

# CHPATER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the research, research question, objective of the research, limitation of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Translation activity is a process of presenting information from one language into another language. According to Aji & Asmarani (2022) translation activities are the process of transferring linguistic meaning from one language to another. In translation activities, translators may experience ‘untransability’, phenomenon where a word or term does not have an equivalent translation in the target language and can create different meaning, giving rise to misunderstandings (Savitri, 2019). Therefore, translators must have a good understanding of the two languages they are translating, so that the meaning conveyed in the source language (SL) is also conveyed into the target language (TL). Translation activities are not just about changing words from the SL to the TL literally, but understanding the context of use and socio-cultural background must also be considered so that readers can understand the text. Moreover, if the translator faces a difficult situation where he has to translate words that do not represent their literal meaning, such as idioms.

Idioms are a problematic language component because translating idioms cannot be done word for word because the meaning and grammar are difficult to predict (Wicaksono & Wahyuni, 2018). Therefore, the translator must translate the idiom as a whole. In line with the opinion of Manipuspika (2021), an idiom is a group of words that have different meanings for each word in it, so translating the idiom cannot be done word by word but must be translated as a whole. Furthermore, Baker in his book “In Other Word: A Coursebook on Translation” explains in detail some of the main difficulties translators face in translating idioms. namely: (1) an idiomatic expression may not have an equivalent word in the target language. (2) an idiomatic expression

may have an equivalent word but the context of its use may be different. (3) an idiomatic expression can be used in the SL both in the literal sense and the idiomatic meaning at the same time. (4) the conventions of using idiomatic expressions in written discourse, the context of their use, and the frequency of their use may differ in the SL and the TL (Baker, 1992). Baker's explanation shows that the process of translating idioms is not easy. After finding the meaning of an idiom in the SL, it is important for the translator to consider the context in which the idiom is used and the appropriate equivalent in the TL. According to Gulay (2018) translators need to properly recognize idiomatic expressions in the SL and in the TL. Moreover, usually an idiom is tied to culture so that each language has its own idiom making it difficult to find interlingual equivalents for an idiom (Almrayat et al., 2024). Because of these difficulties, translating idioms requires specific strategies to facilitate and assist translators in producing good idiom translations. Translators can use translation strategies as a 'way out' when facing difficult situations such as finding equivalent texts (Hidayat et al., 2021).

One idiom translation strategy that can be used is Baker's strategy. There are 6 strategies proposed by Baker (2018) for translating idioms, namely: (a) using an idiom of similar meaning and form. (b) using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. (c) borrowing the source language idiom. (d) translation by paraphrase. (e) translation by omission of a play on idiom. (f) translation by omission of entire idiom. The use of strategies in translating idiomatic expressions allows translation results that are not too extensive so that the meaning can be conveyed well in the TL. According to Kovács (2016) translating idioms is not a simple thing, even a translator with a lot of experience or knowledge related to the target language and culture may not necessarily be able to match native speakers in the correct use of idioms, so it not only requires knowledge related to the source language and target language but translators also need creativity and perseverance in finding appropriate equivalent words. Especially if what is translated is a literary work that has a story line in it. Even though they face difficult situations in translating a literary work such as cultural differences, translators are still not allowed to change the concept and style of

the literary work their translate (Melliana et al., 2021). If the idioms in the literary work are not translated well, readers in the TL will feel different from readers in the SL.

For this reason, researcher is interested in examining the strategies used by translators in translating idiomatic expressions in literary works in the form of novels. Researcher chose novel “Cantik Itu Luka” by Eka Kurniawan to be discussed in this research. Novel “Cantik Itu Luka” is one of Indonesia's best-selling novels which has been translated into more than 34 languages, one of which is English by an Indonesian translator named Annie Tucker. Novel “Cantik Itu Luka” Set in the late colonial period, it tells the story of a woman who lived her life as a prostitute and gave birth to three daughters with beautiful faces. When she was pregnant with her fourth child, she hoped that the child would be born with an ugly face, and that was what happened. Not only does it talk about this woman, but this novel also talks about several other characters with various stories and backgrounds that are interesting to read

After reading this novel, researcher found several idioms used by the novel writer, namely Eka Kurniawan. Therefore, the right strategy can help translators find equivalent meaning between the two languages. However, it does not rule out the possibility that the resulting translation can reduce the effectiveness of conveying meaning from the SL to the TL.

For example:

SL	<i>Dan itu membuat penduduk kota secepat air bah langsung memenuhi jalanan, demi mendengar <b>kabar angin</b> bahwa Kemerad Kliwon yang itu menampakkan dirinya kembali ke jalan-jalan kota. (p. 339)</i>
TL	Hearing <b>the news</b> that the Comrade Kliwon had once again showed his face in the city, the people immediately filled the streets as fast as a flood. (p.255)

In the example above, you can see that it is an Indonesian idiom "**kabar angin**" translated into English as "**the news**". "**Kabar angin**" (*kabar*: news, *angin*: wind) doesn't just mean "the news" in general. Based on *Kamus Besar*

*Bahasa Indonesia*, Indonesian idioms “*kabar angin*” means “news that is not clear; or rumours”. Based on observations made by researcher, the translator has used the translation by paraphrase strategy in translating these idioms into English. Idiomatic meaning “*kabar angin*” less effective in being conveyed into the target language because the translator chose to translate the idiom into “**the news**” which has a more general meaning so that the translation of “**the news**” may not capture the meaning the idiom wants to convey “*kabar angin*”.

Based on the explanation above, researcher is interested in identifying the strategies used by translators in translating idiomatic expressions from novels “*Cantik Itu Luka*” into the novel “*Beauty Is a Wound*” by applying Baker's translation strategy.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the research background, the researcher formulated the research problem as follow: What strategies are used by the translator in translating Indonesian idiomatic expression into English in novel “*Cantik Itu Luka*”?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

As stated in the research question, the researcher stated the objective of this research as follow: To explore the strategies used by the translator in translating Indonesian idiomatic expressions into English in the novel “*Cantik itu Luka*”.

## **1.4 Limitation of the Research**

In this research, researcher limited the analysis to focus on the strategies used by translators in translating idiomatic expressions in the novel “*Cantik Itu Luka*” into the novel *Beauty Is a Wound* using 6 commonly used theories from Baker (2018), namely: (1) translation idiom of similar meaning and form, (2) translation idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, (3) Borrowing the source language idiom, (4) translation by paraphrase, (5) translation by omission of a play on idiom, (6) translation by omission of entire idiom. In addition, because this research was conducted within a limited time period and considering that the novel consists of 18 chapters with approximately 500 pages, the analysis was limited to the 9 selected chapters: 3 beginning chapters,

3 middle chapters, and 3 last chapters of the novel. These chapters were chosen to ensure the research results cover all narrative phases in the novel.

Eka Kurniawan presents the story with a non-linear or non-chronological narrative with flashbacks and flashforwards that include orientation, complication and resolution phases. The initial chapters are the orientation or introduction phase to the main character Dewi Ayu, how she gave birth to her ugly daughter before her death and then rose from the grave after 21 years of death. Then, chapters 2 and 3 are still in the introductory phase of Dewi Ayu and her family's past, here it is also explained how the beginning of Dewi Ayu's prostitute life began after the entry of the Japanese army. In the middle chapters, the story of Dewi Ayu's life during the Japanese colonization, during independence and the life of her children and grandchildren begins. All the people involved in Dewi Ayu's life are told in these middle chapters, including her three children with their husbands and children. In these middle chapters, Eka Kurniawan uses plot reversals with problems that begin to arise. And in the last chapters, from chapter 16 to 18, the problems begin to decline and resolve. The story ends with almost all the characters dying and only Dewi Ayu's four children are left.

### **1.5 Significant of the Research**

The researcher expected that this research can provide good benefits for:

1. For the Translator

Provide information on the translation of Indonesian idioms into English. So, that translators can determine the best strategy in translating idioms

2. For the Researcher

This research can be a reference for future researcher who want to investigate the use of strategies in translating idioms both in terms of writing, sources, and research results.

3. For the Teacher

Teachers can use this research when teaching idioms to students.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

1. Translation

According to Catford (1965) if translation is the process of changing textual material from one language to textual material in another language while still paying attention to the equivalent.

2. Idioms

According to Baker (2018) idioms are frozen language patterns that allow little or no variation in form and often contain meanings different from their components.

3. Novel

According to Mahmoudian (cited in Sisakht, 2014), a novel is a form of long prose narrative based on a true story and combined with elements of creation that describe characters in a continuous event.

4. Translation Strategy

Translation strategy is a process of directing the translator to find a solution to a translation problem (Guerra, 2012).