

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Language is an important aspect of communication because language is a medium used by everyone in this world which is useful for maintaining social life. There are many languages in the world, but there is one language that is used by all people in the world as an international language, and that is English. Among all the differences in language and the use of English as an international language, the process of translation enables individuals to comprehend and convey messages across different linguistic systems.

Apart from reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, translating is also an important aspect that must be mastered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to be able to transfer and convey messages from source language (SL) to the target language (TL). Translating is an action carried out to transfer messages or information from the source language to the target language. As-Safi (2011) stated that translation is the process of producing the most natural equivalent in the target language of a message from the source language. Most students that learning English unconsciously translate when they hear, speak, write, or read in English. However, translation can be challenging because it requires considering both the structure and meaning of words, which often differ between the SL and TL. Apart from that, Hartono (2009) classifies four difficulties in translating, including Lexical difficulties, Stylistic difficulties, Grammatical difficulties, and Cultural difficulties. Addressing these four

difficulties is essential to maintaining the accuracy and effectiveness of translated sentences or texts. Therefore, improving translation competence requires EFL students to develop a strong understanding of appropriate translation methods and techniques.

Not all sentences in English can be translated word-by-word due to differences in the context used and the linguistic theory of the source language. Each language has its characteristics in expressing words or sentences in the language itself. The different cultural content between the source language and the target language is also an obstacle that must be faced in translating. For example, idiomatic expressions in English (SL) cannot be interpreted literally in Indonesian (TL) because the meaning of the idiom itself connects the cultural context and grammatically these two languages have different structures. O'Dell and McCarthy (2017) define idioms as expressions whose meaning is different from the individual words. It means that an idiom is a type of phrase that has meaning but cannot be interpreted literally. It does not rule out the possibility that EFL students have difficulty in translating the meaning of idiomatic expressions.

English is not the only language that has idiomatic expressions, Indonesian does as well. For example, in Indonesian, the expression "*Panjang Tangan*" is used to describe someone who likes to steal, in English, this would be translated as "Light-fingered" instead of "Long-handed". Fromkin and Rodman (2003) stated that idioms are often difficult to translate because the meaning of the idiom itself cannot be constructed as the individual meanings of the words in it.

Structurally, idioms can be seen as simple sentences, but in fact, when translated these sentences become difficult. Therefore, when learning English, understanding idiomatic expressions is important because when dealing with native speakers, idioms will be used a lot because they rarely use a basic level of English when communicating. EFL students who have the ability to communicate using idiomatic expressions in different contexts will help their English language skills become better and more fluent in using foreign languages (Ariyani, 2019)

Building on the explanation above, the researcher intends to explore the challenges faced by English education students at Jambi University who have completed translation courses in translating idiomatic expressions. Before the research will be carried out, the researcher conducted a preliminary observation by asking several students about the material in the translation class. The researcher asked whether students had learned about translating idiomatic expressions in English. Findings revealed that 6th semester students of English Education at Jambi University had indeed studied idiomatic expressions as part of their translation coursework.

To further assess their understanding, the researcher provided two English sentences containing idiomatic expressions and asked two students to translate the sentences into Indonesian. The results indicate that both students experienced difficulties in accurately translating these idioms. Below are the translated sentences produced by the students:

Sentence 1 (Source Language) : She was **a bear for** holding that party

Terjemahan (Target Language) : Dia *antusias* mengadakan pesta tersebut.

Terjemahan Students 1 : Dia *sangat berani* untuk mengadakan pesta itu

Terjemahan Students 2 : Ia *dulunya suka* mengadakan pesta

Sentence 2 (Source Language) : I am **close about** my ex-boyfriend

Terjemahan (Target Language) : Saya *tidak suka berbicara tentang* mantan saya

Terjemahan S1 (Target Language): Aku sudah *sangat muak* perihal mantanku

Terjemahan S2 (Target Language): Saya *tidak mau membicarakan* tentang mantan saya

The translation results of sentence 1 above show that students didn't translate the idiomatic expression in that sentence correctly. The phrase **a bear for** should be translated as *antusias* or *sangat bersemangat*, but the first student translated it as *sangat berani* and the second student translated it as *dulunya suka*. The results of the two students' translations of this first sentence do not show that the translation results are close to or equivalent to the actual meaning. However, in sentence 2, the second student can translate the idiomatic expression in that sentence with a meaning equivalent to the actual meaning. The idiom **close about** can be interpreted as *tidak suka berbicara tentang*. Then the second student translated it as *tidak mau membicarakan*, which it still had the same

meaning and significance as the actual meaning. However, unfortunately, the first students were not yet able to interpret the idiom expressions equivalent to the actual meaning in Indonesian. This shows that students still have difficulty translating idioms.

Furthermore, researcher is interested in analyzing students' difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions. Thus, the researcher will conduct a research entitled: "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Translating Idiomatic Expressions"

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. What are students' difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions?
2. How do students perceive the difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions, and how do they overcome those difficulties in the translation process ?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this study based on the research questions above are formulated as follows:

1. To find out the students' difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions.
2. To explore students' perception of the difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions and figure out how they overcome these difficulties.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The results of this research are expected will be useful for readers, students, and the researcher.

1.4.1 For the readers:

This study focuses on students' difficulties in translating idiomatic expressions. The results of this research are expected to be useful for readers who are interested in the field of translation and idiomatic expressions so that they can add their expertise in translating several types of literary works.

1.4.2 For the students:

This research is expected can help students who have difficulty in translating English idioms into Indonesian so that students' translation skills can improve.

1.4.3 For the researcher:

This research will help researcher understand and develop knowledge of idiomatic expressions and how to translate idiomatic expressions well and precisely.

1.5 Limitations of the Research

This research focuses on 10 English Education students from the 2020/2021 academic year students at Jambi University and examines 10 idiomatic expressions from the *Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test : The Paper Test*. The study focuses only on written translations and identifying the specific difficulties students encounter, their perceptions and how they overcome these difficulties.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1.6.1 *Translation:* Fakhrurrazi (2020) defines translation as the process of transferring a text's ideas, meaning, or messages from one language to another.

1.6.2 *Idiomatic Expressions:* Makkai (2020) stated that idiomatic expressions are phrases that have a culturally specific figurative meaning that cannot be inferred from the meanings of the constituent words.

1.6.3 *Language Proficiency:* According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), language proficiency refers to the ability of an individual to use language with a high degree of accuracy and fluency in various context.