the whole	(12) "Alamak, bite your tongue , Nadine! Didn't you know she just had a miscarriage?" Carol whispered. (RPP, 25)	<i>"Alamak, jaga mulutmu, Nadine! Kau tidak tahu dia baru saja keguguran?" Carol berbisik.</i> (MOK, 27)	1	5.26
One part for the other	(13) Lorena, like most of the other women in the ballroom, scrutinized Astrid from head to toe as she walked to her table wearing what appeared to be a crisp men's button-down shirt tucked into exquisitely cut navy-and-white gingham cigarette trousers. (RPP, 27)	<i>Lorena, seperti sebagian besar wanita dalam ballroom itu, meneliti Astrid dari kepala sampai kaki ketika ia berjalan dalam balutan pakaian yang kelihatannya seperti kemeja pria yang tersetrika licin dan dimasukkan ke celana panjang ketat bermotif gingham biru tua-putih dengan potongan sangat indah.</i> (MOK, 28)	1	5.26
The change of symbol	(14) "No, lah! But she's his wife—she heard it straight from	<i>"Bukan lah! Tapi dia istrinya- dia mendengar</i>	6	30.57

Modulations	ST	TT	Frequency	%
	the horse's mouth that Ah Ma's not going to last long." (RPP, 31)	<i>langsung dari sumbernya bahwa Ah Ma tidak akan bertahan lama".</i> (MOK, 34)		
(15)	"I guess the cat's out of the bag. Everyone must be talking about us now." (RPP, 36)	<i>Kurasa rahasia sudah terbongkar. semua orang pasti membicarakan kita sekarang.</i> (MOK, 40)		
Total			19	100%

Modulation from abstract to concrete explains the shift of something in general into the specific one like data (8) and (9). Then, explicate modulation explains how the shifts happen due to cause and effect, mean and result in data (10) and (11). The shift of a component for the whole represents the entire object by using only a part of it (12). On the other hand, one part for the other has the shift of a part of an object to represent another part of it (13). However, a change of meaning also uses some symbol to symbolize another meaning (14) (15). Moreover, there are six out of ten modulations found in this article. They are abstract to concrete, explicative modulation, the component for the whole, one part for the other, from active to passive or vice versa, and the change of symbol. Six idioms are identified as modulations of abstract to concrete and the change of symbol obtaining the percentage of 30 each. Then, there are five idioms using explicative modulation accounting for 25. There is only one idiom implementing modulation of the component for the whole, and one for modulation of one part for the other. Also, the modulation of using active to passive has one idiom. Therefore, they account for a percentage of 5 each. But there are 60 idioms without modulation. In other words, they have been translated based on the meanings of the idiom and have not been shifted in meaning.

This article mainly focuses on the meaning shifts of idiom translation in the novel *Rich People Problems* and its translation in Indonesian. As further elaborated by Vinay & Darbelnet (1995), this meaning shifting has to do with the fact that some words in English provide general abstractions that can be difficult to understand in the targeted language. A general abstraction is thus refined into a specific abstraction through the use of this modulation such as the data (8) and (9). The next modulation occurring is the explicate modulation that focuses on the cause and effect in the translation, or the means and the result of actions. The meaning of idioms can produce effects and be associated with (10) (11) that actions cause the effects. Somehow the idiom is using the component of the object. And the

meaning of this type of idiom is expressed through the part of the object that represents the whole object (12). It can be said that the meaning shifts from one part to the whole. On the other hand, idioms can also use parts of one object to represent another object (13). Lastly, the meaning shifts can occur from symbols to representing the meanings. The symbols can be from a part of the body (14) or can be from a thing (15).

Therefore, it can be said that the change of an abstract concept to a concrete concept occurs mainly in modulation. That kind of modulation turns a general term into something specific. In addition, common concepts in some English words are identified by the translator and their meanings are shifted into Indonesian with specific concept to avoid difficulties to understand. Through the use of this modulation, it is implied that the result of meaning is generally accepted in Indonesian which implements the specific words. From this we can conclude that there is a shift in meaning in the translation process, narrowing the meaning of the idiom from the general to the specific through the use of abstract to concrete modulation. Also, the meaning shifts in the idiom translation cause an action and have consequences from the actions. Moreover, the use of a part to represent the entire object also leads to the widening of meaning. In addition, modulation of a change in the symbol that represents something leads to different interpretations of the symbol itself.

In the novel, idioms can be classified into several categories. The categories of idioms in this article are based on their structures (Makkai, 1972). The most dominant type found in this article is the phrasal verb idiom. Those idioms are identified through the presence of the verbs followed by one or two prepositions such as the data (1) and (2). This type appears in 54 idioms. Even though the idioms are in the form of phrases, their meaning cannot be easily understood and predicted regarding their structure (Kridalaksana, 2001; Chaer, 2012). Grammatically, tournure idioms are seen as verbs followed by their objects (3) (4). The verbs and the objects are inseparable. Moreover, it also quite often appears in the use of idioms with 18 idioms. That unchangeable pattern occurs in the irreversible binomial idiom as well. The irreversible binomial idiom consists of two words from the same word class and is connected with conjunctions such as *and*, *or*. The word class can be adjectives, adverbs (5), nouns, or verbs (6). However, the idiom can be in the form of a word only. It consists of an adjective and a noun (7) and creates another meaning.

Even though the phrasal verb idioms mostly appear in the translation, only five phrasal verb idioms are shifted in meaning. On the other hand, nine tournure idioms are shifted in meaning from a total of 18 idioms. Thus, it means that the meaning is shifted by half. Based on the data, the irreversible binomial idiom shifted the meaning of 5 out of 7 idioms. Incorporating idiom has been shifted with only one idiom as the last category of the idiom. From the data explained above, it can be concluded that the number of idioms does not determine the greater use of modulation. Although phrasal verb idioms have 54 out of 80 idioms that occur, they only have five idioms being shifted in meaning. On the other hand,

nine tournure idioms are being shifted in meaning. Tournure idioms are identified as sentences or clause. From this we can say that modulation occurs mainly in the idioms with clauses or sentences. However, the change in meaning of a tournure idiom occurs not only with one modulation, but also with two modulations in (9) and (13).

4. Conclusion

What emerges from this study is that by implementing modulation of specific words in abstract modulations to concrete concepts in English, the meanings are generally accepted in Indonesian. The use of abstract to concrete modulation leads to narrow the meaning. Furthermore, the use of a part of the entire object shows leads to widen the meaning. Therefore, modulation can have both narrowing and widening meanings. Furthermore, phrasal verb idioms were not dominantly shifted even though they mostly appear in the translation. Modulations, on the other hand, occur mainly in sentences or idioms that take the form of sentences or clauses.

Modulation is used as a part of idiom translation to get equivalence and to avoid difficulties from the source language to the target language. Moreover, the findings in this article also contribute to translation in general. This result also contributes to the field of idiom translation, as idioms are seen as unpredictable linguistic units with no literal meaning. Therefore, it is important to consider the meaning as the focus when translating an idiom using modulation. Moreover, the modulation is not expected to be implemented only in idiom translation, but it is also to be used in other topic such as cultural words, slangs. Upcoming studies in similar fields are expected to contribute as the references and opportunities for conducting research in the wider field.

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