# Chapter 1

# Introduction

This chapter presents the background of study, research problems, and objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms and organization of the study.

## Background of the Study

Swearwords language are recognized all around the world, used in movies, literature, and TV shows because they are creative, expressive and certainly a colorful part of any language. They help the clarity, precision and completeness of communication. Swearwords can actually add values, because they often assist a reader comprehend the speaker's attitude and strength of feeling. Most of the readers would agree that sometimes nothing but swearwords will do.

Casual written dialogue such as blogs, customer reviews, posts in a forum, translations of court transcriptions, fiction, news, articles, or movie scripts may contain swear words. These swearwords especially are challenging ones for translators, because finding similarities and equivalent terms are difficult, and also because of the controversy of these words.

Translators often have to make a professional call about whether they want to translate a phrase literally or use an equivalent phrase in the target language. A skilled linguist has the skills to handle it, yet, it can be as challenging as translating marketing translation; complete bilingualism and closeness to the target is required.

Translating swearwords has been widely identified in the literature as having as tone-down tendency for at least for reasons (e.g. Chen, 2004, Fernandez, 2009; Greenail, 2012; Hjort,2009; Mattson, 2006; Taivalkoski-Shilov, 2008).

Firstly, a swearword may have no similar words or as we call it the equivalence in the target language as swearwords are often culture-specific. Translators need to decide if they wish to recreate the same effect on the target readership and therefore they may want to adjust the intensity of the swearwords accordingly. Often, literal translations of swearwords may not find its equivalence and this attempt is perceived as unnatural by the readers.

Secondly, swearwords that function as something to fill in communication gap and tend to be erased or omitted in the translations. This is partly because of the space and time constraints in translations, and is partly due to the fact that these gaps and fillers are not critical elements in developing the plot,

for example *You are bloody irrelevant.*

Thirdly, words considered to be swearwords or taboo or dirty words in the source language culture, community and society might be rendered as words that are not sacred or forbidden in the target language. For example, the English expression *For the Lord's Sake!* may be seen as taking the Lord's name in vain (Exodus 20:7). The meaning in "For Lord's sake" may imply a great sense because of the image of Lord or God. The idea is, if not for me and you, at least do/do not do or say or think something because there is Lord or God.

Fourthly, the swearwords' presence may be perceived as more offensive and aggressive because there is a change of mode from spoken language into written language. This change tends to make language feel different.

Many researchers states that swearwords give the contribution to the artistic influence of the original forms and process cultural peculiarities (Chen, 2004; Fernandez, 2009). Therefore, toning down or making softer for the swearwords in translations would result in presenting the audience who speaks a different language an altered and unauthentic experience of a foreign language and culture through the original contents.

Few studies have been done on the language pairs of English and Asian languages. This thesis attempts to fill this gap

by discussing the translations of English swearwords into Indonesia by two steps. First, it will examine the text if a tone-down tendency can be identified in the Indonesian translations of English swearwords. Second, it will examine the text if omitting, paraphrasing models are adequate to convey the message essence and are of optional relevance minimum procession efforts by the target language audience.

The present research will be based on a corpus assembled from an English classic novel *Catcher in The Rye written by J.D. Salinger.* The novel was chosen because it was considered to be controversial fiction when it was first published in America.

Despite the novels' popularity, *Catcher in the Rye* is officially the most challenged books in America. According to the American Library Association in 2006 on their official website *http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/top-100-bannedchallenged-books-2000-2009,. Catcher in The Rye* was considered to be the most controversial book in the United States. Being controversial in that it is categorized as the most challenging titles in schools and libraries, the books that many people want to be removed from public libraries. *Catcher in The Rye* has been challenged largely because of the language used in the book. Its use of vulgar profanity, but also for a whole host of other perceived taboo issues: promoting euthanasia, suicide,

sexuality issues, child molesting.

In Indonesia, the novel has been translated into Indonesian and the readers can easily find them in the book store. *Catcher in The Rye* has been translated in the Indonesian language by Gita Widya Laksmini, published in 2007 by Banana Publisher. As for the book, in which many swearwords and expressions have been used, its Indonesian translation was investigated to show what methods were applied by Indonesian translators for the translation of swearing and what norms were applied during the process of the Indonesian translations of the swearing of the story.

Despite the wide presence of taboo and swearwords in the novel, research on this topic is still rather scarce. This study aims to give an overview of the tactics that can be used for their translations, and to link these tactics to the functions that these taboo and swearwords can have in the source text. While much of the previous research has concluded that taboo and swearwords are mostly under translated, this study will try to link this under-translation to the different functions. Also, the other options besides deletion will be closely investigated.

**Research Problems**

The main questions of interest in the present study may be formulated as follows:

1. How does the translator deal with swearwords in the dialogue of American's novel?

a. What strategies are used by a translator to translate swearwords in the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*?

b. Among the strategies, which ones are most frequently used?

2. What are the results of translator's decisions?

**Purpose of the Study**

First of all, we aim to identify the function of swearwords as they occur in *The Catcher in The Rye* in its translation. Secondly, we aim to confirm that the functions in the source text correspond to those in each of the target texts. Thirdly, we want to inquire how the retaining or changing of a function was manifested in translational patterns and offer explanations as to why certain patterns occurred. Finally, we compare the results of the qualitative analysis to quantitative one.

**Significance of the Study**

Translation is one the most demanding and intellectually difficult task. It is an action of transferring meaning from one

language to another taking into account a number of constraints. These constraints should include words, context, grammar rules, culture, writing conventions and words or utterances difficult to translate, e.g. idioms.

This result of this study is expected to give some contributions to students, teachers, researchers and translators. Using translation on lesson plays an important role in teaching. It is expected to help students to understand the connection between languages and explores the potential of both of them. It is a necessary and natural activity, because in many common places foreign words are met and they need to be decoded. Communication accomplishment is a two-way-system. Learners need to be able to communicate both ways: into and from the foreign language. In most materials used on lessons they are pressed mostly on the ability of using a foreign language, but little guidance is given on how to transmit it back into the mother tongue.

It is crucial and functional for readers and translators to understand that successful translation is indicative of how a good translation must live up to the readers' expectations as: reproducing exactly as for as possible the meaning of the source text, using natural forms of the receptor/target language in such a way as is appropriate to the kind of text being translated and

expressing all aspects of the meaning closely and readily understandable to the intended audience/reader.

## Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the identification of translational patterns that emerge in the translation of swearwords from source text into the target text. Therefore, potential lexical mistranslations or issues of translational accuracy are not the focus to this analysis.

## Definition of Key Terms

The working definitions that will be used throughout the present investigation are as follows:

**Translation.** The term 'Translation' refers to the activity to get from one language to another, or from source text (ST) to target text (TT). The activity to do translation is expected to carry the meaning intended by the author from one language to another.

**Swearwords.** The term 'swearword' is a word which is considered to be rude or offensive. Swearwords are usually used when people are angry.

**Organization of Study**

This thesis is structured as follows: the first chapter introduces the source texts, *The Catcher in The Rye*, and gives background information on the language of the characters, the reception of the novel in American-English and introduces the translators of the Indonesia texts. The second chapter presents a review of the relevant academic literature, drawing on scholarly research relating for swearing as a linguistic phenomenon, swearing and its functions in Indonesia context and issues of swearing and non-standard language in translation.

The third chapter concerns to the method used by the researcher to the analysis. It discusses the research method, data source, sample and sampling technique, research procedure, technique of collecting data, and the last is technique of analyzing data.

The fourth chapter evaluates the results of an initial quantitative investigation into the distribution and frequency of swearwords in the source and target texts and presents a quantitative comparison of the Indonesian translations. This chapter also discusses about the results of the qualitative analysis of the translation of swearwords in the novels to their three functions. The discussion concerns with the translational patterns that emerge in the category of abusive swearing. It is

not all of data can be presented herein due to scope of limitation; however, the date descriptively presented the translator who has to be keen on applying the translation strategies in order to get the most suitable target words and expressions for the sources words and expressions. This chapter also contains a comparison of the qualitative and quantitative analysis and draws out the implications of discrepancies existing in the novel.

Fifth chapter is conclusion and suggestion. It resumes the whole previous chapters. This part primarily deals with the summary of the discussion the data presented as research findings. On the basic of the finding, some suggestions are made.