

**An Analysis of Difficulty in Translating English Idioms into
Bahasa Indonesia**

A Descriptive Research on the 5th Semester Students of the English Education Study
Program of Universitas Tanjungpura

A THESIS

*Submitted to fulfill one of the requirements for writing a thesis in the English
Education Study Program, Language and Art Education Department, Teachers
Training and Education Faculty Universitas Tanjungpura*

PROPOSED BY:

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Tanjungpura, June 30th 2024

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INTO BAHASA INDONESIA**

*(A Descriptive Research on the 5th Semester Students of the English Education Study
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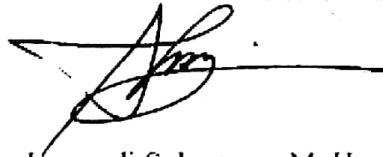
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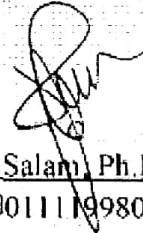
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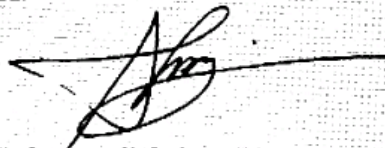
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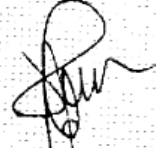
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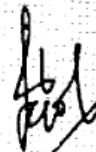
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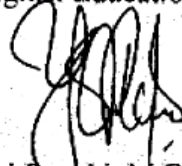
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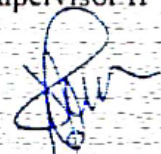
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This thesis has been completed to the best of my ability, but I am aware that there are numerous flaws in terms of both content and grammar. I am truly grateful to those who have helped me achieve this milestone. This thesis has helped me to develop my critical thinking and problem-solving skills. I have also learned how to communicate my research effectively to both academic and non-academic audiences. This thesis has been a challenging but rewarding experience. I have learned a great deal about the research process and about myself. I am now more confident in my abilities as a researcher and I am excited to continue my work in this field. Furthermore, I acknowledge the countless scholars whose contributions have paved the way for this study. Their work forms the foundation upon which I have built my research, and I am honored to contribute to a similar research topic. Lastly, I embrace any suggestions and constructive criticism from readers in order to improve this thesis. Eventually, I hope this thesis could be useful for other English Language Education Study Program

students as their reference when conducting a similar research topic. I expect that this thesis content will contribute to expanding knowledge and education in the future.

Table of Contents

Supervisors' Approval Page	i
Dean's Approval Page	ii
The Head of The Study Program's Approval Page.....	iii
Declaration of Authenticity.....	iv
Acknowledgment	v
Table of Contents	ix
Abstract	xi
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research Background	1
1.2 Research Question	3
1.3 Research Purpose	4
1.4 Research Significance	4
1.5 Scope of Research.....	5
1.6 Terminology.....	5
Chapter 2 Literature Review	7
2.1 Translation	7
2.2 Translation Strategy	8
2.3 Idioms	11
2.4 Idioms Translation	13
2.5 Idioms Translation Strategies	14
2.6 Difficulty	19
2.7 Difficulties in Idioms Translation	20
Chapter 3 Methodology	22
3.1 Research Design.....	22
3.2 Research Participant.....	23
3.3 Technique of Data Collection	23
3.3.1 Short Test.....	23

3.3.2 Interview	24
3.4 Tools of Data Collection	25
3.4.1 Short Test	25
3.4.2 Interview	26
3.5 Data Analysis	27
3.5.1 Short Test	27
3.5.2 Interview	28
Chapter 4 Findings and Discussions	30
4.1 Findings.....	30
4.1.1 Difficulties Identified Through the Short Test.....	30
4.1.2 Students Experiences Revealed Through Interview	32
4.2 Discussions	33
Chapter 5 Conclusions and Suggestions	35
5.1 Conclusions.....	35
5.2 Suggestions	35
References	38
Appendixes.....	43
Appendix 1	43
Appendix 2	47
Appendix 3	48
Appendix 4	74

ABSTRACT

Khairunisa, A (2024): An Analysis of Difficulty in Translating English Idioms into Bahasa Indonesia (A Descriptive Research on The 5th Semester Students of The English Education Study Program of Universitas Tanjungpura)

Supervisor I : Drs. Luwandi Suhartono, M. Hum

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This study investigates the difficulties faced by fifth-semester English education students at Universitas Tanjungpura, Indonesia, in translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, utilizing a short test and follow-up interviews. The analysis revealed a trend of decreasing difficulty with increasing idiom transparency. Students performed best with transparent idioms, followed by semi-transparent and semi-opaque idioms. Opaque idioms, though still well-translated, presented the most difficulty. Challenges identified included translating literal meaning versus figurative language, finding natural equivalents, conveying figurative language, and navigating cultural differences. These findings align with previous research on idiom translation. The study concludes by highlighting the importance of understanding these challenges and suggests avenues for future research, including exploring alternative assessment methods, investigating the impact of pedagogical techniques, expanding the scope of idioms studied, and integrating technology in learning. By addressing these areas, researchers can contribute to improved learning outcomes and more effective strategies for translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia.

Keywords: Idiom translation, English-Bahasa Indonesia, Translation difficulty, Cultural awareness, Translator competence

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Idiomatic expressions are a prevalent aspect of language and are often utilized in everyday discourse, literature, and other forms of communication. Not only do idioms add vibrancy, humor, and subtlety to language, but they also present challenges when it comes to translation. The translation of idiomatic expressions can be particularly complex since idioms frequently contain culturally specific meanings that cannot be translated directly.

The art of translating idiomatic expressions is a complex undertaking. According to Snell-Hornby (2006), it involves thoroughly comprehending both languages and their respective cultural backgrounds. Idioms are intricately linked to cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs, which heightens the difficulty of their translation. For example, the English expression “to spill the beans” denotes revealing a secret, but it may not hold the same connotation in cultures where beans are not associated with secrecy.

According to Malmkjaer (2017), idioms can present a significant challenge for translators due to their ambiguous meanings, which cannot be discerned by simply examining the constituent words. As a result, the translator must identify the intended sense of the idioms and seek out a comparable expression in the target language that conveys the same essence. For instance, the English idiom “to be on the same page” signifies mutual comprehension or agreement, yet individuals who are not familiar with the concept of pages in a book or document may find it perplexing.

Samuelsson-Brown (2018) unequivocally states that idioms are significantly impacted by cultural contexts, which can greatly differ across languages. Translators must be acutely aware of these cultural disparities

and adapt their translations accordingly to ensure precise and effective communication.

Conveying English idioms in Bahasa Indonesia can be a daunting task, given the discrepancies in culture and language between the two. One of the primary reasons for this challenge is that numerous English idioms rely on historical or cultural allusions that Bahasa Indonesia speakers may not be familiar with. Furthermore, the grammatical frameworks of Bahasa Indonesia and English differ, making it a formidable task to convey the same sense in both languages. For instance, an English idiom like "the ball is in your court" (implying that it's your responsibility to take action) would lose its essence if translated verbatim into Bahasa Indonesia.

The translation of idiomatic expressions has been the subject of numerous studies, as it poses a unique challenge for translators. These expressions, often rooted in cultural references or historical contexts, can be difficult to render in another language while preserving their intended meaning and nuance. For example, Ayuningtyas et al (2017) investigated the accuracy of idiom translation. Their research examined how a translator's background knowledge impacts the accuracy of their work. They found that participants with a stronger grasp of the cultural context surrounding the idioms produced more accurate translations. Additionally, they explored the causes of difficulties faced by participants, identifying factors such as lack of familiarity with the target language's equivalent idioms and the inherent ambiguity of some expressions.

This focus on the translator's decision-making process complements the work of Herrera-Sobek (2019), who delved into the broader challenges of interpreting idiomatic expressions. Their research explored the inherent difficulty in conveying the figurative meaning and cultural significance of idioms across languages. Their work highlights the importance of considering not just the literal meaning of the words but also the cultural context and intended effect of the idiom.

Accurate translation hinges on a deep understanding of both the cultural and linguistic contexts at play, particularly when it comes to idioms. As Ozolins (2015) points out, idioms can be especially tricky to translate due to their inherent cultural references and figurative language. Despite this recognition, there is a significant gap in research dedicated specifically to the challenges of translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the difficulties faced by Indonesian students from the English Education Study Program at Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak, when they are tasked with translating English idioms into their native language. This study hopes to shed light on the complexities of idiom translation and inform future teaching practices by examining the specific challenges these students encounter.

A qualitative research design was employed to address this knowledge gap. This two-step approach sought to delve deeper into the challenges faced by 5th-semester students enrolled in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak. First, participants completed a short test translating English idiomatic expressions into Bahasa Indonesia. This aimed to identify a smaller group (approximately 6) for further exploration. Following the test, in-depth interviews with these 6 participants were conducted to pinpoint the specific difficulties encountered when translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia. Through these interviews, valuable insights were gained directly from the students, allowing for an understanding of their thought processes and identification of the root causes of these challenges.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

The objective of this study is to provide an answer to the following question:

What are the difficulties that students of the English Education Study Program of Universitas Tanjungpura encounter in translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia?

1.3 RESEARCH PURPOSE

This study explores the difficulties faced by 5th-semester English Education students at Universitas Tanjungpura when translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia. Idioms, due to their cultural and linguistic depth, resist literal translation, posing a challenge in conveying meaning. This research investigates the students' specific challenges, focusing on linguistic disparities, cultural references, and cognitive processes involved in translation.

By focusing on student experiences, this research aims to contribute to translation studies and enhance cross-cultural communication. The findings will inform pedagogical approaches within the English Education program.

1.4 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The objective of this research is to deepen our understanding of the difficulty that arises when translating English idioms into Bahasa Indonesia. The findings of this study could have real-world benefits for translators, language educators, and students who are working on translating or learning English idiomatic phrases within the Bahasa Indonesia context.

1.4.1 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners

By identifying the specific difficulties encountered, this study can equip EFL learners with a clear understanding of potential roadblocks and provide them with tools and strategies to overcome these challenges. This newfound knowledge can empower them to approach idiomatic translation with greater confidence and accuracy.

1.4.2 English Instructors and Teachers

Educators play a crucial role in equipping students with effective idiom translation skills. This research offers valuable insights into these challenges, enabling teachers to develop targeted pedagogical approaches. Additionally, the research provides a rich

resource of idiomatic translation examples that can be used as instructional aids, enhancing classroom learning and fostering a deeper understanding of idioms.

1.4.3 Translators

The research findings have the potential to significantly improve the work of translators. By delving into the underlying techniques and strategies employed in successful idiomatic translation, this study equips translators with the knowledge and skills to produce more nuanced and culturally appropriate translations. This can lead to improved communication and understanding across cultural boundaries.

1.5 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

1.5.1 This study focused on comprehensively examining the difficulties faced by students in the English Education program at Universitas Tanjungpura, specifically when translating idiomatic expressions from English to Bahasa Indonesia. It's important to note that this research had a specific scope, solely investigating the challenges encountered in translating idioms. Other aspects of language, like syntax, phonology, semantics, and morphology, were not included in this study's focus.

1.5.2 The participants for this research were exclusively 5th-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Tanjungpura who were currently enrolled in the Translation course.

1.6 TERMINOLOGY

This research hinges on a clear understanding of four key terms: translation, idioms, idiom translation, and difficulty.

1.6.1 **Translation:** The process of changing the words of one language to another (source language to target language).

- 1.6.2 **Idioms:** The fixed expression of one language that cannot be translated literally.
- 1.6.3 **Idiom Translation:** The process of interpreting the fixed expression of one language to another from English into Bahasa Indonesia.
- 1.6.4 **Difficulty:** The issues that the students encountered while translating the fixed expression of one language to another from English into Bahasa Indonesia.