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Idioms and their translation in films

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CONTENTS

Abstract

This paper is focused on the translation of English idioms in the Croatian movie subtitles. The aims of the study are to present the main characteristics of idioms, to show the main strategies in idiom translation and their distribution and to find out how the metaphorical value of idioms is kept in translation. The research has been conducted based on the idioms found in three movies (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *The Help*). The corpus analysis explored the frequency of idiom translation strategies and the advantages and disadvantages of certain strategy choices.

Key words: idioms, phraseology, translation, Croatian, English

INTRODUCTION

Idioms are examples of figurative language that are used in our everyday speech. In the last few decades, interest in the field of idiomatic language has grown significantly and what makes idioms very interesting is the fact that these expressions are very culture-specific. In spite of many similarities in formulaic language of cultures across the world, there are many differences. Every culture perceives reality in its own way and this reality is conveyed through language. Often the links between different languages are translators. Their job is not just a simple transmission of words and phrases, but also of the messages and senses of texts. Translators must deal with units larger than individual words, and if those units are idioms, there is more to these expressions than meets the eye.

In order to translate an idiom from one language to another, one must take care of both the meaning and the contextual elements this idiom carries. It has been demonstrated that the figurative meanings of idioms are processed faster than paraphrases or literal uses of the same expressions (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 198). Interestingly enough, Jakobsen, Jensen and Mees have made a research that showed that idiom translation by paraphrase requires a relatively smaller amount of cognitive processing (217-249). When there is no equivalent in the target language, a translator is faced with a few problems. Due to the tricky translating constrictions of time and space, translators are prone to applying strategies of paraphrasing, literal translation or omission (Baker, 59). This causes the original text to lose part of its communicative strength normally achieved in figurative ways.

The purpose of this paper is to take a look at the distribution of the most common idiom translation strategies and, more importantly, to see how much of the figurative value gets lost when translating idioms. The theoretical part will explain some basic notions regarding the definition and characteristics of idioms, the main translation difficulties and strategies and present a few words about audiovisual translation. Finally, the corpus analysis based on three movies (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *The Help*) will compare and discuss the results of the research questions.

THE NATURE OF IDIOMS

What is an idiomatic expression?

Defining an idiomatic expression turns out to be a real can of worms, since there is a wide disagreement among linguists (Gibbs, "Idioms and Formulaic Language" 712) on syntactic, semantic and other features of various linguistic expressions such as *to do up, as free as a bird* or *two wrongs do not make a right*. Gibbs, therefore, offers a "rough list" of nine different forms of formulaic language (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 269-270):

(1) Sayings:

      a. take the bull by the horns

      b. let the cat out of the bag

(2) Proverbs:

a. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

b. A stitch in time saves nine.

(3) Phrasal verbs:

a. to give in

b. to take off

(4) Idioms:

a. kick the bucket

b. to crack the whip

(5) Binomials:

a. spick and span

b. hammer and tongs

(6) Frozen similes:

a. as white as snow

b. as cool as a cucumber

(7) Phrasal compounds:

a. red herring

b. dead-line

(8) Incorporating verb idioms:

a. to babysit

b. to sightsee

(9) Formulaic expressions:

a. at first sight

b. how do you do?

However, there appear to be contrasting views not only on deciding which linguistic forms are (not) idiomatic expressions, but also what their exact nature is. Most traditional views agree that the overall meaning of phrases cannot be predicted from the meanings of their constituent words (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 270). For example, the individual parts of the phrase *spill the beans* can hardly contribute to the overall meaning of the whole expression.

Furthermore, such standard views of idioms regard them to be a special item of the mental lexicon, therefore assuming that idioms are a matter of language alone. In other words, traditional linguists believe that "all there is to idioms is that, similar to words, they have certain syntactic properties and have a meaning that is special, relative to the meanings of the forms that comprise it" (Kovecses and Szabo 328). Kovecses and Szabo further elaborate that the traditional view applies the characterization of idioms based on their syntactic properties and meaning, which is the same characterization as for words.

To sum up, according to the traditional view of idioms, the meaning of the idiomatic phrases is arbitrary and cannot be predicted from the meaning of its constituents, (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 273). Cognitive linguists and psychologists argue that this view of idiomatic expressions is not correct (Gibbs, "Idioms and Formulaic Language" 704-705), and Kovecses and Szabo even add that the separation of linguistic meaning from any conceptual system is "one major stumbling block in understanding the nature of idioms" (329). Cognitive view "adopt[s] the significant methodological premise of seeking correspondences between mind and language" (Gibbs, "Idioms and Formulaic Language" 721). This turns out to be one of the main differences between the traditional and cognitive views of idiomatic expressions.

What is more, cognitive linguistics says that the majority of idioms are not linguistic, but conceptual in nature (Kovecses and Szabo 333), because it is our knowledge of the world that enables us to create, understand and use such expressions. The relation between the meaning of an idiom and the meanings of its parts, Kovecses and Szabo explain, is divorced from two parts – "the human conceptual system and encyclopaedic knowledge that speakers of a language share" (329).

Kovecses, Szabo and Gibbs accentuate the complexity of the study of idioms by saying that the meanings of idioms are not arbitrary or fixed expressions, but motivated and complex phrases due to their various lexical, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic characteristic (Gibbs, "Idioms and Formulaic Language" 712). According to traditional translation theorists, an idiom as an expression should be treated as a single semantic unit, in spite of adhering to the grammatical rules applicable to the individual parts (Nida and Taber 45).

The conceptual basis for idioms

The reason why so many idioms make complete sense to speakers (in spite of their sometimes unrelated literal meanings) lies in the conceptual knowledge, "which includes metaphorical and metonymic schemes of thought" (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 277). Therefore, some basic notions should be explained regarding conceptual metaphors since they are, according to Gibbs, the main motivation for the reason why idiomatic expressions have figurative meanings (*Poetics of the Mind* 295).

Metaphors are tools that help us experience one concept by means of another. This implies that those two concepts or areas of experience are based upon the domain of differences and similarities. Metaphors are a focal point of linguistics and have been thoroughly discussed by cognitive linguists in the last two decades. Linguists such as Lakoff and Johnson (39) explain metaphor through similarity of senses. One of their examples is LIFE IS A ROAD conceptual metaphor, on the basis of which it is possible to say *She is at a crossroads in her life* or *I've gone through a lot in my life*. They present the basic conceptual metaphor with A = B formula (e.g. life = road). While traditional semantics sees A and B as matters of language only, cognitive semantics believe that A and B belong to the conceptual realm (ibid. 76). In other words, metaphors happen on a cognitive level, not on a linguistic. Lakoff and Johnson (ibid. 151) propose that our way of thinking is metaphorical in nature and that this is a way in which we see the world around us (for example, when we say that *He cast a spell on me*). Metaphors are a basic part of our everyday language and are "so ordinary that we use [them] unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice [them]" (Lakoff and Turner 1). Another important feature Lakoff and Johnson underline is that metaphors are not randomly organized, but systematically – depending on the culture (Lakoff and Johnson 119). There is no conceptual metaphor in our western culture such as LOVE IS PEANUT, because peanut is not automatically and unconsciously connected with

love. The organization of concepts is conventional, i.e. based upon our culture. Therefore, we do have LOVE IS MADNESS (*I'm crazy about her*) or LOVE IS MAGIC (*He cast a spell on me*) conceptual metaphors. In order to understand metaphors we must understand our worldviews (Lakoff and Turner 11).

The notion that the figurative meanings of idioms are motivated by such conceptual metaphors that are a part of our conceptual system has been supported by the mental imagery studies. In those studies, Gibbs examined in detail speakers' mental images for idioms and came to the conclusion that people have tacit knowledge of the metaphorical basis for the majority of idioms. Participants gave very consistent and detailed information regarding the causes, intentionality and manner of action in their mental images when given a certain idiom (Gibbs *Poetics of the Mind* 293). Gibbs explains that, for example, when imagining anger idioms such as *flip your lid* or *hit the ceiling,* people used their knowledge about the behaviour of heated fluid escaping from containers and mapped it to the emotion of anger. Interestingly enough, when people were asked to imagine and describe literal phrases, such as *to get very angry*, very little consistency in the responses was found (ibid. 295). In other words, "people readily interpret the figurative meanings of idioms faster than they do either paraphrases or literal uses of the same expressions" (ibid. 198).

Idiom functions

If we go back to the basics and take a look at language as a means of communication, it can be said that, when communicating, we ensure our social survival through language (Gibbs, "Idioms and Formulaic Language" 711). It turns out that formulaic language is an ideal place to understand the rich connection of language and human thought (Gibbs, *Poetics of the Mind* 268). Idiomatic language consists of conveying both explicit and implicit information (Gutt 83-88). Even though implicit information has no form, it is a "part of the total communication intended or assumed by the writer" (Larson in Gutt 86) and it can be found in the context in which idioms are used (Gutt 88).

According to Newmark, figurative expressions (including idioms) have two basic functions, the referential and the pragmatic. The *referential* function serves "to describe a mental process or state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality or an action more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal or physical language", while the *pragmatic* function

serves "to appeal to the senses, to interest, to clarify graphically, to please, to delight, to surprise" (Newmark, *A Textbook on Translation* 104). Both of these functions, Newmark adds, work hand in hand (ibid. 104).

TRANSLATION OF IDIOMS

Having in mind the complex nature of idiomatic expressions, translating one idiom from source language to target language can be a "devil of a job"(Newmark, *Approaches to Translation* 92). Newmark enumerates several factors that influence the translator in the process: the importance of the metaphor within the context, the cultural factor in the metaphor, the extent of the reader's commitment and the reader's knowledge. Further research on both translation difficulties and strategies has been done, of which a brief overview will be presented in a section that follows.

Translation difficulties

When translating an idiomatic expression, translators can find themselves between a rock and a hard place. Baker says that there are two basic areas of difficulty when translating idiomatic expressions: "the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly; and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that an idiom or a fixed expression conveys into the target language" (Baker 65).

According to Baker, idiomatic expressions are the most noticeable when they do not make sense if interpreted literally, such as *raining cats and dogs*. Also, expressions starting with "like" or "as" (i.e. similes) will most likely indicate to the translator that there is some degree of figurative language going on, for example, *as easy as pie* (Baker 65). But trouble occurs with the expressions that are less likely to be recognizable. Many idioms in English have both literal and non-literal meanings, such as *take somebody for a ride*, and many idioms look identical or similar to the ones in the target language but the meaning is partially or completely different (Baker 66). One of the examples is *to be walking on thin ice*, which in English means that you are taking a risk (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2009) while in Croatian you bring somebody into a difficult situation (Englesko-hrvatski frazeološki rječnik 2006).

Other difficulties occur after the idiom has been recognized. Baker recognizes four basic types of problems that translators face during idiom translation (Baker 68-73):

1) An idiomatic expression might not have an equivalent in the target language, mainly because much of the figurative language is culture-specific.

2) An idiom in source language might have an equivalent in the source language but its contexts of use might not be the same, or it might have different connotations.

3) An idiomatic expression in the source language may be used both in literal and in figurative senses at the same time. The play on idiomatic expression might be possible in one language, but not in the other. Without the corresponding equivalent in the target language, the result might be a literal translation that has little or no sense in the text.

4) Different conventions, contexts and frequency of idiom use between two languages are also a possible problem in translating. For example, English is a language with very high usage of idiomatic language, especially in advertisements and the press.

In a slightly different order, Davies mentions similar problems translators may face when translating idioms and fixed expressions: recognition, no equivalent in the target language, a similar counterpart in the target language with a different context of use, an idiom used in the source text both in its literal and idiomatic sense at the same time and difference between the convention, context and frequency of use in the source and target languages (Davies in Akbari 34).

To sum up, there are many translation difficulties when it comes to idioms. The translator must first recognize a given expression as idiomatic. If a translator does not recognize the source language idiom, he or she might not be able to offer its adequate translation. However, a translator could notice a sense of figurative language in a certain expression and look up its meaning. Once an idiomatic expression is recognized, the translator can face the absence of equivalents, different contexts of use and the lack of sensitivity to idiomatic language.

Translation strategies

Having these problems in mind, translating idioms is no piece of cake. So how can one overcome the difficulties of idiomatic translation? There are several strategies that are available to translators. Baker's classification includes four basic strategy groups: (72-78)

1) Using an idiom of similar meaning and form – this strategy seems to offer an ideal solution, because an idiom in the target language can roughly have the same meaning. Unfortunately, this kind of match is not always possible. However, even when there is a corresponding idiom, it might not be the best choice due to the style, register or frequency of the target language idiom.

2) Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form – often an equivalent in the target language is possible to obtain, but in a different form. More or less the same meaning is being conveyed.

3) Translation by paraphrase – paraphrasing is used when no idiomatic equivalent is found in target language. This is the most common way of translating idiomatic language.

4) Translation by omission – just like with single words, the translator might opt for the strategy of simply discarding a certain idiomatic expression. Reasons for this are either a shortage of adequate equivalent or paraphrase, or stylistics.

It can be easily concluded that the primary function of all these strategies is to convey meanings that should be understood by the recipient. One must always have in mind the questions of style, register and rhetorical effect when finding the most appropriate idiomatic translation (Baker 72). When it comes to the figurative language, the aim of idiom translation is to convey the original message, "consisting of both its explicit and implicit information" (Gutt 97), because idioms "help reader to gain a more accurate insight, both physical and emotional, into, say, a character or a situation" (Newmark, *Approaches to Translation* 84). This means that without all the necessary elements of contextual information, the recipient would not get the correct message.

SUBTITLING

Since this paper will concentrate on the corpus consisting of Croatian subtitles, a few words should be mentioned regarding the topic. Subtitling is a type of audiovisual translation in textual form that is presented simultaneously with the visual action on the screen. Luyken *et al.* (in Georgakopoulou, 21) define subtitling as:

> ...condensed written translations of original dialogue which appear as lines of text, usually positioned towards the foot of the screen. Subtitles appear and disappear to coincide in time with the corresponding portion of the original dialogue and are almost always added to the screen image at a later date as a post-production activity.

Subtitles are said to be most successful when not noticed by the viewer. What this means is that, in addition to the spatial and temporal technical constraints, the translator should constantly be aware of the problems regarding syntax and cross-cultural shifts. In order for the subtitling process to be successful, certain changes to the original text should be made (Georgakopoulou 21-28).

According to Kovačič, there is a three-level hierarchy of discourse elements in subtitling (in Georgakopoulou 26):

● The indispensable elements (that must be translated).

● The partly dispensable elements (that can be condensed).

● The dispensable elements (that can be omitted).

One of the most widespread recommendations for subtitling are offered in *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (Carroll, Ivarrson 1998) and state that "[t]he language register must be appropriate and correspond with the spoken word", but also that "[t]ranslation quality must be high with due consideration of all idiomatic and cultural nuances".

Before we come to the end of the theoretical part, a quote that describes the translator's job very well should be mentioned (Georgakopoulou 30):

> The task of the subtitler involves constant decision-making to ensure that the audiovisual programme is not bereft of its style, personality, clarity, and that the rhythm and its dramatic progression not hindered. The final aim is to retain and reflect in the subtitles the equilibrium between the image, sound and text of the original.

AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this paper is to investigate the main problems of idiom translation due to the complexity of its nature; therefore, it will investigate what the most common translation strategies are and what their distribution is. Accordingly, we have formulated two basic research questions:

1. How do translators deal with the problems of idiom translation? Is there (and which is) the most common strategy?

2. How are the translated idiomatic expressions following the action on screen? Has the metaphoric imagery also been transferred in idiom translation?

To answer these questions we have compiled a corpus consisting of three movies, *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) and *The Help* (2011). The criteria for our choice were the following: it had to be an English-language movie that had played in Croatian cinemas and that has been released during the last five years. In order to collect idioms of different registers, we have chosen movies that belong to three different genres (fantasy, action and drama). An analysis of 95 idioms has been conducted in a way that each idiom in a movie and its Croatian translation in a subtitle were noted and categorized according to Baker's classification (using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrase and omission). Since one of the aims of the paper is also to see how much of the metaphoric imagery in Croatian idiom translations gets lost or retained, all of the idiom translations were categorized and described according to two groups; translation by using idioms of similar meaning and form and translation by paraphrase.

Table 1. The corpus

English Title	Croatian Title	Release Year	Production
Alice in Wonderland	*Alisa u zemlji čudesa*	2010	Walt Disney Pictures
Sherlock Holmes	*Sherlock Holmes*	2009	Warner Bros.
The Help	*Tajni život kućnih pomoćnica*	2011	DreamWorks

Due to the fact that the lack of an adequate equivalent in target language is one of the most common challenges, our hypothesis focuses on the strategies used in actual examples of our corpus. In the introductory and theoretical parts of this paper, it has been mentioned that, on the one hand, paraphrasing is the most common translation strategy and that it requires little cognitive effort on the translator's part. Bearing also in mind the temporal and spatial restrictions of movie subtitles, this paper argues that the most used strategy in movie subtitling is precisely paraphrasing. On the other hand, using an idiom of similar meaning and similar form is the most ideal strategy when it comes to idiom translation, thus this paper argues that is the second most frequent translation strategy when it comes to film subtitling.

Bearing in mind that Baker's strategies of idiom translation mainly focus on the most effective ways to convey pure meaning, this paper is more interested in the importance of style and effect that figurative language (in this case, idioms) carries. In cases where no Croatian equivalent is present, this paper argues, the metaphorical values of English idioms are lost when paraphrasing into the Croatian subtitles. Thus, our hypothesis is that idiom translations tend to mainly convey the meaning and that the figurative nuances of the paraphrased idioms are not as present as in the English originals.

FINDINGS

The frequency of idiom translation strategies

The translation analysis of the three movies has proven the hypothesis to be true without a doubt; paraphrasing is the most used translation strategy. Out of a total of 95 idioms found in the movies, more than a half of the idioms have been translated by paraphrase (58%). The next most used strategy is the translation which uses a phrase of similar meaning and similar form and it accounts for 29% of idiom translation. The least implemented strategies are translation by omission (7%) and by using an expression of similar meaning but dissimilar form (6%). This confirms Baker's (75) claim that paraphrasing is number one strategy. In this study, this might be the case either because of a lack of an idiomatic counterpart in the target language, or for the spatial and temporal constraints when subtitling.

Table 2. Translation strategies and their frequency

Translation strategies	Number of occurrences	Percentage
translation by paraphrase	55	58%
using an idiom of similar meaning and similar form	27	29%
translation by omission	7	7%
using an idiom of similar meaning and dissimilar form	6	6%

The metaphorical value in the two most common translation strategies

The main aim of this study is to see whether the idiomatic meaning of English idioms is retained in the Croatian subtitles or rather, if metaphorical value is given preference in translation. Let us take a look at a few examples to see how the translations of English idioms have been handled regarding the metaphoric imagery in the use of idioms of similar meaning and similar form.

The first example (1) is from a scene in *Alice in Wonderland* in which Alice's father is being ironic while trying to explain to her that the strange dreams she is constantly having are perfectly normal. When faced with an idiom *to be off one's head*, the translator could have paraphrased it into something like *you're crazy* or simply leave out the repeated utterance, but instead the translator thought of a Croatian idiom of the same meaning – *biti lud sto gradi.* The speaker's intention seems to have been to accentuate the element of craziness in Alice's dreams and the Croatian translation has kept this figurative element of the English original.

(1)
English original: You're mad, bonkers, **off your head**.
Croatian subtitle: Luda si. Budalasta. **Sto gradi šašava.**
Back-translation: (You're mad, bonkers, **off your rocker**.)

Example (2) from Sherlock Holmes is another example in which the idiomatic information has been kept in the Croatian subtitle by using an idiom of similar meaning and similar form. The Croatian phrase *u tren oka* is a counterpart to the English idiom *in the blink of an eye*,

but, more importantly, the metaphoric component has been transferred from English into Croatian.

(2)
English original:	He'll be straight as a trivet **in no time**.
Croatian subtitle:	Oporavit će se **u tren oka**.
Back-translation:	He'll be better **in the blink of an eye**.

Our third example regarding the translation strategy with an idiom of similar meaning and similar form is from *The Help.* Here the translator used the Croatian equivalent of the idiom *to scare somebody to death*, which is the closest idiom to the expression *to scare the daylights out of somebody*. The English original has not been paraphrased, but an idiom with a slightly different form has been used in order to keep the figurative force of the dialogue.

(3)
English original:	You **scared the daylights out of me**!
Croatian subtitle:	**Nasmrt si me preplašio**!
Back-translation:	You **scared me to death**!

More examples of translations that retain the figurative element together with the meaning are given in 4-6.

(4)
English original:	I don't slay, so **put it out of your mind.**
Croatian subtitle:	Ne ubijam, **izbij si to iz mozga.**
Back-translation:	I don't kill, **put it out of your mind.**

(5)
English original:	You **have lost your mind!**
Croatian subtitle:	Ti si **sišao s uma!**
Back-translation:	You **have lost your mind!**

(6)
English original:	It looks like you'**ve run afoul** of something with wicked claws.
Croatian subtitle:	Imala si **bliski susret** s opakim kanđama.
Back-translation:	You **have had a close encounter** with wicked claws.

Now let us take a look at a few examples when the translators opted for translation by paraphrasing in order to observe the advantages and disadvantages of these choices regarding the figurative aspect of the translations.

In the following example (7) from *Sherlock Holmes,* the translator opted for a paraphrase of the English idiom *to keep an eye on*, even though Croatian language has got practically the same idiom for the English counterpart, i.e. *držati nešto na oku.* In spite of a different form, it is much more frequent in Croatian language to say *pripaziti na miraz* than *držati miraz na oku*. It is interesting to observe that neither the meaning nor the metaphorical value in the Croatian version have been lost with the use of this paraphrase.

(7)

English original:	I'd **keep an eye on** that dowry, if I were you.
Croatian subtitle:	Ja bih **pripazio** na svoj miraz.
Back-translation:	I'd **watch out for** that dowry, if I were you.

Example (8) refers to *The Help* scene in which Aibileen is not just informed that the little girl is crying, but also that she should go and calm her down. The idiom *to cry one's eyes out* has been translated by paraphrasing and such a choice transfers only the meaning, while the metaphorical value is not present. The Croatian language has a few idiomatic expressions that mean the same thing in English (*plakati kao kiša* or *plakati kao ljuta godina*) and it would not have taken too much space in the subtitles. On the other hand, it could be said that it is not necessary to accentuate the fact that the little girl is crying since we can already hear her. Also, by opting for a shorter translation, the viewers can pay more attention to the action happening on the screen. Thus, the figurative value of the English idiom has been lost in the Croatian paraphrase, but the compensation can be found on the screen.

(8)

English original:	Aibileen, Mae Mobley's **cryin' her eyes out**!
Croatian subtitle:	Aibileen, Mae Mobley **plače**!
Back-translation:	Aibileen, Mae Mobley **is crying**!

Following are the examples that also depict the translators' choice of not transferring the metaphorical aspect, the result of which we get *smart* rather than *in her right mind*, *important* rather than *dear to their hearts* and *unusual* rather than *no mean feat*. Other

solutions in Croatian that do include to some extent the figurative values of the English original might be *pri zdravoj pameti* or *pri srcu*. This does not mean that these translations by paraphrasing are wrong or worse than the ones that use an idiom of similar meaning and similar form, but rather that paraphrasing sometimes suits Croatian language in terms of style, rhetoric or frequency of use. Also, the action happening on the screen can, in many cases, compensate for the absence of the idioms' metaphorical values.

(9)

	English original:	No maid **in her right mind** is ever gonna tell you the truth.
	Croatian subtitle:	Nijedna **pametna** pomoćnica ti neće reći istinu.
	Back-translation:	No **smart** maid is ever going to tell you the truth.

(10)

	English original:	A cause I'm sure is **dear to their hearts**.
	Croatian subtitle:	Za cilj koji je znam i njima **važan**.
	Back-translation:	A cause I'm sure is **important** to them.

(11)

	English original:	And she's **no mean feat**.
	Croatian subtitle:	**Neobično**.
	Back-translation:	**Unusual**.

This short study of English idiom translations has led us to a few conclusions. First of all, Baker's claim that paraphrasing is the most commonly used translating strategy has proven right since two thirds of English idioms in the corpus have been translated in that way. When it comes to the strategy of using idioms of similar meaning and similar forms, this paper has shown that it is the second most used translation strategy, with almost one third of occurrences. Similar findings have been found by Bujić, who adds that translators recur to paraphrasing since it is less time- and character-consuming (32-33).

Interestingly enough, this does not mean that in two thirds of total number of idioms there were no corresponding counterparts in Croatian. Our further analysis of idioms in the corpus has proven that even though English idioms do have a matching Croatian counterpart, translators often opt for a different strategy, paraphrasing. We have elaborated in more detail that some Croatian idioms are less frequent and some were simply not necessary due to the action on the screen that can compensate for the loss of figurative aspect. In one of

the examples, it has even been shown that the metaphorical value has not been lost by paraphrasing. To conclude, it is undoubtedly true that idioms carry not just the meaning but also the metaphorical value. However, when it comes to movie translations, the use of paraphrasing does not strictly imply a bad translation or the loss of figurative value, rather it offers a translation that focuses on style, rhetoric and frequency as well as on the meaning.

CONCLUSION

A famous proverb says that you cannot judge a book by its cover and this is definitely true for idioms and their rich and complex nature. Thus, let us take a look at the most important notions of this paper.

First of all, it has been explained what linguistics has said so far regarding idioms and idiomatic language. Most idioms exist in the minds of the speakers and are conceptual, not linguistic in nature, which means that their meanings mainly cannot be predicted from the meanings of the component words. Apart from their unique meaning, idioms have a notable figurative character and this is what sometimes makes translating them a little bit complicated. Nevertheless, it has been said that human mind can interpret idiom meaning faster than its paraphrase.

Many difficulties have been noted when it comes to translating idioms, and this paper has summed up the most important ones. Also, we have mentioned the four most commonly applied strategies; using an idiom of similar form and similar meaning, using an idiom of similar form but dissimilar meaning, translation by paraphrase and translation by omission. Finally, the paper has mentioned a few subtitling notions that a translator is constantly aware of, such as those of time and space.

Since it is no easy task to translate idioms, this paper has shown that in more than a half of the total idiom occurrences of the corpus, Croatian translators have used the paraphrasing translation strategy. This does not mean that all of these examples of English idioms did not have a corresponding counterpart, but that the decision of opting for a paraphrase rather than an idiom has been consciously made. The translators have opted for the 'faster' strategy that entails translations without the metaphorical aspect and the reasons, it has been shown, can be various. Some paraphrases are more frequent than an idiomatic

18

counterpart, some paraphrases suit better in style, some paraphrases are well followed by the action on the screen, and some paraphrases did not even lose the figurative element. All in all, it has been shown that by choosing a paraphrase instead of a corresponding idiom, metaphorical value can be lost (in some cases), but compensated in other ways.

This paper has given a brief insight into the fields of phraseology and translation, particularly the problems that the translators have to face when it comes to idioms. Let us conclude it by saying that it is necessary to translate meaning, but always with context in mind. Idioms and their translations are, as we have seen, a true blessing in disguise.

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