

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the research background, reasons for choosing the topic, research problems, research objectives, research significance and research outline.

1.1 Background of the Study

The translation of slang presents significant challenges due to its transient nature, cultural specificity, and the complex connotations it carries, which are often difficult to convey accurately in another language. Slang reflects the values, attitudes, and trends of a particular social group at a specific point in time, making direct equivalence between terms in different languages uncommon. Consequently, translators must employ creative and nuanced strategies to effectively capture the intended meaning and tone. This study examines the complexities involved in slang translation by analyzing how professional translator and internet fansubber approach this challenge in the context of the film *Legally Blonde*.

In this study, professional translator are defined as individuals or teams officially employed or contracted by media organizations or distribution platforms, such as Netflix, to produce subtitles or dubbed versions for films. These translators are trained experts who follow strict localization standards, quality control processes, and legal guidelines to ensure that translations meet industry norms regarding accuracy, cultural appropriateness, readability, and accessibility. Professional translation aims to serve a broad and diverse audience by balancing fidelity to the source material with cultural sensitivity and regulatory compliance. On the other hand, internet fansubber (fansubber) refer to amateur translators or volunteer communities who unofficially create subtitles for media content and share them online, often well before or independently of professional releases.

Fansubbing is typically motivated by a passion for the media, a desire for rapid dissemination, and audience engagement within niche or fan communities. Fansubbers tend to prioritize cultural relevance, informality, and creative adaptation to better connect with specific viewer groups, sometimes taking liberties with the text that professional translators would avoid due to legal or corporate constraints. The quality and style of fansubs can vary considerably, reflecting the diversity of amateur translators' skills, resources, and cultural backgrounds.

The growing accessibility of media from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds has sparked increased interest in translation studies. This trend has also brought attention to the variety of translation approaches, particularly within popular culture, where slang plays a crucial role in character development, humor, and the overall tone. While professional translators adhere to established industry standards and expectations, internet fansubbers operate in a more informal context, often motivated by personal passion and the desire to share beloved media with a broader audience. These differing contexts and motivations can result in notable variations in translation strategies, especially when addressing culturally nuanced elements such as slang.

This study focuses on *Legally Blonde*, a film rich in slang and colloquialisms that contribute significantly to its comedic effect and character portrayal. The film's dialogue is peppered with slang specific to American college culture, legal jargon, and fashion terminology, creating a complex linguistic landscape for translators. Analyzing the translation of these slang terms offers a valuable insight into the differing strategies employed by professional translators and fansubbers.

Mona Baker's framework of equivalence (1992) provides a robust theoretical foundation for analyzing the translation strategies employed in this study. Baker's model moves beyond the traditional notion of one-to-one correspondence between words,

recognizing that equivalence is a complex and multifaceted concept. Her framework, encompassing various levels of equivalence – from word level to textual and pragmatic equivalence – allows for a nuanced examination of how translators navigate the challenges of conveying the meaning and impact of slang. Specifically, this study will utilize Baker's typology to categorize and compare the different strategies used by professional translators and fansubbers in rendering the slang of *Legally Blonde* into the target language. This comparison will shed light on the potential impact of different translation approaches on the reception and interpretation of the film by the target audience.

For a study comparing slang translation in *Legally Blonde*, professional translators, exemplified by Netflix, and fansubs, represented by pahe.in, exhibit distinct characteristics. Netflix employs trained professionals adhering to strict localization standards, prioritizing accuracy and cultural appropriateness within legal frameworks and subtitling constraints for a broad audience. Conversely, Pahe.in's fansubs are created by amateurs, often prioritizing speed and accessibility with varied quality, taking creative liberties in cultural adaptation and utilizing slang specific to their online community. This disparity highlights the fundamental differences between professional, standardized translation and the more flexible, community-driven approach of fansubs, offering a rich field for analyzing the impact of these divergent strategies on the translation of slang. By comparing the translation choices of professional translators and internet fansubbers, this study aims to answer the following research questions: What types of translation strategies are used by professional translators and internet fansubs in translating slang words in the movie *Legally Blonde*? Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of slang translation and the factors that influence translation choices in both professional and amateur contexts.

The significance of slang in contemporary communication cannot be overstated. It serves not only as a means of expression but also as a marker of identity and belonging within specific social groups. In the context of *Legally Blonde*, the use of slang is particularly pronounced, as it reflects the youthful exuberance and cultural nuances of American college life. The film's protagonist, Elle Woods, navigates a world filled with legal jargon and fashion-related terms, which are often laden with cultural significance. This linguistic richness poses a challenge for translators who must balance fidelity to the original text with the need to make the dialogue accessible and relatable to the target audience.

Moreover, the rise of digital media has transformed the landscape of translation. Fansubbing, which involves the unofficial translation of media by fans, has gained popularity as a way to make content available to non-native speakers. This phenomenon has democratized access to media but has also raised questions about the quality and accuracy of translations. Fansubbers often prioritize speed and cultural relevance over strict adherence to linguistic norms, leading to innovative yet sometimes inconsistent translations. This study aims to explore these dynamics by examining how both professional translators and fansubbers approach the translation of slang, highlighting the implications of their choices for audience reception.

In addition, the cultural context in which slang operates is crucial for understanding its translation. Slang is often tied to specific social phenomena, trends, and subcultures, making it a reflection of the zeitgeist.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

This research topic was chosen due to a compelling intersection of factors, including the inherent challenges of slang translation, the growing influence of fansubbing, and the

suitability of *Legally Blonde* as a case study. Slang, with its dynamic nature and strong cultural ties, presents a significant hurdle for translators seeking to convey not just literal meaning but also the associated connotations and cultural significance. This complexity makes slang translation a fascinating area of inquiry and challenges of cross-cultural communication.

Furthermore, the rise of online streaming and digital communities has amplified the role of fansubbing, offering a unique perspective on translation practices outside the traditional professional sphere. Comparing the strategies employed by fansubbers, often driven by passion and community engagement, with those of professional translators working within institutional constraints promises valuable insights into the translation approaches.

Legally Blonde serves as an ideal corpus for this study due to its abundant and varied use of slang, which is integral to the film's humor, character development, and overall tone. The film's slang, often linked to specific social groups like sorority culture and the legal profession, allows for an in-depth exploration of how translators handle slang with varying degrees of cultural specificity. The availability of both professionally translated versions and numerous fansubbed versions provides a rich dataset for comparative analysis, enabling a nuanced understanding of the diverse translation choices made. By applying Mona Baker's framework on translation and equivalence, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the practical application of translation theory and shed light on the factors influencing translation choices in this specific context.

Mona Baker's translation theory provides a robust framework for analyzing the translation of slang in "*Legally Blonde*," particularly when comparing professional translators and internet fansubbers, by emphasizing equivalence beyond the word level, addressing non-equivalence through various strategies, highlighting the importance of

cultural context, facilitating a systematic comparison of different translation approaches, and analyzing pragmatic meaning. Slang's inherent cultural and situational dependence necessitates a theoretical lens that moves beyond simple word-for-word substitutions, allowing for a deeper understanding of how both professional and amateur translators navigate the complexities of rendering culturally loaded language into a target language, ultimately revealing the diverse strategies employed to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What types of translation strategies are used by professional translators and internet fansubs in translating slang words in the movie *Legally Blonde*?
2. How do the translation strategies used by professional translators differ from those used by internet fansubs in terms of accuracy, cultural equivalence, and readability?

1.4 Purposes of the Study

Dealing with the research questions above, the following are the objectives of the study:

1. To identify and classify the types of slang used in professional translations and internet fansubs of "Legally Blonde".
2. To analyze how professional translators and internet fansubbers differ in translating slang in terms of accuracy, cultural relevance, and readability.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of equivalence in translation theory by specifically examining its application to the nuanced realm of slang. By investigating the types of translation strategies used in professional translations compared to internet fansubs for the movie *Legally Blonde*, this research aims to refine existing models of equivalence and identify potential gaps in current theoretical frameworks. The study seeks to address whether traditional equivalence categories

adequately capture the dynamic and context-dependent nature of slang, thereby indicating the need for expanded or adapted theoretical constructs.

Practically, this study offers valuable insights for translator training and professional practice. By identifying the translation strategies employed by professional translators and internet fansubbers, as well as how these strategies affect the slang in *Legally Blonde*, the research can provide information for the development of curricula and resources in translator education. This study emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity and awareness in translation, particularly when dealing with informal and culturally charged language. For professional translators, this study provides practical guidance and best practices for handling slang across various media, including film and television, ultimately contributing to the production of high-quality translations. Additionally, the examination of fansubbing practices offers valuable perspectives on different translation approaches, which can enhance understanding and appreciation of the contributions made by both professional and non-professional translators.

Pedagogically, this study supports the enhancement of translator education by highlighting the challenges and strategies involved in translating slang an often overlooked yet critical aspect of language transfer. It recommends integrating real-life examples, such as the analysis of translations in *Legally Blonde*, into training programs to improve students' competence in dealing with informal, colloquial, and culturally nuanced language. The findings encourage educators to foster greater awareness of multiple translation approaches, including those used by fansubbers, cultivating flexibility and creativity alongside accuracy and cultural appropriateness in student translators. Ultimately, this pedagogical contribution aims to equip future translators with the skills and sensitivity necessary to produce translations that resonate authentically with diverse audiences, preparing them for both formal and informal translation contexts.

This study uniquely contributes to the field by providing a direct comparative analysis between professional and fansub subtitle translations within the Indonesian context a relatively underexplored area—using *Legally Blonde* as a case study rich in culturally specific and witty slang. Unlike prior research that often focuses solely on one translation context or less slang-heavy films, this study systematically evaluates six translation strategies, combined with quantitative scoring on accuracy, cultural equivalence, and readability for a comprehensive assessment. Furthermore, by examining the interplay between professional standards and fan-driven creativity, the study illuminates new insights into how informal translation communities influence and challenge traditional norms in audiovisual translation. This dual-perspective approach enriches theoretical understanding and offers practical implications for improving subtitle translation quality.

1.6 Outline of The Report

Chapter I is the introduction of the study. It consists of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, research questions, purposes of the study, the significance of the study and outline of the report.

Chapter II discusses the review of related literature which consists of review of the previous studies, theoretical review, and theoretical framework.

Chapter III outlines the research methods employed in this study. This section covers research design, object of the study, the data, the sources of that data, procedures for collecting data, and procedures of data analysis.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the study, which includes research findings and discussion.

Chapter V the last chapter. It includes the conclusion and suggestion.