

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the field of translation, especially in literary works such as novel, translator has the freedom to decide on language transfer strategy. This decision is usually influenced by the theoretical understanding of translation science as well as the translator's subjective preference in reconstructing meaning from the source language into the target language. Many strategies and techniques are available to the translators so that the translation has the same essence and impact as the original text. Essentially, translators do not simply replace words, but transform messages and nuances from the source language to the target language. Thus, translation is not merely seen as a lexical substitution between languages. In this process, consideration of word choice becomes crucial so that the translation results do not cause ambiguity. In addition, the translator also needs to consider the different viewpoints or cultural contexts between the languages involved.

The success of a translation is measured by its ability to transfer messages, ideas, and concepts from the source language to the target language, so that readers feel the same impact as the original text, as stated by Newmark (1988). The challenge achieving this cannot be ignored given the fundamental differences in language and cultural systems. This requires a competent translator to overcome linguistic and cultural inequalities and be able to capture and convey the implied messages or meanings in the text.

Furthermore, in a broader context, translators play central role as agents of knowledge dissemination between different languages. This role is very important because inaccurate translations can lead to misunderstandings. Failure to translate accurately has the potential to cause miscommunication among readers. On the other hand, through translation, audiences can enjoy the narrative richness and beauty of literature from around the world. However, the process of translation goes beyond mere word-for-word replacement. One of the main challenges in translation is translating idiomatic expressions, which cannot simply be replaced word for word.

Translated literary works, such as prose, novels, and poetry, have distinctive characteristics such as expressiveness, the use of connotations and symbolism, as well as the potential for diverse interpretations and a tendency to deviate from conventional linguistic norms (Hartono, 2017). Therefore, literary translators are not only required to master both languages, but must also be able to capture and reproduce the author's creativity so that the literary quality of the source text can be maintained in the translation. Translating a work of fiction such as a novel is a complex task due to its rich content, which includes plot, setting, characters, cultural aspects, and emotions (Jureczek, 2017). These texts reflect social life, moral values, and deep symbolism, requiring skillful interpretation and a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural context. Efforts to preserve the grandeur and stylistics of the original text demand the preservation of poetic and aesthetic aspects, which are often overlooked in the translation process. This task is complicated by the significant number of words in literary works (Hartono, 2018). A novel as stated by Susilo (2021) is a long prose essay that tells the story

of a person's life with the people around him and highlights the characteristics of each actor in it. Mujarod (2022) added that novels has two types of elements, namely intrinsic (theme, message) and extrinsic (moral values, social-culture, author's background) that build narratives and context meanings.

The existence of idiomatic expressions presents its own problems for text translators. Idioms are important element of languages that are present in a variety of contexts and conversations. These expressions are not easily translatable due to their different forms and not transparency of their literal meanings. Idioms contain figurative and cultural meanings that are unique to each language, so translator must understand the cultural connotations in both languages (Ping, 2018). By definition for the idiom is a phrase or expression that has a figurative meaning different from the literal meaning of its component words. Closely tied to the cultural context, idioms often reflect emotions or proverbs prevailing in the language-using society. While some idioms have literal components that can be understood, their overall interpretation depends heavily on the context in which they are used. Literal meaning refers to the straightforward diction definition and requires no further interpretation, while figurative meaning involves a metaphorical understanding that goes beyond the denotative meaning.

It can be concluded that Idiomatic expressions are the integral part of language, especially in literary works, whose meaning is figurative and tied to a cultural context so they serve to convey cultural values and unique perspectives. Idioms cannot be translated literally because their overall meaning depends on metaphorical interpretation, not dictionary definitions. Failure to understand these cultural connotations can lead to misunderstanding and even distort the meaning.

Therefore, translators must have a deep understanding of the social and cultural contexts of both languages in order to choose the right strategy for accurately convey the meaning of idioms.

From the above, it can be understood that in literary works such as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, idiomatic expressions reflect the cultural and emotional depth of characters, highlighting the importance of understanding cultural nuances in conveying the intended meaning. The novel *Little Women* is rich in idiomatic expressions that reflect the values and customs of 19th century American society. The presence of idioms in *Little Women*'s sentences cannot be separated from the overall narrative. Translating idioms in this novel from English to Indonesia is a challenge for translators due to the differences between the two languages and cultures. The translator's knowledge of idioms is essential to convey the author's message. Errors in translating idioms can lead to misunderstandings in understanding theory.

Therefore, translators must use the right strategy to translate idioms well, which requires a deep understanding of the culture and context of the target language in order to produce accurate and appropriate translations. The strategies applied in translating idiomatic expressions provide clear indications of the reasons behind the translator's choices, whether they priorities fidelity to the source culture or an approach that emphasizes accessibility and familiarity for the target audience.

Research on the translation of idioms in literary works, especially the novel *Little Women*, is important given the complexity of translation across languages and cultures that have the potential at distort meaning and reduce reader's

appreciation. The accuracy of translation widely read classic such as *Little Women* is crucial to ensure proper comprehension. This research is also needed the development effective idiom translation strategies and provide insight to the role of idioms as carriers of cultural values.

In this study, researcher found one instance of idiomatic expression found from the novel *Little Women* that contains cultural values.

Preliminary Data

SL: And Jo shook the blue army sock till the needles rattled like castanets

TL: Jo menggoyang-goyangkan kaus kaki biru tentara yang sedang dirajutnya hingga kedua jarumnya beradu menimbulkan bunyi seperti bunyi kastanet,

Idiomatic Expression:

SL: the needles rattled like castanets

TL: kedua jarumnya beradu menimbulkan bunyi seperti bunyi kastanet

Translation Strategy: Using an idiom of similar meaning and form

Source of the transcript of Novel Little Women

In this sentence above, the idiomatic expression **the needles rattled like castanets** was translated to **kedua jarumnya beradu menimbulkan bunyi seperti bunyi kastanet**. This sentence contain an idiomatic expression that uses a sound comparison (simile) with “castanets” to describe the sound produced. The structure of the comparison uses that word “like” in English, “seperti” in Indonesian. The meaning is also preserved, which describes the loud and the rhythmic clashing sound of knitting needles. So this translation uses the strategy of **using an idiom of similar meaning and form**, because the translator looks for an idiom that is functionally and culturally close to the original expression. This

strategy is highly relevant to the research title Translation Strategies Applied in Translation of Idiomatic Expressions in the Novels ‘Little Women’ and ‘Gadis-Gadis March,’ as it demonstrates how translators carefully bridge linguistic differences to preserve the integrity of meaning and style, ensuring that the story remains authentic and easily understood by the target audience.

In addition, this present study is also underpinned by some previous studies similar to this one that analyze the translation strategies of idiomatic expressions. For example, the first study, conducted by Floranti (2020), examined the various problems translators face during the translation process, including the difficulty in accurately translating idioms. Translators use strategies such as paraphrasing to reproduce the original meaning of idioms. Cultural understanding of both languages is also important during the translation process. The second study by Aulia (2023) found that in the film ‘The Perfect Date (2019)’, there are 30 idiomatic expressions. The most frequently used translation strategy is paraphrasing, and most idioms are translated using dynamic equivalence. The third study by Murtajib and Wahyuningsih (2023) examined idiom translation strategies in the film Bee Movie from English to Indonesian. They analyzed 42 idioms, focusing on techniques such as paraphrasing and borrowing. The results showed that paraphrasing dominated at 93%, while borrowing accounted for 7%. This study concludes that a strong understanding of idioms is essential for translators.

Research on the translation of idioms in literary works such as *Little Women* is still limited, especially that which highlights the reasons behind the choice of idiom translation strategies. Although some studies emphasize the

importance of cultural understanding in translating idioms, the motivational aspects or rationale behind the chosen strategies have not been explored in depth. Furthermore, previous studies have focused more on audiovisual contexts than literary texts. In the Indonesian context, studies on how translators of *Little Women* handle idioms and how these strategies reflect translation considerations still require more attention. This research also needs to examine the impact of these strategic choices on Indonesian readers' understanding and appreciation of the cultural and emotional nuances of idioms, as well as compare different translations of *Little Women* to reveal the relationship between the strategies used and the translators' backgrounds.

The novel *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott was chosen as the focus of the research because it is an influential classic rich in idioms and expressions typical of 19th century American English, and has been translated into Indonesian. First published in 1868 and 1869, the novel followed the lives of four sisters—Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy growing up in the midst of the American Civil War, with the main themes surrounding family, friendship, aspiration, as well as social, economic, and gender challenges. The uniqueness of the characters and the complexity of the relationship between the characters make the translation of idioms in this novel very important to maintain the emotional nuances and cultural values contained therein. The novel also reflected the struggle of the women at the time, making it relevant for gender and feminism studies. Since the idioms in the novel reflect a distinctive cultural context and are difficult to transfer to other languages, *Little Women* is a valuable object to analyze in translations studies,

especially in uncovering the challenges and strategies of translating cultural aspect in literature.

Therefore the research aims to identify and analyze the types of idiomatic expressions found in Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women*. In addition, this study also aims to analyze the strategies used in translating idiomatic expressions employed by translators from the classic novel 'Little Women' into Indonesian and to examine the level of equivalence achieved through the chosen strategies as well as to investigate the reasons behind the application of these translation strategies.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

In this study, there are:

1. What are the types of idiom found in the novel *Little Women*?
2. What are the types of translation strategies used by translator in translating idiomatic expression within the novel *Little Women*?
3. Why do the translators choose certain translation strategies in translating idiomatic expressions in the novel *Little Women*?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In this study, the objectives of the study are:

1. To identify and categorize the types of idioms are found within the novel *Little Women*.
2. To analyze the translation strategies utilized by the translators in translating idiomatic expressions in the novel *Little Women*

3. To explain the reasons that determined the translators' choices when translating the idiomatic expressionism the novel *Little Women*

1.4 The Scopes in the Study

The researcher analyzed phrases containing idiomatic expressions in the novel *Little Women* and its translation *Gadis-Gadis March* was written by Louisa May Alcott. This study focused on the identification of the types of idioms and the translation strategies used in the novel. Additionally, the study examines the realization of the reasons underlying the selection of the translation strategies. The researcher applied McCarthy and O'Dell (types of idioms), Mona Baker (translation strategies) and Nida (levels of equivalence) and Chesterman (the reasons of choosing the translation strategies).

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The benefits of this study are divided into two categories; they are theoretically and practically.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significances

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the field of translation studies by presenting new perspectives and insights related to the application of specific translation strategies for idiomatic expressions. In addition, these findings can also reflect the choices made by translators in literary works, which have the potential to enrich theoretical discussions on linguistic and cultural transfer, particularly in the context of novel translation.

1.5.2 Practical Significances

Practical, the usefulness of findings is described as the following:

1. For the Researcher

The findings of this study will deepen researchers' understanding of idiomatic expressions and translation theory. It will provide direct experience in applying translation strategies and analyzing translators' choices in a literary work. For other researchers, this study can serve as a basic reference. Its comprehensive analysis of idioms and translation strategies in the novel *Little Women* can be used for comparative studies of other literary works, languages, and cultures especially the role of translation in novel.

2. For the Students

This research serves as a valuable learning tool. It offers concrete examples of how idiomatic expressions are translated, highlighting the complexity and nuances of language involved. This can help students appreciate the importance of strategic choices in the translation process.

3. For the Lecturers

This research can enrich teaching materials in literary translation courses. The results of this research can be used as discussion material in class and for assignments, helping lecturers explain key concepts related to the translation of idiomatic expressions.