

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most people believe that they have mastered a language when they are able to express themselves fluently in it. But language is not just about words and grammar; language is unique because it reflects the culture of the people using it. Hence to be able to master a language and understand the actual meaning behind the words, expressions and sentences uttered, one needs to learn the language **frills** such as idiomatic expressions and colloquial forms. Expressions like '*to read him like a book*', '*on the house*', '*to be nuts*' and '*like a house on fire*' may not be understood correctly by a non-native speaker of English if he were to interpret the meaning literally.

Idiomatic expressions form a very important part of most languages. They are widely used in informal conversations and literary writings to give life and richness to the language and to express concepts and ideas in an interesting way. For example it is more interesting to say that, '*The manager wants the workers to eat out of his hands*' than '*He wants them to believe everything he says*' to imply a range of effects or meanings.

A form of idiomatic expression that is used widely in writings and conversations is the **idiom**. An idiom is a fixed phrase with fixed meaning and is a form of metaphor. Larsen sees idioms as “**‘dead metaphors’ as they are part of the lexicon of the language**” (Larsen,1984:249).

Like idioms, the *simpulan bahasa* are also part of the lexicon of the Malay language and can be seen as 'dead metaphors'. As this is a study of the translation of *simpulan bahasa* into English, matters concerning both *simpulan bahasa* and idioms will be discussed. This is because some *simpulan bahasa* can be translated into equivalent idioms. This chapter will look at idioms and *simpulan bahasa* which are metaphors and the categorization and transformation of these idiomatic expressions of the Malay and English language.

2.2 Idioms as Metaphors

Metaphor is ***“one of the most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally on feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices and spiritual awareness”*** (Lakoff, 1980:193).

Metaphors as described by Aristotle in Poetics 21, consists ***“in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species or from species to genus or from species to species or on grounds of analogy”*** (in Harris, Taylor.1989:31). Metaphors are figure of speech in which a reference is designated by the name of another referent and

“the essence of metaphors is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff,1980:5).

Lakoff sees metaphors as pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Man tends to conceptualize every little thing that happens around us metaphorically. He believes that a person’s way of talking about or concerning and even experiencing a situation would be metaphorically structured. He further states that metaphors allow us to understand one’s domain of experience in terms of another. These experiences can be seen as the product of our bodies, our interaction with our physical environment and with other people within our culture. While some of these metaphorical concepts may be universal in nature others may vary from culture to culture.

Metaphorical concepts are formed based on natural kinds of experience, like love, time, ideas, understanding, arguments and happiness. For example ideas on love are described by metaphors like, ‘He’s wild about her’ and ‘He drives her out of her mind’. Ideas can be conceptualized metaphorically in terms of food too. Lakoff gives examples of ‘What he said left a bad taste in my mouth’ and ‘too many facts for me to swallow’. These are concepts that require metaphorical definition since they are not clearly described in their own terms to satisfy our purpose of expressing ourselves.

Metaphors like 'time is money' and 'life is a gamble' have a strong cultural basis, especially in English culture. They emerge in this culture because according to Lakoff, ***"what they highlight correspond so closely to what the society experience collectively. Not only are they grounded in the physical and cultural experience, but they also influence society's experience and action"*** (68).

Newmark (1981:85) proposes the terms below in describing metaphors:

- i. **Object** (or topic) - that is, the term described by the metaphor.
- ii. **Image** - that is, the item in terms of which the object is described. For example, in the sentence 'a sunny smile'. The object is the 'smile' as it is being compared with the 'sun' as the image.
- iii. **Sense** - that is, point of similarity which shows in what particular aspects the object and the image are similar
- iv. **Metaphor** - the word(s) taken from the image.

Basically metaphors can be divided into two broad categories. They are 'dead' metaphors and 'live' metaphors. (Larsen,1984:249). **'Dead' metaphors** are those which are part of the lexicon of a language. **'Live' metaphors** on the other hand, are those which are constructed by the author or speaker to illustrate concepts. Larsen sees idioms as 'dead' metaphors as the person using it no longer thinks of the comparison (the image and the object) on which it was based. For example, in the metaphor 'time is money' a person has to

understand why time is compared to money. This could be because time is a limited and valuable commodity, and a waste of time is a waste of money. However, one does not have to understand or make comparison between the object and image in 'time is right' as this expression is already part of the lexicon of the English language and has a fixed meaning of 'the right time'. Although idioms according to Larsen "**were built on a type of comparison**" (1984:249) they are 'dead' metaphors as we do not think of the comparison but think directly of the meaning.

In this study of the translation of *simpulan bahasa* into English, although comparisons between image and object need not be made in understanding idioms, image will be analysed in the translation procedures of *simpulan bahasa* into idioms, as the analysis will determine whether the image in *simpulan bahasa* can be transferred into English idioms. For example the image 'muka' in the *simpulan bahasa* 'masam muka' (sour face) is retained in the idiom 'pull a long face'.

2.3 Idioms

A form of idiomatic expressions that is unique in most languages are the idioms. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (v : I : 21-22), the term idiom has the following meaning:

- i. The form of speech peculiar to a people or country, own language, own tongue;
- ii. The specific character, property or genius of any language, the main expression which is natural or peculiar to it.

Fromkin and Rodman (1978:127) define idioms as ***"fixed phrases, consisting of more than one word which have meanings that cannot be inferred by knowing the meaning of the individual words"***. For example, 'drive a bargain' does not mean 'driving' and 'fly by night', which means 'not reliable' and 'not to be trusted', has nothing to do with the dictionary meaning of each word.

Similarly, Swinney and Cutler (Aitchison, 1978:78) say that idioms are ***"phrases whose overall meaning cannot be predicted from the total of the individual words and they appear to be treated by humans as if they are ordinary, single lexical items"***. 'Get the picture' does not mean getting hold of a picture or a portrait but to understand something or a situation. And if a person is 'hot under the collar' it has nothing to do with the weather.

These definitions and examples clearly show that idioms must be understood as single units with a special meaning of their own. It is difficult to work out the meaning of an idiomatic phrase from the meaning of the individual words, although Boisset (1988:420) says that "**one must be able to distinguish between idiomatic and non- idiomatic expressions**". This is because to understand the meaning of 'out of the frying pan (and) into the fire' which is 'out of a bad situation into a worse one', one must know the non-idiomatic or literal meaning of the expression first. Then only can the idiomatic meaning be understood. Idiomaticity according to Boissert **develops from the basic meaning of the words**. 'To hit the nail on the head' literally means 'to hit it on the right spot', but when interpreted idiomatically means to be 'exactly right in words or action'.

Although idioms appear in all languages, according to Makkai (1972:23), limited literature on it indicates that the study of idioms is "**one of the most neglected and under explored aspects of modern literature, even though the term idiom has been around since antiquity and used in a variety of senses with some more frequently and consistently, than others**".

Makkai's research has shown that between the turn of the century and the 50's and 60's a large number of prominent linguists have steered clear of idioms almost completely. "**The concept of idiomaticity is not mentioned in Bloomfield's 'Postulate' (1926) or 'Language' (1935). Harris in his**

'Methods in Structural Linguistics' chooses not to mention idiomaticity. Likewise Chomsky's published works from 1957 until 1972 also indicates this neglect and according to Palmer (1938:xii) idioms are too broad. " This according to Makkai explains why not much literature can be found on idioms.

Nevertheless idioms exist in most languages ***"as man tends to conceptualize the things that they see and experience in their language idiomatically"*** (Lakoff, 68). They are mostly used in conversations, literary and journalistic writings and in television and radio programmes.

It can be concluded that idioms are peculiar to a language, and that it is necessary to understand the culture and the way of life in which the language is spoken in order to understand the cultural references and connotations which idioms have. As Larsen says (1984:239), ***"idioms are one class of figurative expressions which occur in all languages but which is very language specific"***.

This peculiarity of idioms can be seen if we compare the idioms of Mandarin, Tamil and Malay. In Mandarin when one says 'rice bucket' it means a person who is good at nothing. Whereas in Malay 'rice bucket' or '*periuk nasi*', means a source of income. The Mandarin 'small heart' means to be careful, while '*small heart*' or '*kecil hati*' in Malay means 'one's conscience or instinct'. A comparison can also be made between Malay and Tamil idioms. In Malay when

one says 'to lose heart' or '*hilang hati*' it means to lose interest, whereas in Tamil it means to fall in love. The idiom '*berat kepala*' in Malay means having a problem but when translated literally into Tamil it means to be proud or arrogant while the Malay equivalent for arrogance is '*besar kepala*'. This shows that different cultures perceive and conceptualize things differently. The expressions used might be the same like 'small heart' but their meaning differs.

The examples above indicate that the structure of idioms is similar in most languages, that is, they are fixed group of words that have an overall meaning which differs from the meaning of the individual words. However, they are peculiar to the people and their language, as language reflects the thoughts and worldview of the speakers through socialization and acculturation. A language is **" a system of categories and rules based on fundamental principles and assumptions about the world "** (Leckie Tarry, 1995:5) and this means that people tend to conceptualize the things that they see and experience in their daily lives into their own unique system of categorization.

An expression in one language may have a different meaning in another. Idioms are culture-based, that is **" they emerge naturally in a culture because what they highlight, correspond so closely to what the speakers of a language experience collectively "** (Lakoff: 67). In the Malay language a form of idiomatic expression with its own peculiarities is known as the ***simpulan bahasa***.

2.4 Simpulan Bahasa

The word *simpulan* means 'a knot' and *bahasa*, which originates from the Sanscritic *Basha*, means language. The term *simpulan bahasa* refers to two words which are tied or knotted into a phrase to form a meaning of its own. When they are *untied* the words revert to their dictionary meaning. The peculiarity of Malay idioms is that they are mostly two-word expressions, although a small number of *simpulan bahasa* are made up of three or four words, for example '*melepaskan batuk ditangga*' (to cough at the foot of the stairs) and '*kacang lupakan kulit*' (the nut that forgets its skin). However, for the purpose of this research, the focus will be on the two-word *simpulan bahasa*, although others will also be mentioned.

As Malay society tends to conceptualize the things that they see and experience around them, new *simpulan bahasa* will be created and used in the language and old *simpulan bahasa* will disappear as they become irrelevant to the society. Some old *simpulan bahasa* will lose their idiomaticity and become clichés (Keraf:1981). This explains why some people are not aware of the use of *simpulan bahasa* in their utterances, such as '*berat sebelah*' (lop-sided), '*bintang filem*' (film star), '*budi bahasa*' (language and kindness) and '*cincin tanda*' (symbolic ring).

In the early days most Malays were farmers and fisherman and living in small villages and thus most *simpulan bahasa* were formed from the things that they saw and did everyday. *Simpulan bahasa* like '*gelora hati*' (storm liver), which means 'to be feeling stormy', and '*kena pancing*' (caught by the hook), which means 'to be trapped', show that the seas and the rivers were part of the lives of the traditional Malays and they depended on these places for their livelihood. '*Setahun jagung*' (one year old corn), which means 'a child' or 'someone who's new at work', and '*beras basah*' (wet rice), which means 'something which is useless' reflect the lifestyle of the traditional Malays who were mostly farmers. Poultry farming among the Malays led to the formation of *simpulan bahasa* like '*tidur ayam*' (chicken sleep), and '*ajak-ajak ayam*' (invite chicken). These *simpulan bahasa* mean 'light sleeper' and 'to invite someone half-heartedly'

Nowadays, most Malays have migrated to the city to become professionals and entrepreneurs. Thus, new *simpulan bahasa* like '*Ali Baba*', '*Minah karan*' (electric Minah or girl) and '*mulut laser*' (mouth laser) have been created. '*Ali Baba*' describes 'Malays who act by proxy as directors for companies that are actually owned by non-Malays'. '*Minah karan*', which refers to 'female factory workers', indicates the industrial development experienced by the Malays. These examples show that expressions which were typical of Malay life many years ago are no longer used nowadays as new ones emerge in the society.

Most *simpulan bahasa* were formerly '*bahasa kiasan*', that is similes and when used by society from time to time they change their form to *simpulan bahasa* (Keris Mas 1988, Zaba 1965). For example the *simpulan bahasa*, '*pekak badak*' was originally '*pekak seperti badak*' (as deaf as a rhinoceros) and '*harimau berantai*' was formerly '*garang seperti harimau berantai*' (as fierce as a chained tiger). Then there are those *simpulan bahasa* that originated from folktales and popular beliefs like '*Cina buta*', '*Abu Jahal*' and '*Mat Jenin*'. Others were formed through association with ordinary things or events which could be related to the environment, food and animals. Thus, this explains the formation of *simpulan bahasa* like '*kutu embun*' (dewy louse), '*makan sabun*' (to be fed), '*panjang tangan*' (long hands), and '*makan garam*' (eating salt) (Zaba 1965).

2.5 The Definition of Simpulān Bahasa

The *Kamus Dewan* (1970:1110) defines *simpulan bahasa* as ,

"an expression or a phrase consisting of more than two words and with a meaning different from the words used"

For example the *simpulan bahasa* '*Cina buta*' (blind Chinese), has got an entirely different meaning from the words used. '*Cina*' here refers to a Chinese and '*buta*' means blind. However, this *simpulan bahasa* refers to 'someone who is willing to marry a Muslim woman who has been divorced three times by the same

person. She will only be allowed to marry her former husband for the fourth time once she is divorced by the 'Cina buta' on the assumption that the "blind" Chinese man would be willing to divorce her.

Abdullah Hussein (1966:v) defines *simpulan bahasa* as **"phrases and used to mean differently from its original meaning"**. *Simpulan bahasa* is also perceived by Zaba (1965:151) as **"phrases used to mean differently from its poriginal meaning"** and Keris Mas (1988:131) defines *simpulan bahasa* as **"expressions withs its own meaning and loses the meaning of its words"**.

These definitions can be illustrated by the phrase '*cepat tangan*' ;if treated literally it means 'quick hand' and be wrongly interpreted as hardworking. But the *simpulan bahasa* actually means 'inclined to stealing'. Therefore, the meaning of 'quick' and 'hand' has undergone metaphorisation.

The definition of *simpulan bahasa* can be further exemplified by the phrases '*berat tulang*' and '*makan angin*'. The dictionary meaning of words in these two expressions give us 'heavy bones' and 'eating air' which do not make much sense. But their idiomatic meaning is 'a lazy person' and 'to be on vacation. The denotative meaning of the words are lost as Keraf (96) says **"the meaning of *simpulan bahasa* cannot be explained logically or grammatically based on the words that formed it"**.

From these definitions it can be concluded that *simpulan bahasa* should be understood as a semantic unit i.e. its figurative connotation can only be understood as a whole. If used separately, each word carries its own denotative meaning but when combined with another specific word in a *simpulan bahasa* the meaning changes. An example is the word '*makan*' which means to eat. This word, however loses its denotative meaning when used with other words like '*hati*', '*suap*', '*tangan*' and '*garam*' to form the *simpulan bahasa* '*makan hati*', '*makan suap*', '*makan tangan*' and '*makan garam*'. These expressions acquire the figurative meaning to be hurt, corrupted, unexpected profit or fortune and experienced respectively - which is different from their literal meaning.

2.6 The Structure of *Simpulan Bahasa*

Simpulan bahasa are usually made up of "**a combination of nouns, verbs and adjectives**" (Keris Mas 1988). For example the expression '*makan hati*' (eat liver) is made up of a verb and noun, and '*berat tangan*' (heavy hand) is made up of an adjective and a noun. *Simpulan bahasa* can be classified into the following four groups:

- a. noun + noun
- b. verb + noun
- c. adjective + noun or noun + adjective

d. verb + noun + adjective

i. **Noun + Noun**

This means that both the words used in the *simpulan bahasa* are nouns. For example 'kaki ayam', 'buaya darat', 'bapa ayam', 'kaki botol' and 'kuku besi'. The words in these expressions are all nouns and have the literal meaning of 'chicken feet', 'land crocodile', 'father chicken', 'foot bottle', and 'iron nails'. However, when they are combined and used as *simpulan bahasa*, they carry the figurative meaning of 'being barefooted', 'swindler', 'pimp', 'alcoholic' and 'dictator' respectively. This can be further illustrated in table 1.

Table 1 : Noun + Noun

<i>Simpulan bahasa</i>	Literal meaning	Figurative meaning
<i>Kaki ayam</i>	Chicken feet	Barefooted
<i>Buaya darat</i>	Land crocodile	Swindler
<i>Bapa ayam</i>	Father chicken	Pimp
<i>Kaki botol</i>	Foot bottle	Alcoholic
<i>Kuku besi</i>	Iron nails	Dictator

ii. **Verb + Noun**

The words in this group of *simpulan bahasa* comprised a verb and a noun. For example the *simpulan bahasa* 'pelawa ayam', 'ambil hati', 'ganti tikar' and 'pasang telinga' are each made up of a verb and a noun. They can be literally translated as 'invite chicken', 'take liver', 'change mat' and 'fix ear'. These *simpulan bahasa* which are made up of a verb and a noun, figuratively mean 'to invite someone half-heartedly', 'to be offended or hurt', 'to marry one's sister-in-

law after the death of one's wife' and 'to listen to the conversation of other people'.

Table 2 : Verb + Noun

<i>Simpulan bahasa</i>	Literal meaning	Figurative meaning
<i>Pelawa ayam</i>	Invite chicken	To invite someone healf-heartedly
<i>Ambil hati</i>	Take liver	To be offended/hurt
<i>Ganti tikar</i>	Change mat	To marry one's sister-in-law after the death of one's wife
<i>Pasang telinga</i>	Fix ear	To listen to other people's conversation

iii. Adjective+Noun or Noun+Adjective

The *simpulan bahasa* in this group comprised an adjective and a noun. They can be in the form of adjective + noun or noun + adjective. For example the *simpulan bahasa* 'ayam tambatan', 'janda berhias', 'lipas kudung' and 'muka papan'. These *simpulan bahasa* are comprised of noun + adjective and can be literally translated as 'tied chicken', 'decorated divorcee', 'maimed cockroach' and 'wooden face'. As *simpulan bahasa*, these expressions figuratively mean 'an experienced and aggressive person', 'an attractive and young divorcee', 'a person who does things fast' and 'a thick skinned person' respectively. *Simpulan bahasa* in this group can also be in the form of adjective + noun. For example 'pekak badak', 'pendek fikiran' and 'ringan lidah'. These expressions - which can be literally translated as 'deaf rhinoceros' , 'short thought', and 'light tongue' respectively - are comprised of adjective + noun and carry the meaning of 'someone who pretends to be deaf', 'an impulsive person' and 'a talkative person'. This can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 : Adjective + Noun or Noun + Adjective

<i>Simpulan bahasa</i>	Literal meaning	Figurative meaning
<i>Ayam tambatan</i>	Tied chicken	Experience & aggressive person
<i>Janda berhias</i>	Decorated divorcee	Attractive & young divorcee
<i>Lipas kudung</i>	Maimed chicken	One who does things fast
<i>Muka papan</i>	Wooden face	Thick-skinned person
<i>Pekak badak</i>	Deaf rhinoceros	One who pretends to be deaf
<i>Pendik pikiran</i>	Short thought	Impulsive person
<i>Ringan lidah</i>	Light tongue	Talkative person

iv. Verb + Noun + Adjective

The *simpulan bahasa* in this group consist of three word expressions. Examples for this group are, 'mendukung biawak hidup', berunding dibalik telunjuk', and 'melepaskan anjing tersepit'. The structure of verb + noun + adjective can be seen in the literal translation - 'carry iguana/monitor lizard alive, 'to hide behind the index finger' and 'to release a trapped dog'. These *simpulan bahasa* figuratively mean 'to be kind to an evil person', 'to depend on an irresponsible person' and 'to help an ungrateful person'. This is illustrated in the table.

Table 4 : Verb + Noun + Adjective

<i>Simpulan bahasa</i>	Literal meaning	Figurative meaning
<i>Mendukung biawak hidup</i>	To carry iguana alive	To be kind to an evil person
<i>Berunding dibalik telunjuk</i>	Hide behind the index finger	To depend on an irresponsible person
<i>Lepaskan anjing tersepit</i>	Release a trapped dog	To help an ungrateful person

In the Malay language, most *simpulan bahasa*, are two-word expressions and so they fall into the first three groups i.e. noun + noun, verb + noun and adjective + noun or noun + adjective. Furthermore, most of the three-word expressions are classified as similes or proverbs in the Malay language.

2.7 The Categorization of *Simpulan Bahasa*

The world view of a society is defined as the way they perceive life, and this perception may be reflected in or influenced by various factors, one of which is language, which in turn is an index to culture. Halliday defines language as "***the ability to mean in the situation or social contexts that are generated by the culture***" (in Leckie-Tarry,1995:18). This means that language reflects the culture of its speakers, that is, the way of life they lead and their social environment. A society will conceptualize the things that it sees and experiences in the language and this phenomenon can be seen in the growth and development of the Malay language and culture.

The *simpulan bahasa* is a linguistic manifestation of Malay culture in its many facets - the life and daily activity of the Malays, their beliefs and physical environment. For example, the *simpulan bahasa* '*rendah diri*' (low self), which means 'to be humble', and '*ringan tangan*' (light hand) which means 'to be

helpful', reflect the behaviour and attitude encouraged among the Malays which is influenced by '**Islam**', the religion of most Malays. In addition, '*buah tangan*' (hand's fruit) meaning 'little gifts that one brings when visiting friends and relatives' has always been part of the Malay tradition of being generous. *Simpulan bahasa* like '*mati seladang*' (to die together on one's farm) which means 'to be faithful to one's spouse' and '*makan tanah*' (eat soil) which means 'to be very poor' show that most traditional Malays work as farmers. As farmers they also rear sheep and poultry and this can be seen in the *simpulan bahasa* '*kambing hitam*' (black goat) which means 'a person regarded as a disgrace or a failure family members or group', and '*otak lembu*' (cow's brain) which refers to 'a fool'. As such most *simpulan bahasa* are influenced by or are related to the culture and surroundings of the Malays, their beliefs, daily activities, their livelihood and the people around them. Therefore, *simpulan bahasa* can be categorized based on these aspects that Malays identify with in their culture.

For the purpose of this research *simpulan bahasa* will be categorized based on Genzel's (1991) **categorization of idioms**. Genzel categorizes idioms based on the associations made with parts of the body, health, time, animals, food, games, transportation and also business and negotiations.

Idioms that refer to parts of the body include, 'to eat out the palm of my hand', 'to see eye to eye', 'to toe the line', and 'pulling one's leg'. So one has to 'keep a straight face' even when someone is 'breathing down one's neck'. Although

these expressions refer to parts of the body , the meaning of each has got nothing to do with the parts mentioned in the idioms.

The second category comprises idioms that are associated with health and medication. Some of these are 'to have a taste of one's medicine', 'a sight for sore eyes' and also 'having a stiff upper lip'.

Besides this, idioms can also be categorised into those associated with the concept of time. So we often hear of 'better late than never', 'palmy days', 'the time is right', 'one days are numbered' and 'to bide one's time'.

Quite a large number of idioms use animals to express an idea, mainly through their actions and characteristics. Therefore, some days can be really wet as when 'it rains cats and dogs' and a person can be 'as stubborn as a mule'. One either play a 'cat and mouse game', be 'one one's high horse' or in a 'dog eat dog' situation.

Another category of idioms are those that refer to the name of foods to express an idea. A person can 'have his cake and eat too' because it is his 'cup of tea' or 'a piece of cake' or he can be the 'apple of one's eye'. Otherwise one either 'go bananas' or 'be nutty'.

There are idioms that are associated with driving a car and traffic problems. As such one can 'take a spin', 'step on it' or 'hit the gas'. And the traffic problem nowadays give rise to contemporary idioms like 'to be stuck in the jam' and 'to make a U-turn' and also to be 'a road bully'.

Other categories of idioms are those expressions that are used in negotiation or games and hobbies. For instance in business dealings a person has 'to iron out' or 'figure out' all the problems if he does not one anyone to 'buy him out'. One can also 'have the ball at one's feet' as it is 'child's play'.

Thus in this research, *simpulan bahasa* will be classified based on Genzel's category and other categories that Malay identify with in their culture. The following categorization of *simpulan bahasa* is proposed .

1. *Simpulan bahasa* that refer to parts of the body .

The parts of the body include the hands, legs, face, heart, head, mouth, finger nails, nose and eyes. In this category we have *simpulan bahasa* like '*panjang tangan*' (long hands) or '*berat tangan*' (heavy hands), '*kaki bangku*' (leg of a chair) and '*patah kaki*' (broken leg) - which mean ' a person inclined to steal', ' a person who is not helpful', 'one who can't play football' and 'a helpless or weak person' respectively. Other widely used *simpulan bahasa* in this category are '*rambang mata*' (random eyes), '*putih mata*' (white eyes), '*kuku besi*' (iron fingernails), '*berat hati*' (heavy liver) and '*patah hati*' (broken liver).

These *simpulan bahasa* mean 'one who is unable to make the right choice', 'to regret or cry over spilt milk', 'a dictator', 'to be heavy hearted' and 'to have a broken heart'.

2. *Simpulan bahasa that use animals to express an idea.*

Some of the animals referred to are the chicken, dog, crocodile, monkey, frog and cockroach. The Malays will not accept an invitation if it is '*ajak-ajak ayam*' (invite chicken) but will '*senyum kambing*' (smile goat) if they see an '*ibu ayam*' (mother hen). This is because the expressions mean 'one is not invited sincerely', and 'one smiles cynically' when one sees 'a pimp'. Other *simpulan bahasa* that fall under this category are '*buaya darat*' (land crocodile) which means 'a swindler or a womanizer' and '*hati tikus*' (liver of a rat) which refers to 'a coward'. In addition the *simpulan bahasa*, '*lipas kudung*' (maimed cockroach) means 'a quick or fast worker' and '*mati katak*' (dead frog) means 'to die for an unworthy cause'. In fact quite a number of *simpulan bahasa* fall under this category. It appears that in the early days the Malays, to a certain extent, depended on animals for their livelihood. Some animals, however, like the dog and the pig are perceived negatively because of the influence of **Islam**. For example, the pig in the *simpulan bahasa*, '*membabi buta*' (blind pig) means 'to barge in or to work on something clumsily, whereas the dog in '*anjing kurap*' (ringworm dog) refers to 'a bum'.

3. *Simpulan bahasa* that use the name of food to express an idea.

Some of these are '*tangkai jering*' (the stalk of a plant with horrible smelling pods), '*asam garam*' (tamarind salt), '*miang keladi*' (itchy yam) and '*makan chilli*' (eating chilli). These *simpulan bahasa* figuratively mean 'a mean person', 'an experienced person', 'a cheeky and mischievous person' and 'to feel insulted'.

4. *Simpulan bahasa* that are associated with family and kinship.

Traditional Malays place a lot of emphasis on family and relationships. The family is very important and most ceremonies, religious and traditional rites, involve the family and relatives. Important decisions on marriage and inheritance are made together. Some examples of *simpulan bahasa* from this category are '*anak buah*' (child fruit), '*anak panjang*' (child long), '*orang rumah*' (people's house), '*anak angkat*' (child lifted), and '*orang baru*' (new people). These *simpulan bahasa* mean 'one's niece or nephew', 'the fourth child in a family', 'one's spouse', 'adopted child' and 'a baby or newly married couple'.

5. *Simpulan bahasa* that refer to natural elements or phenomenon.

This is an important category of *simpulan bahasa* as language is the "*product of man's perception of his environment*" (Asmah: 113). The Malay's perception of nature is conceptualized in *simpulan bahasa* such as, '*batu api*' (fire stone) which means an instigator; '*bunga dedap*' (a kind of foul smelling

flower) which means 'an attractive but mean-hearted person'; '*diam ubi*' (silent tapioca) which means 'a hardworking but quiet person'; '*tahi minyak*' (oil faeces) which means 'one who is boastful but is actually useless' and '*tangkap angin*' (catch wind) which means 'to work hard unnecessarily'.

6. *Simpulan bahasa* that refer to action and behaviour.

The actions and behaviour which the Malays see and experience are conceptualized into *simpulan bahasa* like '*makan cuka*' (eat vinegar), '*pasang badan*' (fix body), '*beralas cakap*' (layer the speech), '*curi tulang*' (stealing bones), and '*makan pakai*' (eat wear). These action words (verbs) when used as *simpulan bahasa* mean 'to be hurt', 'dressed to kill', 'to be tactful', 'to be lazy' and 'to look good in anything' respectively.

7. *Simpulan bahasa* that are associated with the monarchy, government and administration.

The 'Sultans' or Malay kings have always been an important part of Malay society as they were the heads of state, religion and custom. Some of the *simpulan bahasa* in this category are '*bahasa dalam*' (language inside), '*mahkota negeri*' (crown nation), and '*raja sehari*' (king for one day) and these expressions mean 'a royal language variety or register', 'the king' and 'the bride and bridegroom'.

8. *Simpulan bahasa* that reflect foreign influence in trade and colonization.

The Malay states especially the Malacca Sultanate were the center of trade for the South East Asian region before the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese in 1511. Naturally, many words and phrases were borrowed and assimilated into the Malay language. And more words and phrases were borrowed and assimilated with the expansion of foreign power into the Malay states. Some of the *simpulan bahasa* that fall under this category are '*berbulan madu*' (honey moon), '*kapak Eropah*' (European dagger), '*Keling karam*' (sinking Indians), '*ayam Belanda*' (Dutch chicken) and '*gunting Inggeris*' (English scissors). These expressions figuratively mean 'to be on a honeymoon', 'to be paid for what 's worth doing', 'to be noisy and chaotic', 'to take something that does not belong to one' and 'to be a spy'.

9. *Simpulan bahasa* that are associated with Islam.

Islam is the religion of most Malays, and, therefore, it has influenced the Malay language. It has also brought with it influences from its country of origin, Saudi Arabia. These influences were easily accepted by the traditional Malays who perceived anything associated with the Arabs as 'sacred'. Examples of *simpulan bahasa* that fall under this category are '*Abu Jahal*' (an Arabic name), '*anak Adam*' (Adam's child) and '*Quran buruk*' (old Koran). The figurative meaning of these expressions are 'to be merciless', 'mankind ' and 'to show deference to one's parents even though they are old'.

10. *Simpulan bahasa* that refer to common things and concepts used by the Malays in their daily lives.

Among them are '*gulung tikar*' (roll the mat which is made from coconut leaves) , '*atas pagar*' (on the fence), '*kasut buruk*' (old and worn out shoes), '*peti kosong*' (empty box or chest) and '*pisau cukur*' (shaving knife). The meaning of these expressions are 'to close down a business', 'to be neutral', 'one who is neglected or ignored' 'an arrogant fool ' and 'to con or swindle ' respectively. Most of the *simpulan bahasa* that fall under this category refer to things used by the traditional Malays in their daily lives.

Although the categories listed above may not be complete or comprehensive, they will help in the analysis of the translation on *simpulan bahasa*. It will then be seen how far translation is possible for the *simpulan bahasa* that come under the various categories as **"the absence of appropriate words and expressions can make exact translation between languages difficult and at times impossible "** (Lyons, 1981: 310)

2.8 *Simpulan bahasa* and Transformation

As the *simpulan bahasa* is part of the Malay language and carries its own meaning, it has its own function and position within the structure of the language.

When used in a sentence each word in the *simpulan bahasa* does not function independently as a part of speech. Otherwise, the *simpulan bahasa* will lose its idiomaticity.

For example 'makan suap' in the sentence "*Dia makan suap*" means 'a corrupted person'. However if the bound morpheme or prefix 'me' is added to the verb 'makan' (eat) in the *simpulan bahasa* to show 'progressive action' as in,

'Dia memakan suap'

the idiomatic meaning of the *simpulan bahasa* is lost. The following sentences further illustrate this:

- '*Sifat keras hati (hard liver) sangat buruk*'

But if the verb is inflected as in,

- '*Sifat mengeras hati sangat buruk*', the sentence becomes nonsensical. In,
- '*Dia jatuh hati*' (fall liver) *kepada Aini*' means 'to fall in love'.
- But , '*Dia menjatuh hati*' is non-idiomatic.

Nevertheless there are *simpulan bahasa* that can carry the same idiomatic meaning after transformation. For example the *simpulan bahasa* '*bawa mulut*' (to carry mouth) means 'to tell tales' in the sentence,

- i. '*Dia suka bawa mulut apabila berjumpa kawan*'. The meaning of the *simpulan bahasa* is retained in the sentence
- ii. '*Dia suka membawa mulut tentang hal kawannya*'.

The examples above show that some *simpulan bahasa* can be transformed without losing its meaning whereas others will lose its meaning when used

wrongly. The transformation of *simpulan bahasa* refers to the possible operations or processes that can be done on them when used in a sentence. In this context *simpulan bahasa* can be classified based on **Fraser's classification of idioms** in 1968 (in Makkai,52). Fraser points out that idioms can be classified based on the **seven (7) level of frozenness in terms of their transformational potential**. These operations on idioms are represented in the following levels symbolising a **Frozenness Hierarchy** (Boisset : 30)

1. **L 0 - no operation possible**; the idiom is totally frozen.

This means that the use of idioms in this category is fixed and transformation is not possible. Examples are 'kick the bucket' and 'jump the gun'. In the case of *simpulan bahasa*, examples of those that are classified at this level, that is those expressions that do not undergo transformation are '*kucing kurap*' (cat stray), which refers to a vagrant , '*bapa ayam*' (father chicken) which refers to a pimp and '*buruk siku*' (ugly elbow) which refers to a person who wants back things that he has given to others. If the *simpulan bahasa* re transformed they will lose their idiomaticity.

2. **L 1 - adjunction** of some none idiomatic constituent to the idiom, as the 's' and 'ing' in 'John's kicking the bucket'. This means that the idioms will not lose its meaning after the transformation. In Malay the adjunction refers to the inflection of the words in *simpulan bahasa* with prefixes like '*me, men, mem, meng, ber*' and '*nya*'. This transformation can be seen in *simpulan bahasa*

such as '*makan diri*' (eat oneself), which means to eat one's heart out, '*hati batu*' (liver stone) which means stubborn and '*buka mata*' (open eyes) which means to be aware or alert. The transformation can be seen in the sentences below.

- '*Perbuatannya itu memakan dirinya sendiri*'. (Its her fault that she's eating her heart out) .
- '*Budak itu berhati batu*' . (That boy is very stubborn).
- '*Dia harus membuka mata tentang hal itu*'. (He should be aware of it).

These examples show that the *simpulan bahasa* do lose their idiomaticity and meaning after going through transformation.

3. **L 2 - insertion** of some constituents into the idioms, as in 'else' in 'I have something else on' without losing the idiomatic meaning. In the case of the *simpulan bahasa* , some of the words inserted are '*dan, rasa, yang, nanti*' and '*juga*'. These words are inserted in expressions like '*asam dan garam*' (tamarind and salt), '*berat rasa hati*' (heavy feels liver) and '*termasuk juga di hati*' (to enter also liver). After the insertion of the words mentioned, the *simpulan bahasa* retain the meaning of to be experienced, reluctant and to make sense.

4. **L 3 - permutation** of some elements within an idiom, that is to rearrange words or order of the idioms without losing its meaning - 'lay down the law' is transformed to 'lay the law down'. This process is also possible in *simpulan*

hati' (small liver). After going through the transformation process they function as verbs as in , ' *Perbuatannya menggelikan hati ibunya*' (she was amused with him), '*dia menuakeladikan dirinya di kalangan orang muda*' (he behaved like a young man) and '*dia mengecilkan hati ibu bapanya* (he hurt his parents' feelings).

7. **L 6 - unrestricted**; any operation can apply. However according to Makkai no idioms can be identified at this level. Therefore, the analysis in chapter four will determine whether there are *simpulan bahasa* that can be classified at this level.

Thus it can be concluded that *simpulan bahasa* do share some characteristics of idioms, in terms of categorizations and also the transformation process. It can then be hypothesized that it is possible to translate *simpulan bahasa* into English idioms without losing their meanings. The analysis will show whether the *simpulan bahasa* in the data collected can be placed in the categories identified and the different transformation processes proposed by Fraser.