

## **An analysis of idiomatic expressions used in “The Call of the Wild” movie**

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### ***Abstract***

*Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions in the Movie "The Call of the Wild." The purpose of this research is to identify the different idiomatic that were used in the movie “The Call of the Wild” and to decipher their true meanings. Researchers employed the theory of McCarty and O'Dell and an idiom dictionary to address the set research topics. This study employs qualitative descriptive research techniques. Data analysis was done by reducing and displaying information to conclude. The study's conclusions are as follows: the six kinds of McCarty and O'Dell idiomatic idioms were discovered in the movie The Call of the Wild. The six categories of terms are similes idiom (7%), binomials idiom (5%), proverbs idiom (16%), euphemisms idiom (22%), cliches idiom (17%), and fixed statement idiom (33%). The most common form of idiomatic expression is a Fixed Statement idiom, the dominating idiom. On the other hand, binomial idioms are the style of idiomatic expression that The Call of the Wild uses the least. The implied meaning of idiomatic can be deduced from the context of the statement in the movie. Idioms cannot be understood in just one word or phrase, so they must be understood in one sentence or paragraph to understand the meaning of the original context.*

**Keywords:** *Idiomatic Expression, The Call of The Wild Movie*

### **1. Introduction**

Language is a communication system humans use to convey and understand messages between one another. It is an important tool in social interaction and helps us share information, thoughts, feelings, and ideas. According to Sugiati (2016, p. 1), language is a means of communication that has a very significant role in the social life of society to exchange ideas, express intentions, and convey messages to others. Language has many types and variants, including spoken and sign languages—language is a complex system that connects the thoughts of every human in this world. Using language, we can interact with the people around us, gain access to information through writing, the media, and the internet, and expand our reach and understanding by exchanging ideas and knowledge. Each language has different grammar rules, keywords, and vocabulary, so people need to learn a particular language to communicate with others who speak that language. Language functions as a means of communication and reflects a group's culture, history, and identity. People can learn and understand worldviews, traditions, and values through language.

In the current era of globalization and technological advances, English is a universal language extensively utilized for international communication. According to Puspita (2018, p.3), English is a link language. As an international language, English is a global communication tool in various fields, such as business, academics, tourism, and diplomacy. In everyday life, speaking English can also help individuals communicate with people from various countries with different languages and cultures. This can broaden social networks and open opportunities to study and work abroad.

English in Indonesia is widespread in various fields, such as business, academia, and the media. English is the official language in many countries, so understanding this language can help one to communicate with people from different backgrounds and establish business relationships with international companies. In addition, the ability to speak English is also important in education. According to Listiani (2016, p. 3), Students must be motivated to communicate to exchange ideas that will expand their knowledge if they are to learn English well. Many literature and learning resources, such as scientific publications, journals, and websites, are available in English, so English proficiency can help individuals obtain broader information and knowledge. English can also be found in various media such as TV, news, magazines, songs, and movies.

Movies are created through moving images, sound, and other visual elements. Movies are usually produced to be shown in theatres, television, or streaming platforms. Panjaitan et al. (2022, p. 2) stated that a movie is an audiovisual work consisting of a series of moving images displayed sequentially to create the illusion of movement. The language utilised in a movie serves to articulate the creator's objectives associated with linguistics (Mutiarasari & Kurniadi, 2019). This implies that the use of language inherently encapsulates linguistic elements, often conveying the creator's intentions within the realm of linguistic discourse. People can be educated and entertained simultaneously when they watch a movie. A movie can entertain, inspire, educate, and convey a message to its audience (Dewi et al., 2022). In watching a movie, the audience can be emotionally involved with the story and characters and enjoy the audiovisual experience provided by the movie. Movies can also be entertainment and an escape from everyday reality, allowing one to explore new worlds and different experiences. In the global movie industry, English is very important for audiences worldwide who want to enjoy international movies. Sometimes, movie enthusiasts are very confused about understanding the storyline in English-language movies because movies usually contain a lot of idioms that are foreign to hear and difficult to understand.

An idiom is an expression with a deeper meaning than its exact definition or the sum of its constituent words. According to Arizal (2022, p. 1), an idiom (idiomatic expression) is a kind of informal language that has a different meaning from the sentence that has been written. Idioms are often used in everyday language by native speakers to express thoughts or ideas briefly and concisely. Idioms are characterized primarily by their meanings, which are not understandable from the meanings of the words that make them up. The meaning of idioms is often unpredictable based solely on word-for-word language knowledge. Therefore, understanding idioms requires cultural knowledge, the typical use of language, and the situational context in which the idioms are used. They add color, style, and feel to everyday language and are often used in conversation. Understanding and using idiomatic expressions requires knowledge of cultural context and language use. Idiomatic expressions improve

language proficiency and help convey messages effectively, but their meaning cannot be translated literally.

Considering the preceding explanation, the researcher chooses the movie "The Call of the Wild" to provide deeper insight into English used in different contexts, such as in movies. This can help enrich our understanding of the culture and habits of people who use English as their main language. The researcher chose this movie because many idioms can be found in the movie script. Some cultural knowledge impacts conversational statements in movies, so they need contextual explanations to interpret the meaning.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

A phrase or expression in a language that has a particular meaning that cannot be deduced from the meanings of the individual words is called an idiom. Generally, these idioms have long existed and developed in a particular culture. According to Thao (2021, p. 12), an idiom (idiomatic expression) is a type of informal language that differs from the meaning of the words in the expression. Pratama & Damara (2018, p. 47) propose that idiomatic expressions are daily expressions used by English speakers whose meaning differs from the actual literal meaning. They are used to express an idea uniquely and sometimes cannot be understood exclusively by non-native speakers or people unfamiliar with the idiom.

Idioms can give a more robust feel to a conversation and add an interesting linguistic dimension. They help to convey meaning efficiently and effectively and are often used satirically, describing feelings or situations more colorfully. Zaid (2019, p. 7) stated that native speakers use idioms in everyday communication because idiomatic expressions are colorful and interesting. However, understanding idioms is often challenging for second language learners because it's not always possible to infer the meaning from the words that make up an idiom. It is crucial to note that idioms can vary between languages and different cultures.

Therefore, understanding idioms in their proper cultural context is key to using and understanding them properly. McCarty and O'Dell, as cited from Okfiyanti (2020, p. 20), define eight types of idioms: Similes, Binomials, Trinomials, Proverbs, Euphemisms, Cliché, Fixed Statements, and Other Language. The various types of idioms can be classified and understood through their distinct characteristics. Characterized by comparisons, similes directly equate two dissimilar things using words like "like" or "as." Binomials, or word pairs, consist of two words often used together to convey a unique meaning beyond their definitions.

Conversely, trinomials are idiomatic expressions involving three words connected by conjunctions such as "and" or "or." Proverbs, short statements offering general advice or truths, are widely recognized sayings within a language or culture. Euphemisms, another type of idiom, convey messages subtly or politely by replacing potentially inappropriate or sensitive words. Clichés, formed by overuse, are phrases that lose their original impact. Fixed statements, a form of idiom, are frequently heard and used in everyday conversations. An example is, "The other languages are mostly derived from Latin or French."

## **3. Research Method**

This research obtains information by collecting data on idioms in "The Call of The Wild" movies. According to Creswell (2012, p. 3), research collects and analyzes information to increase our understanding of a topic or problem. The approach used in this study is

qualitative, which focuses on understanding the observed phenomena. The qualitative approach was chosen because it has flexibility, is not complicated in defining concepts, and provides opportunities for changes if more basic evidence is found.

In analyzing the data, the data is first gathered by the writer, who then analyses it. Analyzing data derived from research findings is known as data analysis. Researchers employ non-statistical analysis methods. In this research, the researcher utilized the procedural steps of Miles and Huberman, as cited by Wuri et al. (2021, p. 37), such as data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The following is an explanation of the 3-step method of analyzing research data as follows:

- Data reduction

Data reduction is selecting, merging, simplifying, and reducing data. This involves extracting relevant information from field notes or written transcripts and then summarising and translating it. The main data sources in qualitative research are words and actions, while secondary data can be written documents, pictures, or videos.

- Data Display

After the data is reduced, the next step is to present the data. In qualitative research, data can be presented in various forms, such as descriptions, tables, flowcharts, etc. In this analysis, the researcher prefers to explain information about the kinds of idioms contained in the movie "The Call of The Wild."

- Conclusion drawing/verification

Before concluding, the researcher must summarise all the research results and evaluate their implications. Based on the research findings in the movie "The Call of The Wild,"

#### **4. Findings and Discussion**

##### ***Finding***

After the researcher watched the movie "The Call of The Wild," several things will be explained in the findings of this research. Several answers to the questions contained in the research question will be presented. The researcher found various idiomatic expressions in the film "The Call of The Wild." The researcher categorized the types of idiomatic expressions found based on McCarthy and O'Dell's theory and the meaning of these expressions.

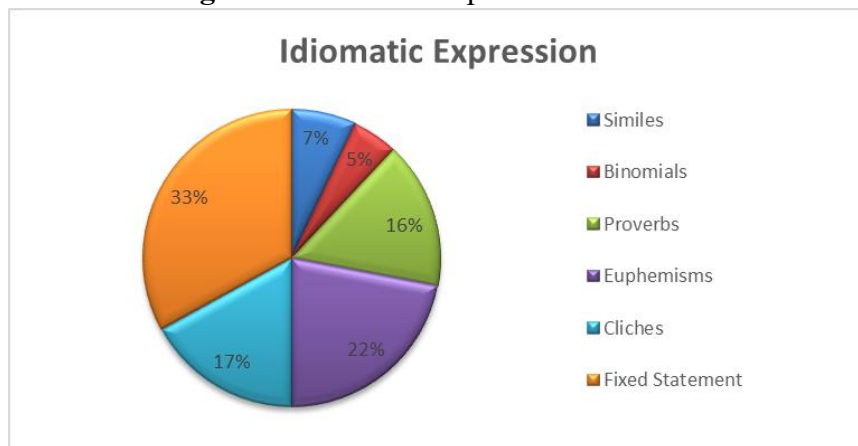
After analyzing idiomatic expressions in the movie "The Call of The Wild," the researcher finds eight types of idiomatic expressions in the movie. There are six idiomatic expressions of Similies, four idiomatic expressions of binomial, 14 idiomatic expressions of proverbs, 19 idiomatic expressions of Euphemisms, 15 idiomatic expressions of Cliché, and 28 idiomatic expressions of Fixed Statements.

The researcher found that in Similies, there are six idiomatic expressions. In binomials, there are four idiomatic expressions and 14 idiomatic expressions, 19 idiomatic expressions, 15 idiomatic expressions, and Fixed Statements, 28 idiomatic expressions.

Based on the findings above, the most dominant idiomatic expression in the movie "The Call of The Wild" is "Fixed Statement," with 28 idiomatic expressions used. This accounts for about 33% of all idiomatic expressions in the movie. The second most frequently occurring idiomatic expression is "Euphemisms," with 19 idiomatic expressions, which account for about 22% of the total idiomatic expressions in the movie. In the third position are "Clichés," which have 15 idiomatic expressions, or about 17% in the movie. "Proverbs"

occupies the fourth position, with 14 idiomatic expressions or about 16% in the movie. The fifth idiomatic expression is "Similies," which has six idiomatic expressions and accounts for about 7%. The sixth is "Binomials," with four idiomatic expressions, covering only about 5% of the movie. The last is Trinomial and another language with 0 data. The percentage data can be seen as follows:

**Figure 1.** Idiomatic Expressions Used



1. Similes

Similes (Comparison) is a figure of speech and a literary device that involves making a comparison between two different things or concepts using the words "like," "as for as," and "as much as." Similes are used to create vivid and imaginative descriptions, drawing similarities between the known and the unfamiliar to enhance understanding or create a more engaging and colorful expression.

There are examples of 6 Similes idiom type in the movie "The Call of The Wild":

**Table 1.** Similes idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	As far as the word can travel	This phrase uses the simile "as far as the word can travel" to describe how quickly excitement and enthusiasm spread among people.
2	Get up like one.	"Get up like one" means to recover or stand up together as a unified group. It highlights the idea of teamwork and unity.
3	Like it might happen	This simile compares Perrault's daily driving to someone constantly prepared or cautious, suggesting he is always ready for something unexpected.
4	As much as he believes in you	This simile compares the level of belief or trust that Perrault has in "Buck" with something else, emphasizing the strength of his belief.
5	He's not like him.	This expression shows the difference or contrast that occurs in an unusual Spitz. Perrault usually always saw Spitz, but at that time, he didn't see him.
6	It's like he's vanished.	This simile compares the situation to the vanishing or missing Spitz, highlighting a mysterious or unexplained absence.

2. Binomials

Binomials (Word Pairs) are expressions or phrases that consist of two words or parts that are typically joined by a conjunction such as "and," "or," or "but." These word pairs are commonly used together in a specific order, and the combination of the two words often has a specific meaning that may not be directly deducible from the meanings of the individual words.

There are examples of 4 Binomials idiom types in the movie "The Call of The Wild" :

**Table 2.** Binomials idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	Club and fang	Describes a harsh and unforgiving law or rule, often used in the context of survival in the wilderness.
2	Beaten but not broken	This binomial indicates that although Buck was physically defeated or overpowered by the man with a club, he remained mentally strong or resilient. It suggests that while he may have lost the battle, he did not lose his spirit or determination.
3	And the edge of nowhere	Refers to a remote and isolated location at the edge of a vast and desolate wilderness, often used when describing places far from civilization.
4	Young and flourish	imply that something or someone is both young and showing healthy growth.

3. Proverbs

Proverbs are traditional sayings or expressions that convey wisdom, truth, or advice based on common sense, cultural beliefs, or practical experiences. These concise statements often offer guidance or moral lessons in a memorable and easily understandable form. Proverbs are typically passed down through generations within a culture and play a significant role in folklore, literature, and everyday communication.

There are examples of 14 Proverbs idiom type in the movie "The Call of The Wild":

**Table 3.** Proverbs idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	All that glitters is not gold.	This proverb implies that not everything that appears valuable or attractive on the surface is precious.
2	A pack can have only one leader.	This proverb implies that a group or team should have a clear and single leader to avoid confusion or conflict.
3	You can't make up this much time.	This phrase reflects that once time is lost or wasted, it cannot be regained or made up.
4	They don't need me and my sled anymore.	This saying expresses that someone or something has become unnecessary or obsolete.
5	You never know what's coming.	This proverb underscores the unpredictability of life and how unexpected events can occur at any time.

6	It's everywhere. Take it, take it all. It won't change anything	This phrase suggests that material wealth or possessions, symbolized by gold in the context, won't necessarily bring happiness or fulfillment.
7	Don't touch him until we hear all the facts.	This saying emphasizes the importance of gathering all the information before passing judgment or taking action.
8	We fall all together, but so do we get up as one.	This proverb highlights that unity and cooperation are essential when facing challenges or adversity.
9	In the world of men, Buck had learned to listen to their voices	This saying implies that adapting and understanding the language or behavior of a particular group or environment is crucial for survival.
10	"Off the map, where no one's been." That's, that's what he loved A real adventure	This saying encourages exploration and taking risks beyond what is familiar or known.
11	They don't understand you, do what Spitz does.	This reflects the idea that sometimes, individuals conform to the norms or behaviors of a group, even if they don't fully understand them.
12	He was less attentive to his master's commands.	This phrase implies that when individuals become more independent or self-reliant, they may pay less attention to authority figures.
13	No man needs more than that.	This proverb suggests contentment with simple necessities rather than excessive desires.
14	You see, I knew him once when he was just a dog at a man's side	This phrase reflects that individuals or animals can undergo transformative experiences or growth over time.

4. Euphemisms

Euphemisms are figures of speech or expressions that replace direct, blunt, or potentially offensive words or phrases with milder or more socially acceptable ones. They are often employed to discuss sensitive, delicate, or uncomfortable topics less harshly or aggressively. Euphemisms can serve various purposes, including politeness, avoidance of taboos, or softening the impact of distressing or unpleasant information.

There are examples of 19 Euphemisms idiom types in the movie "The Call of The Wild":

**Table 4.** Euphemisms idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	The yellow metal	refer to gold
2	A mad fever's spread	refer to a gold rush.
3	To try their luck	this is for seeking gold.
4	Thousands of gold rushers	for individuals participating in the gold rush.

5	News of the Klondike	refer to information about the Klondike gold rush.
6	He was less attentive to his master's commands	for disobedience.
7	Crying for a dog	for showing emotional attachment or concern for a dog.
8	He's not broken. He just fell off his feet.	for being exhausted or fatigued.
9	We carry lives	for delivering important mail.
10	Spitz' had her enough	for a change in leadership among sledgedogs.
11	He grabbed a pencil and drew a bound line off the map	for venturing into uncharted territory.
12	This is for Mrs. Birthday	for a birthday gift.
13	My fortune is lost	this is for losing a substantial amount of money.
14	It's your ancestors	for wild wolves.
15	It's their domain, they own this house	This is for the wolves' territory.
16	Pick up the pieces harder	for rebuilding one's life.
17	It's everywhere, take it all	for the abundance of gold in the area.
18	You're home	to return to one's place of origin.
19	He remembers kind hands and old masters	to remember past human companions.

5. Clichés

Cliches are expressions, phrases, or ideas that have been overused to the point where they have lost their originality, impact, or effectiveness. They often come across as trite, predictable, or lacking in creativity because they have been used so frequently that they no longer provide fresh or meaningful insights. Clichés can be found in various forms, including idiomatic expressions, catchphrases, sayings, or even plot elements in stories.

There are examples of 15 Clichés idiom types in the movie "The Call of The Wild":

**Table 5.** Cliches idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	All in the papers at the time	This cliché is used to indicate that something was widely known or publicized. It means that the information was commonly reported in newspapers.
2	Mad fever's spread	This cliché suggests that a strong enthusiasm or obsession has taken hold of many people, often recklessly or irrationally.

3	To try their luck	This cliché means attempting something in the hope of achieving success, often with an element of risk or uncertainty.
4	His master	Referring to someone as "his master" is a cliché that implies a strong and loyal relationship between a person and their pet or servant.
5	King of the realm	This cliché suggests that someone or something holds a dominant or authoritative position within a specific context or domain.
6	Out of the way!	This cliché phrase demands that someone or something move aside or make room for another.
7	Men with a club	This cliché refers to individuals who use force or violence to assert control or dominance over others.
8	Edge of nowhere	This cliché describes a remote or isolated location, often implying that it is far from civilization.
9	Fall all together	This cliché means that a group of people or things will experience success or failure collectively, with shared outcomes.
10	Off the map	This cliché refers to going to a place or pursuing an uncharted path or one not commonly explored.
11	Pick up the pieces.	This cliché means to attempt to restore or recover something that has been damaged or broken.
12	It's everywhere	This cliché suggests that something is abundant and can be found easily everywhere.
13	Won't bring back the dead	This cliché reminds us that no matter what we do, we cannot change the past or resurrect those who have passed away.
14	Remember kind hands	This cliché reflects on the memory of people who have treated someone or something with care and compassion.
15	Heard the call	This cliché implies that someone has responded to their inner calling or instinct, often suggesting a strong sense of purpose or destiny.

6. Fixed Statements

Fixed Statements, fixed expressions, or formulaic language are specific phrases or sentences that have become standardized and are commonly used in everyday conversation, often without much variation. These expressions are deeply ingrained in a language and are often recognized and understood by native speakers without further explanation.

There are examples of 28 Fixed statements idiom type in the movie "The Call of The Wild":

**Table 6.** Fixed statements idiom and the meaning

No.	Idiom	Meaning
1	Come on there	It is an informal command to encourage someone or something to move or act.

2	Here, good boy.	It is used to praise or encourage a well-behaved dog.
3	I'm so sorry.	It is an apology for a mistake or misbehavior.
4	Don't you dare!	This expression is used to emphasize a prohibition or express firm disapproval of an action the person may take.
5	Usually	Indicates that something is typically the case.
6	Settle	It is a command to calm down or become quiet.
7	Why don't you sit out here and think about what you have done?	Suggests taking time to reflect on one's actions.
8	I need help with this last transfer.	It is a request for assistance in completing a task.
9	What in the world is in this thing?	It expresses surprise or curiosity about the contents of something.
10	Just one, locked in that box.	It refers to a single item or individual enclosed in a locked container.
11	Easy boy.	A calming phrase to reassure or calm a dog
12	She deserves it.	Expresses the belief that someone deserves something.
13	That's mine	Claims ownership of something.
14	Good morning	It is a polite greeting used in the morning.
15	It's been a long time.	Indicates that a significant amount of time has passed since the last meeting.
16	Good to see you	Expresses happiness at seeing someone.
17	Mush!	It is a command used to instruct a dog team to start moving.
18	Tied up	It means being busy.
19	Get up	To rise or stand up.
20	Growing up	the process of maturity.
21	Makeup	To reconcile or resolve a disagreement or conflict.
22	Get off me!	Command to stay away.
23	came up	arrived or reached a specific place or destination.
24	Stay out	used to limit access to the area or to keep someone from entering it.

25	Get out	used as a command or instruction for someone to leave a particular place or area.
26	Go on	often added to reinforce the command and urge the person to continue moving or departing.
27	Hands off	This phrase commands someone to remove their hands from something or someone.
28	Ran off	This phrase refers to quickly departing or leaving a place, often in a hurry or without permission.

### ***Discussion***

Based on the research results, it can be shown that there are a total of 86 idiomatic expressions found in the film script "The Call of the Wild." According to McCarthy and O'Dell's theory, these idiomatic expressions are divided into eight types: Similies, Binomials, Trinomials, Proverbs, Euphemisms, Clichés, Fixed Statements, and Other Languages.

Researchers found 86 idiomatic expressions in the movie "The Call of The Wild." Of these, 6 are similes, 4 are binomials, 14 are proverbs, 19 are euphemisms, 15 are clichés, and 28 are fixed statements. Subsequently, as indicated by diagram 4.1, we can observe the prevalence of each idiomatic expression. Fixed Statements distribute 32% of all conversational expression findings. The distribution of Euphemisms is 22% in the findings of idiomatic expressions. Clichés distribute 17% of the findings of idiomatic expressions. Proverbs' distribution is 16% in the findings. The distribution of Similies is 9% in the findings. The distribution of Binomials is 4% in the findings. Based on the data, almost half of the idiomatic expressions in this study are "Fixed Statements." This is because "Fixed Statements" are idiomatic expressions that are very common in the native language and are frequently used in this film to facilitate the audience's understanding. Apart from that, the film also contains various other idiomatic expressions that contribute to its appeal. This makes the film easy to understand while still having interesting layers of meaning for those who want to dig deeper. Therefore, the diversity of idiomatic expressions in the film "The Call of the Wild" makes the story unique, strong, and easy to follow.

### **5. Conclusion**

From the study done by the writer, it is known that phrases contain idiomatic expressions in movies, especially The Call of The Wild. According to the data analyzed for the study, certain idioms and dominating idiom types in the idiomatic expressions were discovered. They came to the following conclusion:

The first statement of the problem of this research is to analyze the kind of idiomatic expression in The Call Of The Wild Movies. Here, the researcher found 86 idiomatic expressions that are in these movies. Based on McCarty and O'Dell, there are six idiomatic expressions: Similies, Binomial, Proverbs, Euphemisms, Cliché, and Fixed statements. From those kinds of idiomatic expressions in The Call of The Wild, the type of idiom is as follows: there are six idiomatic expressions of Similies, four idiomatic expressions of binomial, 14 idiomatic expressions of proverbs, 19 idiomatic expressions of Euphemisms, 15 idiomatic expressions of Cliché, and 28 idiomatic expressions of Fixed Statement.

The second statement problem of this research is the analysis of the meaning of idiomatic expressions. The research used English as the main language in the movie script. To know

the idiom's meaning in *The Call of The Wild* contains many idiomatic expressions from America or England. The expressions used in the dialogues in this movie are culturally influenced and require contextual explanation to understand their meaning properly.

The last statement of the problem of this research also shows that the most dominant idiom in the film *The Call of The Wild* is a Fixed Statement. We analyze the idiom expressions in *The Call of The Wild* movie data, which shows that from 28 (twenty-eight) idiomatic expressions, around 32%. This is because fixed statement idioms are idiomatic expressions known as fixed expressions or formulaic language, which are certain expressions or sentences that have become standard and commonly used in everyday conversation, often without much variation. These expressions are ingrained in a language and are often recognized and understood by native speakers without further explanation. So, *The Call of the Wild* does not use too many idioms that are difficult for the audience to understand so that they can enjoy the film happily.

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