



The Translation Strategies of Korean Idiomatic Expressions in the *Going Seventeen* Variety Show

Didin Samsudin^{*}, Rastya Ismatriyana

Korean Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Literature Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

^{}Corresponding author. Email: didinsamsudin@upi.edu*

ABSTRACT

Translation is a process of transferring the meaning as well as the culture contained in the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). An appropriate translation strategy is needed to translate the SL correctly, especially when translating culture-specific items, such as idioms. This research aims to discover the types of idiom translation strategies used in the subtitle variety show “GOING SEVENTEEN”. The method used in this study was a qualitative descriptive method by collecting data used the note-taking method from the variety show “GOING SEVENTEEN” season 2022, which is available on the SEVENTEEN YouTube channel. The results of the study obtained 120 idioms from 32 videos. The 120 idioms were classified into four types of strategies: (1) using idioms that have the same form and meaning, (2) idioms with the same meaning but different forms, (3) paraphrasing, and (4) omissions. It could be concluded that the most frequently used strategy was using the same idiom of the same meaning but with a different form with 50 idioms, followed by the same form and meaning with 35 idioms. These two strategies could convey the meaning of Korean idioms into Indonesian in the variety show. Meanwhile, 29 idioms used the paraphrasing strategy, and 6 idioms used the omission strategy. These two strategies were less because the translator tried to maintain the original meaning of the idiom so that the audience can also understand the language and culture contained in the idiom.

Keywords: *Korean idioms, Korean language, translation, translation strategy.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language serves as more than just a method of communication. Additionally, language serves as a tool that spreads knowledge, art, culture, and even technology. Particularly in the current period of globalization, where other cultures may easily invade a nation, this role is becoming more and more felt. Foreign languages are introduced with other foreign cultures, serving as a path for cultural understanding. Therefore, learning a foreign language is necessary to grasp the culture it is spoken in. This comprehension may be obtained through the process of translating from the source language to the target language.

Translation involves transferring meaning and cultural nuances from the source language to the target language. According to Larson (1998, as cited in Wardoyo, 2016), translation is only the process of conveying meaning from the source language to the target language. The meaning conveyed from the source language should not be altered when translated into the target language. As a result, translating requires knowledge of the target and the culture that influences it. This is important because the translator transfers the culture of the group utilizing the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) in addition to translating a text (Hatmiati, 2018).

The previous understanding is also supported by a quote from Nida and Taber (1969, as cited in Sulistijani & Parwis, 2019) stating that translation reinterprets the content or message of the SL into the TL with a meaning or equivalent nearly identical language styles. In order for the reader or speaker of the TL to correctly receive the message of the SL, the translator must be able to precisely adjust the grammatical and lexical conditions of the translated words. It is a challenge for translators to accurately convey the SL without losing its cultural essence. Thus, an appropriate method or strategy is needed so that the translation results can also be transmitted correctly.

Linguists refer to it as “translation strategy” with different terms. Newmark (1981, in Sulistijani & Parwis, 2019) uses the term “procedure” of translation and refers to how translation problems are handled at the word, phrase, and sentence level. Molina and Albir (2002, as cited in Rusyana & Nugroho, 2022) call it a translation technique and define it as a functional classification and analysis procedure of translation equivalence. Meanwhile, Vinay and Darbelnet (2000, as cited in Sulistijani & Parwis) and Baker (2018) call it a translation strategy. They explain it as a method used by translators when forming similarities when transferring meaningful elements of meaning from the SL to the TL (Vinay & Darbelnet, op. cit.). Regardless of the different naming, it can be concluded that the translation strategy is a way to help the translator make a proportional translation that does not lose the original meaning of the SL.

A translation strategy is needed, especially when translating source language text or speech with cultural elements, better known as culture-specific items (CSI). Lee (2003, in Wang & Cho, 2022) divides CSI into four types: proper nouns (names, place, organization, etc.), vocabulary related to certain cultures (region, expression, society, manner, etc.), vocabulary or idioms related to certain events in the source culture, and expressions of language usage habits. Idioms are one kind of CSI that is frequently used in casual discourse.

According to the Indonesian dictionary, an idiom is a structure whose meaning is not the same as the combined meaning of its components. Idiom also means the typical language and dialect of a country, tribe, group, and so on. This definition also agrees with the opinion of Chaer (as cited in Lestari, Widiati, & Isnaini, 2018), who holds that an idiom is a linguistic unit (whether in the form of words, phrases, or sentences) whose meaning is not fixed on the grammatical or lexical forms that make it up. An example is the idiom of *kambing hitam* ‘scapegoat’, which means someone who is innocent in an incident but intentionally becomes the party to blame instead. The meaning of this does not imply the meaning of “goat” or “black”. Instead, a new meaning emerges, closely tied to the socio-cultural conditions underlying it (Torchia & Djuhari, 2007; Adelnia, & Dastjerdi, 2011). For this reason, the translator’s understanding of the target language’s culture is also essential when translating idioms.

There are several difficulties faced by translators when translating idioms, namely: (1) idioms may not have an appropriate equivalent in TL, (2) idioms may have parts that are similar to TL, but the context of their use is different, (3) idioms can be used literally and idiomatically simultaneously, and (4) different idiom usage in both SL and TL (Baker, 2018; Ali & Sayyiyed, 2017; Idami, Wati, & Balqis, 2022). This issue may be observed in a number of idiomatic usages in daily life, such as the researchers’ discovery of the variety show “GOING SEVENTEEN”.

“GOING SEVENTEEN” is a variety program belonging to the K-Pop boy group SEVENTEEN which is uploaded on the group’s official YouTube channel. Because of how naturally funny each member is and how well it portrays South Korean culture, this variety show has been uploaded since 2019. It has grown in popularity, alluring foreign fans to learn more about the culture itself. Subtitles that are funny and closely related to everyday situations are another attraction of this program. The researcher discovered a translation phenomenon during this occurrence as follows based on the findings of early observations:

SL: “*jeoreul jabeuryeogo hamyeon aju keun koga dachisimnida*”

TL: “*Jika kamu ingin menangkapku seperti itu, hidungmu akan terluka parah*” (*hidung terluka parah = menyesal*)

“If you catch me like that, your nose will be badly hurt. (nose hurt badly = regrets)”

(GOING SEVENTEEN 2021 EP. 9 ‘Don’t Lie III’ #1)

In the sentence above, there is an idiom *keun koga dachisimnida* which literally means “your nose will be badly hurt”. The idiomatic meaning is added at the conclusion of the phrase after the literal meaning has been presented. The translator did this because they found the idiom can be used both literally and idiomatically simultaneously. The audience may indeed be able to understand the context literally and idiomatically. Still, it will be too long to explain in the subtitles that are placed at the bottom of the video. In order to condense the subtitles on the video without diluting their original meaning, a translation strategy that is more suited to describe the idiom is thus required.

Many previous researchers have carried out research on idiom translation strategies. Rusyana and Nugroho (2022) explain more about the technique of translating Korean idioms using the theory of Molina and Albir (2002). The result showed that the translation method used in the *webtoon* is mainly oriented toward the source language. There are seven different translation techniques, with the most common equivalent techniques. However, applying this technique does not guarantee that the message can be conveyed correctly because of the translator's obstacles in understanding the culture and source language. Another study Manipuspika and Winzami (2021) discussed the technique of translating idioms in the film “Murder On the Orient Express” using Baker’s theory (2018). The findings showed that translators more often translate English idioms using paraphrasing techniques because they cannot find suitable idioms in Indonesian.

The study concentrates more on outlining the various Korean idiom translation strategies applied in the variety show “GOING SEVENTEEN”. From the translation strategy used, it can be seen whether the context of the SL idiom has been conveyed properly or not. Additionally, appropriate translation strategies can show the translator's understanding of both SL and TL. It is hoped that from this research, other researchers can determine the type of translation strategy that is suitable when translating an idiom, especially Korean idioms.

2. METHOD

In this study, descriptive qualitative research was used, an examination in which oral or written material is evaluated descriptively, as opposed to quantitative research, which gathers data in numbers (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2010, as cited in Destaria & Rini, 2019). This suggests that a full explanation of the analysis findings was provided with the study data. In addition, Selinger and Shohamy (1989) stated that descriptive research involves a set of techniques designed to specify, describe, or explain what occurs or is interpreted in nature without adding or explaining anything significant.

The data studied were taken from the Korean source language (SL) texts and the Indonesian target language (TL) texts and further analyzed using the content analysis method with the note-taking technique. Researchers took 32 episodes from “GOING SEVENTEEN” season 2022. The 120 idioms obtained were then analyzed using Baker's translation strategy theory (2018).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There were 120 idioms discovered in this study and were divided into four categories by the following characteristics: (1) using idioms that have the same form and meaning strategy with 35 data, (2) idioms with the same meaning but different forms strategy with 50 data, (3) translation by paraphrasing with 29 data, and (4) translation by omissions with 6 data. Table 1 shows the frequency of each translation strategy founded.

Table 1. Frequency of each translation strategies

No	Strategies of Translating Idioms	Frequency
1.	Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form	35
2.	Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form	50
3.	Translation by Paraphrase	29
4.	Translation by Omission	6
Total		120

3.1. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form

This strategy employs TL idioms with the same meaning and form as SL. The application of this strategy requires a better comprehension of the source and target language as well as of the culture involved, as knowledge of idioms with the same meaning and lexical context in the TL is also necessary.

(1) SL: “*ppurin daero geoduneun kontencheu*”

TL: “*Apa yang kamu tabur, itu yang kamu tuai.*”

“You reap what you sow”

(GOING SEVENTEEN 2022 Ep. 36 ‘How to Eat Rice the Perfect Way’ #1)

Ppurin daero geodunda is a Korean proverb which means “you reap what you sow” or ‘everything that happens is a result of things which you have done in the past’. This proverb in Indonesian is “*Apa yang kamu tabur, itu yang kamu tuai*”, so the translator used an idiom of similar meaning and forms to transfer the exact context for the viewers.

3.2. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form

This strategy makes use of idioms with identical meanings in TL but distinct lexical forms. Nevertheless, the semantic context must be appropriate for the SL idiom.

(2) SL: “*geunyang neo jangnan anida [gamgaemuryang]*”

TL: “*Kau luar biasa [Dia senang]*”

“You’re no joke [Grateful]”

(GOING SEVENTEEN 2022 EP.44 GSVT E-Triathlon Championship 2022 #1)

“*jangnan anida*” can be literally translated into “you are no joke”, but the translator translates it to “*kau luar biasa*”. It has the same meaning but in different lexical forms. While “*gamgaemuryang*” is a *sajaseongeo* or four-character Hanja idiomatic expression which means “overwhelming feelings.” It is translated into “*Dia bahagia*” instead and has a different form with the original idiom.

3.3. Translation by Paraphrase

This method is frequently applied when translators are unable to locate idioms in the TL that have the same lexical or grammatical form. The idiom’s original meaning can be paraphrased while maintaining its accuracy of meaning.

(3) SL: “*jagi-e gireul neomu gatji*”

TL: “*Dulu dia bertindak semaunya*”

“You were a bulldozer back then”

(GOING SEVENTEEN 2022
EP.52 ‘Know Thyself’ #2)

The literal translation of the SL can be translated as “he was gone too far in his way,” but the translator translated it into “*dulu dia bertindak semaunya*” in Indonesian. They paraphrased it using different words and grammatical structures to fit the context of the conversation more.

3.4. Translation by Omission

This omission method can be an option if it is believed that using the idiom won’t alter the SL’s overall meaning.

(4) SL: “*sasakeonkeon bulphyeongbulmani simhani dongnyo*”

TL: “*Rekan kerja yang banyak mengeluh*”

“Coworkers who complain about everything”

(GOING SEVENTEEN 2022 EP.50 ‘SEVENTEEN GOING Radio Show’ #2)

“*Sasakeonkeon*” is also a four-character Hanja idiomatic expression which means ‘all applicable events’. The translator omitted the idiom since it would be a waste of words, and the subtitle would be too long to read even if it has equivalent terms in the TL.

Based on the facts above, it is possible to conclude that Baker's (2018) four translation strategy theories may be found in the variety program “GOING SEVENTEEN”. In contrast to ManispuSpika and Winzami (2021)’s prior study, idioms with the same meaning but dissimilar forms are most frequently utilized in this research, with a total of 50 idioms. This method eliminates the need for translators to search for idioms in Indonesian that have the same lexical form, just need the same semantic means. It can also be observed from the usage of this method that translators prefer to keep the original meaning of Korean idioms while still being understandable by the Indonesian audience (Türker, 2019)

This tendency is also evident in employing idioms with the same form and meaning, which ranks second with 35 expressions. The translator makes every effort to interpret these phrases oriented to the SL. This finding also contradicts Rusyana and Nugroho’s (2022) prior study, which focused more focused on TL. However, the study also found that the translator's shortcomings in comprehending culture and idiom meaning impacted the translation results. As a result, a translator's knowledge factor influences the sort of translation technique they employ.

The least used strategy is translation by paraphrase and omission. Slightly different from the second strategy with 29 idioms, the paraphrase strategy is considered the most suitable strategy for translating idioms (Baker, 2018). Meanwhile, the elimination strategy with 6 idioms is only used if there really are no equivalent idioms in the TL (ManispuSpika & Winzami, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

From our findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the most frequently used strategy was using the same idiom of the same meaning but with a different form with 50 idioms, followed by the same form and meaning with 35 idioms. These two strategies can convey the sense of Korean idioms into Indonesian in the variety show. Meanwhile, 29 idioms use the paraphrasing strategy, and 6 idioms use the omission strategy. These two strategies are lesser because the translator tries to maintain the original meaning of the idiom so that the audience can also understand the language and culture contained in the idiom.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank the study program for the opportunity to be funded for this publication as well as the reviewer's comments on the earlier version of this paper.

REFERENCES

- Adelnia, A., & Dastjerdi, H. V. (2011). Translation of idioms: a hard task for the translator. *Theory and practice in language studies*, 1(7), 879-883.
- Ali, H., & Sayyiyed Al-Rushaidi, S. M. (2017). Translating idiomatic expressions from English into Arabic: Difficulties and strategies. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume*, 7.
- Baker, M. (2018). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. New York: Routledge.
- Destaria, M., & Rini, Y. P. (2019). Analysis of translation strategy in transferring meaning of English idiom into Bahasa Indonesia in the subtitle of Pitch Perfect 3 movie. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, 34-48.
- Hatmiati, H. (2018, Oktober). Budaya dalam Penerjemahan Bahasa [Culture in Language Translation]. *Jurnal Al Mi'yar*, 1(2), 39-54.
- Idami, Z., Wati, S., & Balqis, R. (2022). An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Translating Idiomatic Expressions: What and Why?. *Acitya: Journal of Teaching and Education*, 4(1), 175-188.
- Language Development and Fostering Agency. ((n.d.), (n.d.) (n.d.)). *Arti Kata Idiom - Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology) Retrieved August 2, 2023, from Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia: <https://www.kbbi.web.id/idiom>
- Lestari, P., Widiati, S. W., & Isnaini, Z. L. (2018). Penerjemahan Idiom Dalam Komik Hayate No Gotoku Volume 36 [Translation of Idioms in the Comic Hayate No Gotoku Volume 36]. *JOM: Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Riau*, 5(1), 1-15.
- Manispuspika, Y. S., & Winzami, D. R. (2021, February). Translation of Idioms: How They are Reflected in Movie Subtitling. *AWEJ for Translation and Literary Studies*, 5(1), 113-125. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol5no1.8>
- Rusyana, D., & Nugroho, S. A. (2022, July). Orientasi Penerjemahan Idiom Bahasa Korea dalam Webtoon "Touch Touch You" [Translation of Korean Idioms in Webtoon "Touch Touch You"]. *BAHTERA: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra*, 21((2)), 132-145.
- Selinger, H. W., & Shohamy, E. (1989). *Second Language Research Method*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SEVENTEEN. (2021, June 16). [GOING SEVENTEEN] EP.9 Don't Lie III #1. *APA Referencing [Video]*. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvu_JCYrwE0&t=223s
- SEVENTEEN. (2022, February 9). [GOING SEVENTEEN] EP.36 How to Eat Rice the Perfect Way #1. *APA Referencing [Video]*. YouTube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGc4foXl6BA&t=277s>
- SEVENTEEN. (2022, April 13). [GOING SEVENTEEN] EP.44 GSVT E-Triathlon Championship 2022 #1. *APA Referencing [Video]*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKjpYOR8_F0&t=975s
- SEVENTEEN. (2022, June 15). [GOING SEVENTEEN] EP.50 SEVENTEEN GOING Radio Show #2. *APA Referencing [Video]*. YouTube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oux44JI4u6Y&t=126s>

- SEVENTEEN. (2022, July 6). [GOING SEVENTEEN] EP.52 Know Thyself #2. *APA Referencing [Video]*. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZE_s1IFdhY&t=1340s
- Sulistijani, E., & Parwis, F. Y. (2019). Strategi Penerjemahan Subtitling dalam Film "Ender's Game" [Subtitling Translation Strategy in the Film "Ender's Game"]. *DEIKSIS*, 11(03), 210-220. doi:10.30998/deiksis.v11i03.4111
- Torchia, C., & Djuhari, L. (2007). *Indonesian idioms and expressions: Colloquial Indonesian at work*. Tuttle Publishing.
- Türker, E. (2019). Idiom acquisition by second language learners: The influence of cross-linguistic similarity and context. *The Language Learning Journal*, 47(2), 133-144..
- Wang, J., & Cho, W. (2022). A Study on the Aspects of Translation Strategies of Culture-specific Items in the Drama <Reply 1988>. *New Korean Language Education*, 130, 357-385. doi:10.15734/koed..130.202203.357
- Wardoyo, C. (2016). Metode dan strategi penerjemahan istilah-istilah pragmatik dalam buku "pragmatics" karya George Yule ke dalam bahasa Indonesia [Methods and strategies for translating pragmatic terms in the book "pragmatics" by George Yule into Indonesian]. *Al-Tsaqafa: Jurnal Ilmiah Peradaban Islam*, 13(02), 182-187. doi:<https://doi.org/10.15575/al-tsaqafa.v13i02.1984>

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

