

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research, including the background, its relevance to the issues discussed, and the objectives and expected contributions of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The development of technology allows us to access all activities in a sophisticated manner. The development of the internet and digital devices has ushered the world into an era where information and communication have become faster and easier. Statista. com (Petrosyan, 2024) shows 5. 45 billion internet users worldwide, 67. 1 percent of the global population. As a result, digital technology has affected various aspects of human life, including language.

Language as a communication system in society. Language is used to interpret all things in the form of ideas, feelings, and information. Language is a communication tool organized in units, such as words, phrases, clauses, and sentences expressed in spoken and written form (Wiratno & Riyadi, 2014). Every country has its own language in which people can communicate with each other. This is expressed by MoEC (in Muchtar et al., 2016); every society will have a different communication system for its survival. As a result, each society can form its own culture. This means that language speakers will be bound by the social rules that apply in the local community. In the context of globalization, technology and the internet bridge access to the exchange of languages and cultures from various countries to achieve specific goals. According to Wiranto & Santosa (2014), language has an interpersonal function, namely as a tool to convey information and facilitate transactions of goods and services in human communication. Technology and the internet bridge access to the exchange of languages and cultures from various countries to achieve specific goals. The use of language has become increasingly widespread across digital platforms, including social media and the internet, enabling individuals from diverse countries to communicate on a global scale. As a communication tool, language

serves an important role not only in facilitating everyday interactions but also as a means to promote and preserve culture.

Language differences in communication cause several problems, such as mistranslation. This difference is one of the factors that can trigger the emergence of intercultural communication barriers. Chaney & Martin (in Muchtar et al., 2016) state that a communication barrier is everything that becomes a barrier to effective communication. Mistranslation in translating messages can have dire consequences, especially in a cultural context. Inappropriate translations or messages that are translated too literally can cause errors and affect decision making. It is not uncommon for readers to encounter difficulties in comprehending translated texts, even when the source text remains more accessible, despite the reader's limited mastery of the target language. This suggests that translation is not simply changing words from one language to another. Instead, it necessitates a careful consideration of contextual and nuanced meanings to ensure the message is accurately and effectively conveyed.

Translation has become an essential skill in this era of globalization. Although the availability of tools that have made access to content in other languages more straightforward, such as Google Translate, DeepL Translator, Microsoft Translator, and similar translation engines, this technology has limitations in conveying cultural and idiomatic nuances. Machine translation is not always accurate; often, the nuances and meanings contained in the language are lost or cannot be fully conveyed in the process. Vanmassenhove et al. (2019) research proved that human translation is better than machine translation, as machine translation has been shown to reduce variation and lexical richness. This highlights the irreplaceable role of human translation. Human translation can comprehend and translate the nuances, idioms, and connotations present in the source language. Humans possess a broader mind and experience than machines. Human translation can determine the appropriate diction based on the context being discussed. In addition, human translation can consult cultural experts or conduct research to ensure accuracy and appropriateness in translation.

Idioms pose a significant challenge for translators. Often, a good text or discourse in English becomes stiff and difficult to understand when translated into Indonesian. According to Baker (2018), idioms are frozen language patterns that allow little or no variation in form and, in the case of idioms, often carry meanings that cannot be deduced from their individual components. Certain meanings that are sometimes related to the culture in the source language cannot be found in the target language, making the translation process difficult because idiom translation is very different from regular translation. According to Baker (2018), idiom translation is not just about finding a similar idiom in the target language but also considering the context, lexical elements, style, and rhetorical effect. Moreover, idioms can enter the realm of being culture-bound. Therefore, the translation process must be accompanied by a sufficient mastery of the target language and culture.

The concept of idioms is also used in idiomatic expressions. An idiomatic expression is a phrase or expression that cannot be understood based on the meanings of its individual words; the overall meaning cannot be predicted based on the words that make it up. This means idiomatic expressions are phrases or expressions that have a specific figurative meaning and depend on the context. Idiomatic expressions are often used in everyday conversations, which contain comparisons, metaphors, advice, life principles, rules of conduct, and so on. The use of idiomatic expressions aims to convey meaning in a more vivid and expressive manner, thereby adding color and appeal to communication.

The development of digital technology continues to progress at an unprecedented pace, and video games have emerged as a significant medium in the context of modern communication, capturing global attention. Video games play a crucial role in the dissemination of universal values and the diversity of national cultures in the era of globalization. As a form of interactive media, video games also serve as an essential platform for introducing different cultures. Unlike traditional media, video games enable players to not only watch or read but also interact directly with cultures and universal values through storylines, dialog, and game mechanics. Many video games represent cultural elements from

diverse countries, including mythology, language styles, traditional clothing, and historical backgrounds. Games like *Assassin's Creed* and *Ghost of Tsushima* present historical and cultural settings from various periods and locations, such as ancient Egypt, Greece, and feudal Japan. This exposure allows players from different cultural backgrounds to learn about and appreciate cultures other than their own. However, to fully realize this global potential, effective game translation and localization are essential. Features such as subtitles and culturally adapted content enable a global audience to access and comprehend the cultural nuances embedded within games. The gaming experience transcends mere button inputs; it revolves around the player's immersion in the game world, even if temporarily. Achieving this level of immersion requires both technical skill and artistic finesse in translation (Bernal-Merino, 2017). Consequently, inconsistencies in cultural translation within video games can compromise the integrity of the game, diminish its appeal, and ultimately lead to a loss of player interest.

Based on the context above, there are various challenges in the translation of idiomatic expressions found in the Indonesian subtitles of the game *Genshin Impact*. Because the goal of idiomatic translation is to not sound like a translation, the result of the translation should sound as if it were written directly by a native speaker (Choliludin, 2013). This gap provides researchers with the perspective to observe how the game *Genshin Impact* adapts idiomatic expressions in its subtitles.

Genshin Impact is an open-world action role-playing game (RPG) developed and originally published by miHoYo Co., Ltd., with its initial release in September 2020. In December 2021, miHoYo transferred its global publishing duties to COGNOSPHERE PTE. LTD., a Singapore-based subsidiary, to support its global expansion strategy and ensure compliance with international regulations. According to Fan (2024). *Genshin Impact* gained a place in the international market thanks to its superior production quality, high level of play, and cultural diversity, winning several top awards in the global game industry in 2020, including Mobile Game of the Year at The Game Awards (TGA), considered the

"Oscars of the game industry. " This game has been downloaded more than 100 million times on Play Store as of November 2024. This shows the high interest of global gamers in the game.

This game has an interesting storyline with a vast open-world concept that can be explored. Players will play the role of the Traveler, who explores Teyvat in search of his missing twin brother. Teyvat is a fantasy land consisting of seven different regions, each of which has a direct correlation with real-world regions or cultures. These regions are Mondstadt, based in Central Europe and Germany; Liyue, based in China; Inazuma, based in Japan; Sumeru, based in the Middle East, India, and Egypt; Fontaine, based in France; Natlan, based in South America and Mexico; and Snezhnaya based on Russia. The uniqueness of each region offers a diverse play experience, from scenic exploration to the introduction of unique cultures and traditions. Language and dialog play an important role in the development of the game and narrative. The game uses dialog to build relationships between characters, reveal the plot of the story, and provide important information to the player. Conversations in games serve not only as a means of communication but also as a tool to create atmosphere, build character, and enrich the storyline.

The researcher chose the conversation in the Archon Quest in Genshin Impact as the object of research, where the Traveler will meet most of the characters who are influential and directly related to the course of the game's main plot. The selection of subtitles in the Archon Quest can be a concrete representation of character interaction that allows for cultural exchange through conversation by considering idiomatic translation strategies to maintain the meaning conveyed to the audience.

Based on the studies that have been conducted, there are several studies related to idiomatic expressions that are used as benchmarks for the current research. The first research was conducted by Damian Gacek (2019), entitled *Translation of Video Games in the Context of Polish Localizations* this research focuses on the translation and localization of video games, specifically examining Polish localizations of games such as Ace Ventura, Baldur's Gate, and Warcraft 3:

Reign of Chaos. The study aims to analyze translation techniques used in fully localized video games. The method used in this research is a qualitative analysis. To analyze the translation strategies in this study, Gacek (2019) used the domestication and foreignization theory formulated by Venuti (1998). The result of this research shows that game localization is an important process for players. The obstacles in translation are more visible in dubbing than in subtitles. However, this does not mean that the translation is irrelevant. Based on the analysis conducted, Warcraft 3: Reign of Chaos (2002) was translated very well. In Baldur's Gate (1998), the translation makes the atmosphere a little darker and unpleasant than the original text.

The second study is an article journal by Asti Ramadhani Endah Lestari (2019) entitled *Translation of English Idiomatic Expression in Zootopia into Indonesian Context*. This study aims to describe the process and results of the translation of English idiomatic expressions in the movie Zootopia into the Indonesian context. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method focusing on socio-pragmatics study. The data collection technique used in this research is observation. The research procedure conducted in this study is that the researcher watches Zootopia while identifying idioms that appear in the movie. The idioms were then translated into Indonesian by deciphering the eight methods proposed by Newmark. The results show that some English idioms have similar forms and meanings to Indonesian idioms, while others have equivalent meanings but in different forms. Some idioms have no equivalent in Indonesian, so they are translated by adopting them into Indonesian using the free translation method.

Another previous research that relates to this research was conducted by Angie Jeshica Dewi (2022) titled *The Translation of Idiomatic Expressions in The Great Gatsby: A Study Based on Baker's Strategies*; the focus of this research is to identify the types of idioms in the novel and then analyze the idiom translation strategies used by the translator. The theory used to identify the types of idiomatic expressions based on Fernando's theory (1996) while to identify the translation strategies based on Baker's theory (2018). This research used a qualitative method, and the technique used for data collection was observation.

The data of this research is taken from two versions of the novel: the original text in English and the translated text in Indonesian. The data collection was done through close reading after listing the idiomatic expressions determined by their types using Fernando's theory. The results revealed a total of 67 idiomatic expressions. Based on Fernando's classification, all three types of idioms were identified: pure idioms (34 instances), semi-idioms (15 instances), and literal idioms (18 instances). Regarding translation strategies, five out of six strategies proposed by Baker (2018) were found: 13 idioms were translated using an equivalent idiom with the same meaning and form, 2 with an equivalent idiom of the same meaning but a different form, 38 through paraphrasing, five by omitting a play on the idiom, and one by omitting the idiom entirely. The findings indicate that pure idioms were the most frequently occurring type while paraphrasing was the most commonly used translation strategy. This suggests that translators adapt idioms into a more comprehensible form in the target language, particularly when a direct equivalent is unavailable.

There are differences between this study and previous studies, although they share the same main focus on idioms. While Lestari's (2019) research only focuses on categorizing idioms to determine their meanings, this research emphasizes how idiomatic expressions in the adaptation of video games are conveyed, particularly in the Indonesian subtitles of Genshin Impact. On the other hand, the similarities between this research and previous studies, such as Dewi's (2022) and Gacek's (2019), include several key aspects. First, both this research and previous studies discuss how the meaning of idioms is translated into Indonesian, which is a form of localization in video games aimed at adapting content to fit the culture, language, and preferences of the target audience. Second, this study also employs Fernando's theory (1996) to identify idioms and Baker's theory (2018) to analyze translation strategies. Despite these similarities, there are notable differences that serve as updates to previous studies. The primary difference lies in the object and research problem. This study focuses on the Indonesian subtitles in the Genshin Impact video game, which, compared to newspapers or novels, is more interactive and appeals more to today's younger

generation. Additionally, this research not only examines how idiom strategies in the source language are translated but also explores how translation strategies achieve meaning equivalence using Nida's theory (2003). Therefore, the researcher decided to analyze this unique context, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for further exploration.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Video game localization is more than just translation. Video game localization is internationalization, where the developer prepares the game to adapt to any market. The localization team will work with the developer to understand the context of the game, which helps them to maintain the equivalence of the original meaning during translation. The researcher concludes that there are two types of questions that will be the main focuses of this research:

1. What translation strategies are used to translated idiomatic expression in the Genshin Impact video game into Indonesian?
2. How is the meaning of idiomatic expressions maintained in an equivalent manner in the Indonesian subtitle of Genshin Impact video game?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are designed based on the formulation of the problem that is expected to be answered. There are two main goals of this research:

1. To explain the translation strategies used to translate idiomatic expressions in the Genshin Impact video game into Indonesian.
2. To examine how the meaning of idiomatic expressions is maintained in an equivalent manner in the Indonesian subtitles of Genshin Impact video game.

1.4 Research Significance

The researcher hopes that this study can benefit readers and researchers interested in the field of linguistics, particularly in translation and idiomatic expression analysis, with a focus on translation strategies in game subtitles. This

study has two main types of benefits, namely theoretical benefits and practical benefits.

Theoretically, this research provides knowledge in the field of subtitle translation studies by applying Fernando's (1996) classification of types of idiomatic translation and Baker's (2018) translation strategies in the realm of Genshin Impact Video Game translation. This research is expected to shed further light on the translation strategies of idiomatic expressions and their translation into the target language.

Particularly, this study serves as a practical guide for readers to add insight into idioms. For linguistic scholars, to add insight and study the meaning of idioms, and for other researchers, this research is expected to add linguistic insight into idioms, then as a reference to conduct further research that is deeper.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

This section explains important terms that will be the focus of the research. The explanation is as follows:

1. Translation

The translation is the process of language transfer, which aims to convert written or spoken source language text into target-language text. According to Anderson, Brislin, Gerver, et al. (1976), Translation is the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one source language (SL) to the target language (TL), whether the languages are in written or oral form. This definition means that translation is not only transferring language but also translating ideas or meanings.

2. Translation Strategy

Translation strategy is the process used by the translator by applying the matching strategy to overcome the challenges or problems that occur during the translation process in order to produce an acceptable and equivalent translation (Pamungkas and Akmaliyah, 2019).

3. Localization

Localization in translation is the process of translating and adapting content to suit the preferences and needs of the local market. According to O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) Game localization is a dynamic field that is driven by technology, led by market demands and influenced by popular discourses on games, and therefore most up-to-date information sources can be found online. Where the translator or localization team makes use of popular culture trends, humor, or local context to make the translation more relevant and interesting to the target audience.

4. Idiom

Idioms are fixed lexical units that cannot be interpreted by looking at only some of their components. According to Fernando (2000), Idioms are indivisible units whose components cannot be varied or varied only within definable limits.

5. Idiomatic Expression

An idiom is an expression whose meaning cannot be accounted for as a compositional function of the meanings its parts have when they are not parts of idioms. Idiomatic expression is broader in scope because it includes all forms of unique expressions that are difficult to translate literally, whether they are idioms, expressions, or specific words.

6. Audiovisual Translation (Subtitling Translation)

Audiovisual translation or also known as subtitling is the process of language transfer on screen. According to Luyken et al (in Cintas and Anderman, 2009) define subtitles as written translations of original dialogue which appear as lines of text, usually positioned towards the foot of the screen. Which means that the subtitles do not represent the source text, but both are present synchronously in the subtitled version.