

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of study

Language is a fundamental medium for communication, allowing individuals to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions in both written and spoken forms. It acts as a bridge of understanding between speakers and listeners, facilitating connections across various cultures and societies (Halliday, 1978). As a complex linguistic construct, language includes not only words, but also symbols, gestures, and expressions that reflect the values and identities of communities. This interplay between language and culture is especially evident in translation, which serves as a critical tool for facilitating cross-cultural communication (House, 1997).

In the case of audiovisual media, translation becomes an integral means for global audiences to access content originally produced in foreign languages. Subtitles, a common form of audiovisual translation, allow viewers to understand the narrative, cultural nuances, and emotional depth of films. However, subtitle translation presents unique challenges. Translators must deal with linguistic differences, cultural gaps, and technical limitations such as screen space and timing. These challenges require the use of various translation strategies to ensure that the original message is conveyed accurately while remaining culturally and contextually relevant. As a medium of interaction, it plays a central role in everyday life, guiding actions, and decisions. The process of understanding languages other than one's own requires translation, which ensures that meanings and messages are accurately conveyed across linguistic barriers. This communicative function of language extends to various forms of media, including film, which combines visual storytelling with linguistic elements to engage audiences. As a product of technological advancement, movies combine visual and audio elements to tell stories, share knowledge, and provide entertainment. Born from innovations in photography and projection, film has become a medium that combines words, sounds, images and dramatic elements to engage audiences worldwide. Its unique ability to present stories in an engaging way has made it a preferred form of entertainment, education, and cultural exchange. Films produced in multiple languages often attract global audiences. The rise of international movies has led movie providers such as Netflix to translate movies with subtitles, allowing viewers to understand movies in languages they are not familiar with. With this subtitle bridge the linguistic gap, allowing films to reach a broader audience apart from viewers from the source language.

The existence of subtitles in movies serves the purpose of helping the viewers understand the meaning and content of the message to be conveyed in the movie so that it can be enjoyed. Although the existence of subtitles can help the audience to enjoy the movie, the translator often finds obstacles or difficulties related to the translation process. These obstacles are the differences between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). Therefore, translators need translation strategies in order to help the process of transferring the source language to the target language and produce a good and precise translation. One of the problems in the subtitle translation is the differences in social backgrounds in each language because language is part of the culture. Nida (2001) stated that a language is always a part of a culture and the meaning of texts directly or indirectly to the corresponding culture. The process of translating words in one language into another language cannot be done directly without looking at the cultural background of the term between source and target languages. According to House's in Translation Quality Assessment (1997), the effectiveness of subtitles can be evaluated based on parameters such as accuracy, completeness of meaning, and readability. Poorly translated subtitles can lead to misunderstanding or loss of engagement, while high-quality translations increase accessibility and immersion. Therefore, translation techniques can be classified and analyzed. The translation technique used by the translator in translating the source language text into the target language greatly affects the quality of the translation.

In translating, the meaning of the source language is transferred to the target language, this process involves not only converting words and phrases but also adapting cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and context-specific elements to ensure that the meaning is accurately conveyed in the target language. Effective translation requires a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as an awareness of the cultural and contextual differences between them. As a result, translation is not merely a mechanical process of word substitution but a complex task that requires the translator to make decisions based on linguistic, cultural, and contextual factors (Apriyanti et al. 2016). Subtitle translation in films plays a crucial role in ensuring accessibility and comprehension for international audiences, especially those who do not use English as a native language. It serves as a bridge that enables non-native speakers to engage with the narrative, dialogues, and nuances of a film. The nuances of language, cultural references, and idioms often pose significant challenges in the translation process, influencing how the content is perceived by viewers. Therefore, understanding the translation techniques employed in subtitles is essential to ensuring an accurate and immersive experience for audiences.

James S. Holmes (1972) introduces the concept of ‘functionality’ in translation:

informative, expressive, and textual. It happens so that the audience understands what the content of the foreign language conversation is, in their language, they also more easily understand the verbal expressions used as well as the context in the conversation. This study focuses on examining the translation techniques specifically applied in the subtitles of the well-known movie "Titanic." By exploring the details of these translation methods, this research aims to determine the impact of subtitle translation on the viewer's experience and how it contributes to or potentially hinders the overall reception and understanding of the film.

Subtitle translation has become an important issue in the global context of media use. With the increasing availability of streaming platforms and access to international films, viewers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are presented with content that often requires translation. Poorly translated subtitles can lead to misunderstanding, reduced engagement, or even cultural offense. In contrast, accurate subtitle translation enhances the storytelling experience and promotes greater cultural exchange and understanding. As digital platforms which provide movie service like Netflix continue to expand their audience base, understanding the subtitle translation becomes critical in ensuring accessibility and inclusivity. In addition to official subtitle providers such as Netflix, there are also individuals or groups, commonly referred to as "Fansub," who voluntarily translate movies, often for free or through donations. These fansub use several different approaches according to their own styles and preferences. Some even create their own websites and online communities to provide viewers with alternative subtitling options. This highlights the wide range of contributors to the field of film translation, providing viewers with a variety of subtitle choices based on personal preferences.

The movie Titanic (1997), by James Cameron, was chosen as the object of study because of its iconic and world-wide popularity, combining elements of history, romance, and tragedy. Its popularity has attracted viewers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, making it an ideal subject for studying the challenges of subtitle translation. The movie's dialogue is filled with emotional nuance, expressions of language, and cultural references, which require translators to deal with the difficulties of accurately conveying meaning in target languages. Furthermore, the existence of two subtitle providers, the official Netflix version and the community translator, fansub, provides a great opportunity to analyze the differences in translation strategies and their impact on the viewing experience. When comparing official and unofficial subtitles, there are significant differences in aspects such as



word choice and translation approaches. These differences are often due to the strict subtitle translation guidelines followed by official providers such as Netflix. These guidelines include specific requirements for subtitle duration, file format, character limits, line handling, subtitle positioning, and consistency between source language and target language (Netflix Partner Help Center). In contrast, fansub translations typically have more flexibility, which can result in subtitles that are more informal or creatively expressive.

The primary objective of this research is to conduct an analysis of the strategies utilized in the translation of dialogues, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references within the film "Titanic." By studying these aspects, the study seeks to identify the challenges faced and the solutions employed by translators to convey the original meaning, emotions, and cultural context effectively. Furthermore, this research aims to contribute to the improvement of audiovisual translation practices by evaluating the effectiveness of the specific translation techniques used in subtitling the movie "Titanic." Understanding the successes and limitations of these strategies aids in refining future translation in the film industry.

1.2 The Objectives of the Study

a. General Objective

To compare the translation strategies used in subtitle translation for the movie Titanic (1997) and the impact on how meaning of the movie dialogue conveyed based on the translation style

b. Specific Objectives

1. To identify and compare the translation strategies used by Netflix and fansub providers in subtitling Titanic (1997).
2. To analyze the role of cultural adaptation in subtitle translation for improving contextual relevance and maintaining intended meaning.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The study primarily focuses on the various translation techniques used in the subtitle translation of the film "Titanic," by this means, it only focuses on the Indonesian version. This includes analyzing how the translators handle linguistic and cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, slang, and other challenges in the source material. The study aims to offer practical insights and recommendations that can be applied to improve subtitle translation

practices in audio visual or entertainment industry by dividing difference and similarity and explain which one is more effective to use based on the context needed.

The study is restricted to only Titanic (1997) movies with Indonesian subtitles from official movie provider: Netflix, and from non-official fansub: fishmaang. The first one (1) hour of the movie was selected as the target for data collection because the significant difference of translation was found. The research took 1 to 3 months to complete, during which time data collection, data analysis, and data breakdown were carried out, the location itself was in the environment around the researcher.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of the study is of great benefit to the following:

1. Academic:

- a. Contribution to Translation Studies: this research adds to existing knowledge in translation studies by offering an analysis of the specific translation strategy used by official and unofficial subbers in the process of translating the movie *Titanic* (1997).
- b. Insights into Translation Practices: by examining translation strategies, this research highlights the various strategies used by translators. It provides a valuable resource for scholars and researchers who wish to understand and improve translation techniques in audiovisual media.

2. Target audience:

Better Understanding: Non-English viewers gain access to an understanding of the language used in the film, such as idioms and slang words. This enhances their viewing experience with language that the audience can understand.

3. Translator:

- a. Insights into Translation Strategies: This research provides insight into the strategies used by official (Netflix) and fansub (Fishmaang) translators in translating subtitles, thus helping other translators understand the different approaches can be used effectively.

- b. Understanding Cultural Adaptation: Translators will recognize the importance of adapting cultural references and their role to increase the level of understanding and ensure effective communication to the audience.
- c. Improving Creativity Skills: By exploring how elements such as idioms, humor and cultural references are translated, this study can help translators enhance their creativity in complex translation challenges.

1.5 Literature Review

To better understand the complexities of this audiovisual or movie translation, other researchers have studied subtitle translation. The literature review that follows researches into current subtitle translation methods used in different movies, illuminating the solution translators use to communicate ideas across linguistic and cultural divides.

1. **“Analisis teknik terjemahan subtitle film The Climbers karya Daniel Lee by Antonius Ferdian Nugraha (2022)”** This study identifies ten translation techniques applied to 128 data in the form of subtitled narrative texts. The techniques include modulation, borrowing, literal translation, linguistic amplification, adaptive, descriptive, common equivalence, substitution, reduction, and variation. This study uses Molina and Albir (2002) translation theory, which emphasizes that translators can utilize more than one technique to deal with structural and cultural differences between languages. The similarity in my field of research is in the analysis of the strategy that can be used by the translator to effectively convey the meaning of the word, except my object using different movies and two different subtitle providers to highlight the difference of translation strategy used.
2. **“Analisis teknik penerjemahan subtitle dalam film Inside Out karya Pete Docter dan Ronnie Del Carmen” by Muhammad Ali Ghufron, Novia Yolanda, and Mutmainatul Mardiyah in their collaborative effort (2022).** The movie inside out, which portrays complex emotional themes, requires particular translation techniques to maintain the meaning and cultural context appropriate for the target audience. The researcher analyzes the using Translation Techniques theory proposed by Molina and Albir (2002), that include transposition, modification, cultural substitution, and equivalence. This theory helps the researcher to identify and categorize the techniques

used in the film's subtitles. In addition, Hans Vermeer's Scopus theory is also used to measure the extent to which the purpose of the translation matches the target audience. This theory emphasizes that translation should be adapted to the purpose of communication in a broader context, such as film translation which should consider a diverse international audience. The combination of these two theories provides a deeper understanding of how the Inside Out movie subtitles were adapted to ensure that the original message is still conveyed effectively despite cultural and linguistic differences. Findings in this study is that cultural adaptation is essential to maintain the emotional message of the movie, given that it is heavily steeped in American psychological and cultural elements that may not be immediately understood by audiences from different cultures. Therefore, the translation techniques applied should take into account the psychological and social context of the story elements displayed. Some similarities found in this study are the identification and categorization of strategy used in subtitle translation and why adaptation to target language is an important factor for conveying the meaning. The main difference is that by having two objects to be researched, my research found how different translators' translation styles affect the meaning conveyed.

3. **Ni Made Sila Ulati, Mirsa Umiyati, and Agus Darma Yoga Pratama (2022) in “Subtitling Translation Strategy and Semiotic Approach on Titanic Film”** add to the discussion on ways for translating subtitles by analyzing the movie "Titanic." This study utilizes Gottlieb's (1992) translation strategy theory and Forceville's (2007) multimodal transcription theory. Eight translation strategies were found, including expansion, paraphrasing, transfer, imitation, transcription, condensation, decimation, and deletion, with the transfer strategy being the most dominant. This strategy ensures that the meaning of the source language is conveyed intact to the target language. Meanwhile, dislocation and resignation strategies were not found in the data. The study also analyzed the meanings conveyed through nonverbal cues such as visual images and background music, which create an emotional atmosphere such as sadness, happiness of love, unforgettable tragedy, and the power of true love. The multimodal transcription analysis shows how these elements work together to holistically convey the movie's message. By sharing the same research object, Titanic, there are similarities with this study, which is the categorization of strategies used by translators in subtitles. The main difference is that this study examines the importance

of non-verbal cues add elements in portraying the atmosphere of the film, while my study analyzes how differences in translation style can create different meanings in the target language.

4. **Ziyaul Haq's (2017) study on “Penerjemahan Subtitle dari Bahasa Inggris Ke dalam Bahasa Indonesia (Penelitian Analisis Isi pada Subtitle Film Contraband)”** identifies various translation strategies and equivalence issues. This study uses a content analysis approach to evaluate the equivalence between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) and identify the translation strategies used. The study found that there are eleven translation strategies applied, including literal, borrowing, paraphrasing, compression, omission, and transposition. In terms of equivalence, this study refers to Mona Baker's theory, which identifies equivalence at three levels: word, above-word and grammatical. Equivalence at the word level, for example, shows how the translator chooses word equivalents that are appropriate to the cultural context and meaning in the movie. On the other hand, this study also notes some deviations that occur in the translation process, such as meaning reversal, omission, and grammatical errors. These deviations, according to Peter Newmark, can be caused by changes in sentence structure, lexical mismatches, and differences in point of view between SL and TL. The similarity of this study is how adaptation from source language to target language is important to connect cultural context from the two different languages in order to make it relatable to the viewers. The difference lies in how Ziyaul highlights the problem of translating in translation practice, while my study is focused on how translators' style of translation affects the subtitle.
5. **“Penerjemahan Subtitle Film Django Unchained dari Bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa Indonesia” by Nadiatul Amri (2017)** analyzes the translation of Django Unchained movie subtitles, focusing on the translation techniques used to adapt the meaning and cultural context of the movie to Indonesian viewers. In this study, Amri examines the use of translation techniques such as literal translation, modulation, cultural substitution, and adaptation that aim to preserve the meaning of the movie and create an easy-to-understand viewing experience. One important technique is cultural substitution, which is used to replace unfamiliar cultural references in Indonesian culture with more relevant ones, although it sometimes causes a shift in meaning. In addition, the modulation technique is mostly applied to adjust the language style to

make it more natural and suitable for the context of daily conversation in Indonesian.

In this study, Amri employs translation theories, such as Hans Vermeer's Scopus theory, which emphasizes on adapting the purpose of translation to the target audience, and Vinay and Darbelnet's translation theory, which offers various techniques to transfer meaning effectively. The research findings show that literal translation techniques are sometimes not effective enough because the translation is awkward and less relevant to Indonesian culture. In contrast, the use of adaptive techniques such as modulation and adaptation allows the translation to be easier to understand and more appropriate to the local cultural context, maintaining the congruence between the meaning conveyed in the movie and what the Indonesian audience understands. There are similarities in the use of Vinay and Darbelnet's theories in analyzing the strategies and categorization of translation and how important it is to adapt cultural references to the target language to make it more relatable to the target viewers, except that in my study it is more about highlighting the different strategies used by the two translators in conveying the meaning of the film which will affect the output meaning in the subtitles.

My research in comparative study on subtitle translation strategy has added to the developing field of subtitle translation analysis by examining different translation strategy will affect the meaning conveyed in the movie. Through the examination of a wide variety of films and the application of numerous analytical methodologies, researchers continue in expanding our comprehension of the details involved in this type of specialized translation. With audiovisual information continuing to cross linguistic and cultural barriers, the knowledge gained from this research is becoming increasingly relevant for translation studies practitioners.