CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as a comprehensive introduction to the research described in the following subchapters:

1.1 Background

Translation allows people to enjoy foreign literature in their native language. The act is essential in making literature available to a wider audience by carrying stories, ideas, and cultural nuance across languages. As House (2014) highlighted, translation produces equivalent text in another language by maintaining the meaning, style, and context of the source text. This allows people to understand the text and connect with different narratives and perspectives.

Translation can be difficult when dealing with figurative languages such as idioms. Idioms are phrases where the meaning cannot be deduced from the literal interpretation of the words within the expression (O'Dell & McCarthy, 2017). Moreover, as Baker (2018) characterized, idioms can violate truth conditions, be grammatically ill-formed, have simile-like structures, and be misleading. Hence, idiomatic expressions can be complicated to render and can lead to untranslatability. According to Aranda (2007), untranslatability is a characteristic of text or speech without an equivalent in another language. This notion emphasizes the difficulty of achieving perfect translations, where some ideas and terms are closely linked and difficult to accurately translate. Therefore, many idioms lack direct equivalences in the target language.

In order to address the difficulties in translating idioms, translators use various strategies to get the intended meaning across in the target language. Baker (2018) outlined several translation strategies that are intended for idiom translation, which include translation by paraphrase, omission, borrowing the source language idiom, using an idiom of similar meaning and form, and using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. Each strategy has its advantages and disadvantages. Thus, choosing a translation strategy depends on the context and the translator's goal for the translation. Therefore, these strategies demonstrate the intricate decision-making process translators undergo to bridge the cultural and linguistic gap.

This research analyzes Riordan's (2018) "9 from the Nine Worlds" and Its Indonesian rendition. "9 from the Nine Worlds" is a companion book that complements Riordan's "Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard" novel trilogy by providing short stories for each of the nine worlds of Norse mythology. Written by New York Times #1 best-selling author, Rick Riordan, the book also serves as an entertaining depiction of Norse mythology. The Indonesian rendition of the book was rendered by Reni Indarndini, who is a renowned translator of various books, such as "Dune" by Frank Herbert, "Persuasion" by Jane Austen, and "Evermore" by Alyson Noel. As this rendition of the companion book was published in 2019 by Noura Books, the book lacks notable research that analyzed this specific rendition thus far. Furthermore, the author implemented various idioms in the book, which makes the book feasible to be analyzed, specifically the idiom translation, for this research.

Several recent studies have provided substantial information on the topic of idiom translation. A study conducted by Abdalla (2023) analyzed the challenges faced by university students in translating idioms from English to Arabic. This study emphasized the importance of contextual understanding and selecting the appropriate strategies for translating idioms. Another study, conducted by Tambunan (2023), analyzed the translation strategies used in translating idioms in "The Recruit" TV series. The researcher used Glucksberg's (2001) idiom classification and Baker's (2018) translation strategies for the analysis. Additionally, Mohammadi and Keshavarzi (2015) analyzed the untranslatability in translating cultural-specific elements (nouns, adjectives, names of places or persons) from the Persian epic "Shahnameh," particularly the story "Rostam and Sohrab." The researchers identified cultural-specific elements that posed translation challenges, emphasizing strategies such as transference, retention, and replacement to address these cultural gaps. Despite providing valuable insights into the intricacies of idiom and cultural translation, a notable gap remains as these studies do not specifically address the untranslatability of idioms. Therefore, this research aimed to address the gap by analyzing the idiom characteristics that can lead to untranslatability in Riordan's (2018) "9 from the Nine Worlds" and its Indonesian rendition.

1.2 Research Questions

To guide the analysis of the research, the research addressed 2 central questions:

1. What are the untranslatable characteristics of the idiomatic expressions in Riordan's (2018) "9 from the Nine Worlds" companion book?

2. What are the translation strategies used in the Indonesian rendition of "9 from the Nine Worlds" companion book for translating the idioms?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

This research aimed to analyze the idiom characteristics that can lead to untranslatability and the strategies in translating idiomatic expressions in Riordan's (2018) "9 from the Nine Worlds." To address the first research question, the researcher classified the idiom characteristics using Baker's (2018) classification and analyzed how these characteristics lead to untranslatability based on Aranda's concept (2007). For the second research question, the researcher classified the translation strategies used, drawing on Baker's (2018) idiom translation strategies. By doing this, the study sought to uncover the strategies used by the translator to overcome the untranslatable idiom.

1.4 Scope of the Research

This research focused specifically on Riordan's (2018) "9 from Nine Worlds" and its Indonesian rendition. For the analysis, the researcher primarily employed Baker's (2018) idiom characteristics and translation strategies. To analyze the untranslatability, Aranda's (2007) notion of untranslatability was also applied. As this thesis focuses solely on idioms that are untranslatable based on Aranda's framework, the analysis excluded idioms with clear equivalents in the

target language. In identifying idiomatic expressions, the researcher verified each potential idiom using *Cambridge Dictionary* and *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, both of which explicitly label idioms. Due to practical constraints, this study did not investigate the actual translation process, as direct contact with the translator was not possible. The researcher acknowledged the inherent subjectivity of translation choices and the potential limitations associated with a single translator's work.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research held significances both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the present research contributed to the ongoing development of the translation studies field by providing an in-depth analysis of idiom untranslatability and translation strategies for their translation. Building on Baker's (2018) idiom characteristics and translation strategies in 2018 and Aranda's (2007) notion of untranslatability, the study provided a deeper understanding of the difficulties and methods in idiom translation.

Practically, this research provided insights both for translators and educators. For translators, it offered insights into the specific difficulties of idiom translation and suggested practical strategies to overcome them. For educators, the findings can help in creating better training programs and materials for translation students. By connecting theory with real-world practice, this study aimed to improve how idioms are translated in literary works, making translations more accurate and culturally resonant.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To ensure clarity and precision in this research, here are the key terms defined:

1. Idiomatic Expressions (Idioms)

Idioms are phrases composed of multiple words that carry a meaning not obvious from the individual words alone.

2. Translation Strategies

Translation strategies are the approaches a translator may employ to communicate idiomatic expressions from the source language into the target language with the meaning and tone retained.

3. Untranslatability

Untranslatability is a situation in literary translation in which words cannot be translated exactly or completely into another language without losing a portion of the meaning, nuances, or figurative connotations of the original.

4. Companion Piece

A companion piece is a supporting work that brings additional material to add value towards another primary work, but it supports the understanding of the reader by fueling new ideas or other detailed information linked to the main text.

5. Rendition

Rendition refers to a specific translation or version of text produced in another language.