

## **An Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions In the “Inglorious Basterds” Film**

**Muhammad Bintang Rahmadinata 1<sup>1)</sup>, Author Name 2<sup>2)</sup>, Nurul Fadhillah 3<sup>3)</sup>,**

<sup>1,2)</sup> SMA Qur'an Darul Fattah, <sup>3)</sup> Universitas Lampung 2,

Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author, email: abin.rahmadinata@gmail.com

Received: November, 14, 2023

Revised: Desember, 14, 2023

Accepted: December, 30, 2023

### **Abstract**

This study presents an analysis of idiomatic expressions within the film "Inglourious Basterds" (2009), employing the categorization framework established by O'Dell and McCarthy (2010). The analysis commenced with a comprehensive investigation into the meanings and contextual nuances of the identified idioms. Then, a classification system was applied to categorize the idiomatous expressions into four categories, Similes, Proverbs, Euphemisms, and Clichés as well as Fixed Statements. Furthermore, the meaning of each idiom was elucidated.

The use of clichés can be seen as a clever device for enhancing character depth and cultural references, thereby contributing to the overall richness of the storytelling. This study highlights the meticulous attention to linguistic detail employed by the creators of the film. The utilization of expression in the film serves to augment the storytelling, captivate the audience, and evoke a culturally vibrant and genuine setting..

**Keywords:** Idiom, Idiomatic Expression, Film

### **Introduction**

Humans, as social creatures, cannot live without socializing with other humans. They need to socialize to fulfill their necessities. To perform that, they should engage in an action known as "communication." Communication can be defined as the process by which people connect with one another. When people communicate, they need to use language.

Language, according to Crystal (2008), is the systematic, conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression. According to this definition, language is essential for humans. People use language for a variety of functions in their lives, such as engaging, providing facts, issuing commands, and so on. When using language, individuals may occasionally use phrases or expressions that do not contain a clear meaning; these phrases or words are known as idioms.

Idioms, according to Larson (1984) and Newmark (1988), quoted in Howwar (2013), are incapable of being fully interpreted be avoided. According to Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2011), idioms are statements that suggest they aren't connected to the law of composition and may not be correlated with the meaning of its elements.

Idioms are now used in areas other than communication, one of which is film. According to Bordwell and Thompson (1997:3, 2008:2), film may be viewed as a kind of communication that is used to communicate ideas and facts; they also show us locations and ways of life that we might not otherwise see. They also said that films are identified by seeing a depiction, a well-planned performance, or a slide show. Additionally, as stated by Brown (1993:233), referenced in Klean (2013), films are typically associated with instructive learning materials due to their unique ability to impact, communicate, and

offer advice. Moreover, films are audio-visual works of art in which viewers are able to see and hear actors' facial emotions in detail.

The writer became intrigued by examining the phrase used in the film "Inglourious Basterds" after witnessing the magnificent usage of idiomatic expressions in the film. This film was directed by Quentin Tarantino and distributed by Universal Pictures. The movie was picked because it portrays a significant quantity of idioms utilized by its characters. Because studies have challenges in comprehending idioms, the writer was curious about how many forms of idioms are shown in this film. Furthermore, most people are unaware that some phrases used in films are idioms, as they were interpreted word for word without comprehending their precise meaning. Even if they use decrypted subtitles, certain words may not be translated precisely. Based on the explanation, the writer intended to undertake a study named "An Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions in the Film Inglourious Basterds."

In accordance with O'Dell and McCarthy's (2010:6), an idiom is defined as a combination of multiple words whose meaning cannot be interpreted word-for-word. They further divide the idiomatic expressions into six categories: Similes, Binomials, Proverbs, Euphemisms, Clichés and Fixed Statements, and Other languages. Similes are used when making a comparison between two objects. They often use terms like "as" or "likes" to connect the two contrasting things. Similes must be used throughout the whole statement since they suggest that the meaning of the author's words cannot be altered. Combinations of two words that have a fixed order and are joined by a conjunction are called binomials. The terms can rhyme, be alliterative, be equivalent, have opposite extremes, or be the same word. Proverbs are short sentences used to warn or offer advice. Euphemisms, on the other hand, are courteous idioms that are used to prevent offense. Clichés and Fixed Statements are regularly employed in any situation or conversation. Clichés is a statement that most people recognize and hence is not distinctive; it is also frequently used in the promotion of slogans and publications. Aside from that, English includes many terms from other languages, such as French and Latin, as well as many others. English can be considered to be a component of other languages.

Language plays a very important role and function in films (Biran, 2006:29). The way a film makes use of language also has an influence on the film's quality. In this way, idiom is employed in films to pique people's interest and keep them watching. In terms of education, films, and idioms have an edge in the teaching and learning process.

The use of expression in films has a significant influence on learner's vocabulary and interpersonal ability. Most students prefer to memorize in an entertaining method, such as by watching films. They learn the language and its highlights, such as idioms, by watching films. Understanding the meaning of idioms in films might help students better grasp the films themselves. Understanding the significance of idioms in films allows students to completely appreciate the films and increase their comprehension of them. Idioms, on the other hand, might be difficult for students to remember and understand. The intricacies of idioms stem from their difficulty in being translated accurately, word by word. This idea is backed by Burchfield's (1998) argument that an idiom is a phrase in which the collective meaning of the words differs from their individual lexical definitions. Moreover, the domain of Funny Mispronunciation challenges conventional linguistic norms by altering intonation, infusing humor, skepticism, or even rudeness into everyday conversations. This departure from linguistic conventions vividly demonstrates the dynamic essence of slang, showcasing its adaptability and capacity for innovation. Another prevalent form of slang involves shortened forms, a linguistic condensation method observed across various languages. This phenomenon entails the selective omission of internal letters and phonemes, signifying a universal trait in the evolution of language..

## **Methods (Times New Roman 12, Bold)**

The research method the writer used for this article is the qualitative research method. The qualitative research technique is described as a research technique designed to investigate and comprehend the significance that certain individuals or groups of people believe stems from societal or human problems (Creswell, 2013). According to Alwasilah (2002:107-109), there are five traits of the qualitative research method, which are: "(1) understanding the meaning, (2) understanding the particular contexts, (3) identification of phenomena and unexpected effect, (4) existing base theories, (5) process understanding".

### 1. DATA SOURCES

The analysis of idiomatic expressions in the film "Inglourious Basterds" drew from three primary data sources. The primary data sources encompassed the film's visual and auditory elements, which means the film itself. Additionally, supplementary information was gathered from internet sources and the film script to enhance the comprehensive examination.

## 2. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection proceeded in a structured two-step process. Initially, the writer engaged in a meticulous viewing of the film, attentively scrutinizing dialogues and contexts to pinpoint the idiomatic expressions uttered in the English language. Concurrently, a thorough examination of the film script was undertaken to ensure a comprehensive coverage of idiomatic content. Every identified idiomatic expression encountered within the film was systematically identified and documented.

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis phase commenced with a comprehensive investigation into the meanings and contextual nuances of the identified idioms. Drawing upon the theoretical framework established by O'Dell and McCarthy, a classification system was applied to categorize the idiomatic expressions into distinct types. These categories included similes, binomials, proverbs, euphemisms, clichés, and fixed statements. Such categorization facilitated a structured exploration of how idiomatic expressions contributed to the film's narrative.

Furthermore, the analysis extended identification and classification. Each idiom underwent detailed annotation, including references to the specific data pages within the film when it occurred. Additionally, the meaning of each idiom was elucidated.

## Result and Discussion

This study analyzed and categorized the idiomatic expressions featured in the film "Inglourious Basterds" (2009). The writer identified and categorized five types of idioms based on the theory by O'Dell & McCarthy (2010) in the context of the film "Inglorious Basterds". Here, the writer summarized the categorization of idioms featured in the film "Inglorious Basterds".

. Do not use the location when referring to pictures or tables, for example: "... presented in Figure 1 below," but "... is presented in Figure 1," or "... (Figure 1)." Consistency: All images/tables presented must be referenced in the body of the text, or vice versa referenced in the body of the text must have images/tables. The table caption is above the table. Figure caption is below the image.

**Table 1. Categorization of idioms featured in the film "Inglorious Basterds"**

	Type of Idioms	Data	Quantity
	Similes	Sure as hell	1
	Binomials		-
	Proverbs	While the going was good, business is booming, put all your eggs in one basket, tripping the light fantastic, kill us in the crib, pages of history	6
	Euphemisms	Rounding up, close the file, take on debit, spread the word, take on at their own game, go out, speaking the King's, rapping on the door, in the hands of, chewed out, had my way.	1 3

	Clichés and Fixed Statements	Couldn't have said it better, made good, made their way, everything in his power, on the other hand, pretty much, fight my way, just like that, sit well, all the way, how's he doing, for that matter, looking for trouble, by all means, make a deal, not so fast, get out of my sigh, gave himself away, least of all, that's about it, away, long run, not to mention, find myself, long story short, too good to be true, sitting in your chair, every once in a while, reach out, extends its hand, that goes without saying, give a fuck.	3 1
	Other Languages		-

### Similes

1. (00:22:11)

"But I sure as hell didn't come down from the goddamn Smoky Mountains,"

The idiom "sure as hell" means "really sure".

### Proverbs

1. (00:27:53)

"..., got the fuck outta Salzberg while the gettin' was good"

The underlined words are an alteration of the idiom "while the going was good". Which means "while there is a good opportunity".

2. (00:30:34)

"And cousin, business is booming."

The idiom "business is booming" usually refers to a period of increased commercial activity within a business or industry. In the movie, the idiom referred to the Basterds' activity of killing- Nazis which had become more active.

3. (01:07:54)

"Basically, we have all our rotten eggs in one basket"

The idiom "rotten eggs in one basket" is a slight alteration from the idiom "put all your eggs in one basket", which means "to depend for your success on a single person or plan of action".

4. (1:40:17)

"I don't see me tripping the light fantastic up the red carpet anytime soon"

The idiom "tripping the light fantastic" means "to dance".

5. (1:43:03)

"But that doesn't exactly kill us in the crib."

The idiom "kill in the crib" means "to prevent something before it succeeds".

6. (2:10:13)

---

“But in the pages of history, every once in a while, fate reaches out and extends its hand”

The idiom “pages of history” means “important parts of the history of a place, time, or group of people”.

Euphemisms

1. (2:09:53)

“... , it behooves oneself to keep his wits”

The idiom “keep his wits” means “to be ready to think quickly in a situation and react to things that you are not expecting”.

2. (0:08:03)

“I’ve heard the Führer has put you in charge of rounding up the Jews left in France...”

The idiom “rounding up” means “to find and bring together a group of animals or people”.

3. (00:09:02)

If you can assist me with answers, my department can close the file on your family.”

The idiom “close the file” means “to conclude/finish an investigation into actions or history”.

4. (00:23:47)

When you join my command, you take on debit”

The idiom “take on debit” in this film means “to owe a debt to someone”. In the scene, Lt. Aldo stated that when the Basterds joined his command, each of them owes him one hundred Nazi soldiers’ scalps, explaining the dialogue earlier.

5. (00:36:13)

“So tell ’em we let ya live so you could spread the word through the ranks what’s gonna happen to every Nazi we find.”

The idiom “spread the word” means “to communicate a message to a lot of people”.

6. (1:06:49)

You say he wants to take on the Jews, at their own game”

The idiom “take on at their own game” means “to confound opposition by using a similar strategy”.

7. (1:31:49)

“Well, if this is it, old boy, I hope you don’t mind if I go out speaking the king’s”

The idiom “go out” means “to die”.

8. (1:31:49)

“Well, if this is it, old boy, I hope you don’t mind if I go out speaking the king’s”

In the movie, the idiom “speaking the King’s” means “to speak English”. The words “The king’s” refers to the English language since England, the country of origin of the English language, is ruled by a monarchy (King/Queen).

9. (1:32:06)

“And seeing as I might be rapping on the door momentarily...”

In the film, the idiom “rapping on the door” means “about to die, or facing a life-threatening situation”. In the scene, Lt. Hicox stated that as he’s about to die because his cover was blown, he at least wanted to commend the Whiskey Scotch given by his enemy.

10.(2:02:30)

“Alas, you’re now in the hands of the S.S.”

The idiom “in the hands of” means “controlled or owned by”.

11.(2:27:43)

“Naw, I don’t think so, more like chewed out”

The idiom “chewed out” means “to be criticized harshly or angrily, especially for personal failings”

12.(2:28:41)

I mean, if I had my way, you’d wear that goddamn uniform for the rest of our pecker-suckin’ life”

The idiom “had my way” means “to get or do what one wants to get or do despite the desires, plans, etc., of other people”.

13.(2:05:39)

“And when you purchase friends like Bridget von Hammersmark, you get what you pay for”

The idiom “you get what you pay for” is used to say that something that can be purchased for a low price may possess improper qualities.

Cliches & Fixed Statements

1. (00:08:14)

“The Führer couldn’t have said it better himself”

The idiom “couldn’t have said it better” is an expression that means that the subject wholeheartedly agrees with somebody else’s remark.

2. (00:10:06)

“...they’ve either made good their escape or someone is very successful hiding them.”

The idiom “made good” means “to succeed”.

3. (00:10:40)

“But we heard the Dreyfuses had made their way into Spain”

The idiom “made their way” means “to travel or move to a place”.

4. (00:13:45)

“It would appear he did everything in his power to earn it.”

The idiom “everything in his power” means “to do as best as possible”.

5. (00:13:49)

“But I, on the other hand, love my unofficial title”

The idiom “on the other hand” is —used to introduce a statement that contrasts with a previous statement or presents a different point of view.

6. (00:14:37)

“Now the Führer and Goebbels’s propaganda have said pretty much the same thing”  
The idiom “pretty much” means “almost completely”.

7. (00:22:16)

“..., fight my way through half Sicily...”  
The idiom “fight my way” means “to move forward or make progress by pushing, fighting, or struggling”.

8. (00:37:13)

“See, we like our Nazis in uniforms. That way, you spot ’em just like that.”  
The idiom “just like that” means “suddenly or unexpectedly”.

9. (00:37:23)

“And that don’t sit well with us”  
The idiom “sit well” means “to be something that you agree or are pleased with”.

10.(1:5:53)

“All the way down, sir”  
The idiom “All the way” means “as much as possible or completely”.

11.(1:6:55)

“Compared to, say, Louis B. Mayer, how’s he doing?”  
The idiom “how’s he doing” is an expression to ask whether a person is happy, successful, etc...

12.(1:10:25)

“You know, we’re not looking for trouble right now”  
The idiom “looking for trouble” means “behaving in a way that is likely to cause problems for you”.

13.(1:11:45)

“But if trouble does happen, we need you to make damn sure no Germans or French, for that matter— escape from that basement”  
The idiom “for that matter” is used to show that a statement is true in another situation.

14.(1:31:52)

“By all means”  
The idiom “by all means” is an expression used to give permission to someone.

15.(1:34:41)

“Okay, Wilhelm, what’d ya say we make a deal?”  
The idiom “make a deal” means “to agree to a contract, an arrangement, a transaction, an understanding”.

16.(1:36:07)

“Not so fast”

The idiom “not so fast” is used in speech to say that one disagrees with what someone has said or to tell someone to stop or slow down.

17.(1:36:53)

“Take that fucking traitor and get her out of my sigh”

The idiom “get out of my sigh” is used to tell someone in an angry way to go away.

18.(1:38:51)

“The English man gave himself away”

The idiom “gave himself away” means “to inadvertently reveal something about yourself that you intended to keep a secret”.

19.(1:40:23)

“Least of all by tomorrow night”

The idiom “least of all” means “especially not”.

20.(1:43:16)

“That’s about it”

The idiom “that’s about it” means “there is no more to be said or done”.

21.(2:02:27)

“You’ve had a nice long run, Aldo.”

The idiom “long run” means “a long or far travel/journey”.

22.(2:08:17)

“..., not to mention winning the war single-handedly for the Allies”

The idiom “not to mention” is used to emphasize something that you are adding to a list”.

23.(2:08:21)

“..., only later to find myself standing before a Jewish tribunal”

The idiom “find myself” means “To discover, recognize, or realize one's location, thoughts, or sentiments”.

24. (2:09:57)

“Long story short, we hear a story too good to be true... it ain't”

The idiom “long story short” means “used when you do not tell all the details”.

25.(2:09:57)

“Long story short, we hear a story too good to be true... it ain't”

The idiom “too good to be true” means “used when you do not tell all the details”.



26.(2:10:04)

“Sitting in your chair, I would probably say the same thing”

In the film’s scene, the phrase “sitting in your chair” can mean literally or as an idiom. As an idiom “sitting in your chair” means “In your perspective or opinion”.

27. (2:10:13)

“But in the pages of history, every once in a while, fate reaches out and extends its hand”

The idiom “every once in a while” means “sometimes, but not regularly”

28.(2:10:13)

“But in the pages of history, every once in a while, fate reaches out and extends its hand”

The idiom “reach out” means “to make an effort to communicate with people or to give them your support”.

29.(2:10:13)

“But in the pages of history, every once in a while, fate reaches out and extends its hand”

The idiom “extends its hand” means “to offer one's support or assistance”.

30. (2:15:09)

“Well, that goes without saying”

The idiom “that goes without saying” means “to be obviously true”.

31. (2:27:37)

“But I don’t give a fuck about him.”

The idiom “give a fuck” means “care at all about someone or something”.

## **Discussion**

Based on the data analysis, this discussion presents an analysis of idiomatic expressions within the film "Inglourious Basterds," employing the categorization framework by O'Dell and McCarthy (2010). Out of six categories, four categories of idioms were identified, being Similes, Proverbs, Euphemisms, and Clichés & Fixed Statements. All the idioms were spoken in English by the characters throughout the film.

The most prevalent type of idioms was the Clichés and Fixed Statements. Concurring with O'Dell and McCarthy (2010), Clichés and Fixed Statements are frequently used in various situations and discussions. They are comments that most people recognize and therefore not uncommon. Some clichés and fixed statements can be interpreted into a new sentence, while others are used as an expression of a certain situation. For instance, the idiom “made their way” means “to travel or move to a place”, but the idiom “by all means” is used to imply permission to someone without other meaning behind the phrase, though it is still able to be understood literally. The use of Clichés and Fixed Statements in the film is indicative of the deliberate use of common and well-established expressions to create a sense of familiarity and authenticity within the dialogue. These expressions serve to connect the characters with the audience, making the interactions and conversations more relatable.

The least prevalent type of idioms was the Similes. According to O'Dell and McCarthy (2010), Similes are expressed when comparing two things, and include words ‘as’ or ‘like’. The only English-spoken idiom in the film was “sure as hell” which means “really sure”. The idiom was used in the film to show a character’s belief in his statement.

Several Proverbs and Euphemisms were also identified within the film, demonstrating a nuanced use of language to convey cultural references, wisdom, and subtle communication. Proverbs are said when giving insight, and warnings. Their inclusion enriches the dialogue by providing deeper meanings to certain scenes. Euphemisms, on the other hand, offer a layer of subtlety to the characters' interactions, allowing them to address sensitive topics with tact. Chi and Hao (2013) also stated that euphemism is a term, phrase, or communication style that is employed in a given situation to soften or conceal something unpleasant. Euphemism reduces offensiveness by removing the negative connotation associated with direct identification. In other words, euphemism is an unauthentic mode of expression that would be considered a lie if interpreted literally.

## Conclusion

The intricate narrative of "Inglorious Basterds" is skillfully interwoven with a diverse array of idiomatic expressions, enhancing the film's compelling storytelling. Following a meticulous viewing and analysis, the author successfully identified fifty-one idioms within the English dialogue, classifying them into four distinct categories based on O'Dell and McCarthy's theoretical framework. These encompassed one Simile, six Proverbs, thirteen Euphemisms, and a predominant thirty-one instances of Clichés and Fixed Statements. The recurrent presence of Clichés and Fixed Statements throughout the film can be attributed to their adaptable nature, seamlessly fitting into various conversational contexts. The coexistence of these diverse idiom categories contributes collectively to the narrative's enrichment. The strategic incorporation of idiomatic expressions in the film serves to not only embellish the storytelling but also to captivate the audience, creating a vivid and authentically cultural cinematic experience.

## References

- Biran, M. Y. (2006). *Teknik Menulis Skenario Film Cerita*. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya.
- Chi R., Hao Y. (2013). *Euphemism from Sociolinguistics Perspective*. Canada: CSCanada
- Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (2008). *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Burchfield R. W. (1998). *Modern English Usage (Revised Ed)*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2011). *An Introduction to Language*. Wadsworth Canada: Nelson Education, Ltd.
- Crystal, David. (2008). *The Language of the World*. USA: Princeton University Press.
- Howwar, M. (2013). Seeking the Nature of Idioms: A Socio-Cultural Study in Idiomatic English and Arabic meanings. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publication*, 3(2), 3–5.
- Kalean, I. (2013). Speaking Skill Improvement by Using Movie as Media. *JP3*, 1(13), 155–160.
- O'Dell & McCarthy. (2010). *English Idiom in Use Advance*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (1997). *Film Art: An Introduction*. USA: McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Alwasilah, A. (2002). *Pokok Kualitatif: Dasar-Dasar Merancang Dan Melakukan Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: PT. Dunia Pusaka Jaya.
- Rosalia, S., Noerazizah, S., Anggraeni, A. (2018). An Analysis of Idioms In "Guardian of The Galaxy Vol.2" Movie. *IKIP Siliwangi*.
- Rahayu, P, T. (2022). *An Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions In Toy Story 3 Film Script*. Raden Intan Repository.