

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Translation

Translation is broadly understood as the act of converting or rendering meaning from one language into another. As Apriyanti, Wulandari, Safitri, and Dewi (2016) stated that translation is a product of translating. This process involves linguistic, cultural, and contextual mediation to ensure that the translation result is accurate and the essence is delivered.

Translation is more than a word-for-word substitution. According to Catford (1995), it is the process of replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language). In general, translation plays an important role in language learning as it facilitates the transference of information between languages, allowing the exchange of knowledge of culture and effectively bridging language barriers globally. Some experts have come up with different theories to comprehend the ideas of translation, which has greatly facilitated learning and knowledge of the topic.

Translating consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida & Taber, 1974). Newmark (1988) also defined translation as the process of rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text. In the process of translation, it involves more than just substituting words; translation also requires an in-depth understanding of both languages' linguistic systems, grammar, cultural nuances, and context.

According to Snell-Hornby (1988), translation does not only work as a mere transcoding process, but as a form of action across cultures, a cross-cultural event. This means that translation requires the translator to

navigate between different cultural and communication systems. When translating, the translator must not only consider the linguistic features of the text but also the norms, values, and expectations of both source and target audiences. As such, translation becomes a dynamic act where the goal is to transfer meaning in a way that is both accurate and contextually appropriate.

2.2. Translation Strategies

Translation strategies are methods or procedures that translators use to address or overcome challenges in translating a text. According to Kyrychuk (2018), in order to identify semantic and communicative features of translating a text, a set of specific tasks of exploring the notions of translation strategy, translation method, translation technique, translation equivalence, and defining their significance in achieving accuracy, and eventually the adequacy of translation.

These strategies help in conveying and navigating difficulties that arise to maintain clarity in translating. Most of the time, the term “strategy” in “translation strategies” is used interchangeably with terms like “procedure,” “technique,” “method,” “tactic,” and “approach.” These terms overlap in meaning and are defined differently by experts but they mostly refer to a similar entity.

According to Khudaybergenova (2021), the phrase “translation strategy” is widely used to describe the translation process. She explains that translation strategies refer to the techniques implemented by translators to solve specific problems that arise during the translation process, especially when dealing with cultural differences between the source and target languages. Strategies are essential in guiding decision-making, particularly when the source text contains elements that have no direct equivalents in the target language.

In the field of translation strategies, various experts have developed their own ideas to address the complexities of converting meaning across

languages with the involvement of various techniques. Among the experts, Newmark (1988) proposed translation methods and translation procedures that are inclusive on a macro and micro level. Baker (1992) defined translation strategy as practical solutions that a translator uses to overcome translation problems, especially those arising from non-equivalence at the word or phrase level. Similarly, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) stated that translation strategy is a set of systematic methods used to transfer meaning from the source language to the target language, which they grouped under two categories: direct and oblique translation. Considering the nature of this study involves translating informal English expressions such as slang, abbreviations, and memes, Newmark's proposed translation framework is best suited to support the analysis. Therefore, this study adopts Newmark's theory as the main theoretical framework, as his theory offers flexibility in addressing linguistic creativity and contextual variations found in social media content.

2.2.1. Peter Newmark's Framework

Peter Newmark is one of the most influential figures in the field of translation studies. In his work, *A Textbook of Translation* (1988), Newmark introduced a framework that includes both translation methods and translation procedures, which are needed as foundational in the practice of translation. He mentioned that, while translation methods relate to whole texts, translation procedures are used for sentences and the smaller units of language (Newmark, 1988), which include sentences or phrases. Both translation methods and translation procedures are practical to use in solving problems in the process of transferring, converting, or rendering meaning from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL).

2.2.1.1. Translation Methods

Translation methods is the overall process or approach a translator takes when translating an entire text. The methods portray the translator's decision on how close the translation should stay to the original (source language) or how much it should be adapted to the target readers (target language). Newmark (1988) classified translation methods into eight types that range between emphasizing the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). These methods are presented in the form of a “flattened V” diagram.



Figure 2. 1 Newmark's Flattened V Diagram

On the SL-focused side, word-for-word, literal, faithful, and semantic translation preserve the structure, meaning, and nuances of the original text as much as possible. Meanwhile, on the TL-oriented side, adaptation, free, idiomatic, and communicative translation prioritize naturalness and cultural relevance in the target language. Here is how each of them was defined by Newmark (1988):

1. Word-for-Word Translation

Word-for-word is often described as interlinear translation, with the TL is put below the SL words. In word-for-word translation, it is usually translated singly by their most common meanings and often out of context. As for cultural words, they will be translated literally (Newmark, 1988).

2. Literal Translation

In literal translation, the SL grammatical structures are converted to their nearest TL equivalents, but the lexical words are translated one-by-one, making them out of context

(Newmark, 1988).

3. Faithful Translation

A faithful translation attempts to accurately translate the contextual meaning of the SL text while respecting the TL grammatical structures. It 'transfers' cultural words and preserves grammatical abnormality and attempts to be completely faithful to the SL writer (Newmark, 1988).

4. Semantic Translation

Semantic translation differs from faithful translation as it needs more attention to the aesthetic aspects of the SL (natural sounds, word-play, repetition style). Semantic translation is more flexible, admits the creative exception to 100% fidelity and allows for the translator's intuitive empathy with the original (Newmark, 1988).

5. Adaptation

Adaptation is the 'freest' form of translation. This method is mainly used for plays (comedies and poetry; the SL culture is converted to the TL culture and the text is rewritten) (Newmark, 1988).

6. Free Translation

Free translation produces the text without the style and form of the original. It usually paraphrases much longer than the original (Newmark, 1988).

7. Idiomatic Translation

Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' from the original text but it tends to distort the meaning by preferring

colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original (Newmark, 1988).

8. Communicative Translation

Communicative translation attempts to convert the exact contextual meaning of the original in a way that both content and language are acceptable and comprehensible to the readers (Newmark, 1988).

2.2.1.2. Translation Procedures

Translation procedure is the technique or steps a translator uses to translate smaller units of language, such as words, phrases, and sentences, that occur within the text. While Newmark's translation methods provide a framework of the overall strategy a translator can adopt when translating an entire text, they do not address how to deal with specific translation challenges at the micro level of language. To manage these issues, Newmark proposes a set of translation procedures or strategies, which can be used to handle specific translation problems locally or in individual units. The following section outlines the translation procedures introduced by Newmark (1988):

1. Transference

Transference is the process of transferring an SL word to a TL text as a translation procedure, similar to what Catford refers to as transference that includes transliteration (Newmark, 1988).

2. Naturalisation

This procedure adapts the SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology (word-formations) of the TL (Newmark, 1988).

3. Cultural Equivalent

Cultural equivalent is an approximate translation where a cultural word in the SL with a TL one. However, “they are not accurate” (Newmark, 1988).

4. Functional Equivalent

Functional equivalent is a common procedure where cultural words require the use of a culture-free word, sometimes with a new specific term (Newmark, 1988).

5. Descriptive Equivalent

In translation, description sometimes has to be weighed against function (Newmark, 1988).

6. Synonymy

In synonymy, using the ‘synonym’ word in the sense of a near TL equivalent to an SL word in a context where a precise equivalent may or may not exist (Newmark, 1988).

7. Through-Translation

Through-translation is the literal translation of common collocations, names of organisations, and the components of compounds. It is also known as *calque* or loan translation (Newmark, 1988).

8. Shifts or Transpositions

A shift or transposition is a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from SL to TL (Newmark, 1988).

9. Modulation

Modulation is a variation through a change of viewpoint, perspective, and, very often, category of thought (Newmark, 1988).

10. Recognized Translation

Recognized translation is when the translator “normally uses the official or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term” (Newmark, 1988).

11. Translation Label

Translation label is a provisional translation, often using literal translation or “heritage language” approach until a more suitable equivalent is found (Newmark, 1988).

12. Compensation

This translation procedure occurs when the loss of meaning, sound effect, metaphor, or pragmatic effect in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part (Newmark, 1988).

13. Paraphrase

This procedure is an amplification or explanation of the meaning of a segment of a text. In the paraphrase procedure, it is usually used in an ‘anonymous’ text when it is poorly written (Newmark, 1988).

2.3. Machine Translation

The development of machine translation (MT) has transformed the way people approach language barriers in communication, both in professional and casual contexts. In later decades, machine translation advancement has increased quickly (Kamaluddin, et. al, 2024), offering extra-ordinary exactness and familiarity in deciphering writings. Jiménez-Crezo (2017) noted that MT tools have become another *de facto* dictionary for language learners, as learners often use them as readily available tool to look up word meanings and contextual usage. This growing reliance on MT is not only for its convenience but also becoming an evolving role in everyday language practices, particularly in digital spaces.

With the widespread use of social media and other online platforms, the usage of machine translation is frequently applied in the context of informal language, such as slang, abbreviations, and memes. Therefore, this research focuses on evaluating how well an MT tool, particularly DeepL, performs in translating informal English expressions from social media X.

2.3.1. DeepL Machine Translation

DeepL Translator is a machine translator system that has gained recognition for its high performance and natural-sounding results. Reber (2019) claimed that DeepL offers high precision rate than other MT tools like Google Translate. Similarly, by Cambedda, Nunzio, Nosilia (2021) concluded that DeepL outperformed Yandex in several aspects of translation quality. Furthermore, Kamaluddin, Rasyid, Abqoriyyah, and Saehu (2024) affirmed that compared to the earlier systems, DeepL has shown notable improvements in accuracy and fluency. These findings suggest that DeepL is a reliable option for translating content that requires sensitivity to context, such as informal language in social media. This makes DeepL a relevant tool for translation evaluation, particularly in assessing how well it handles internet-based expressions.

Given DeepL's growing reputation for delivering appropriate

translations, it is essential to evaluate and measure its effectiveness in translating informal language in social media like slang, abbreviations, and memes. To do so, this research applied a translation quality framework to examine how effectively DeepL captured the meaning and naturalness of such informal contents.

2.4. Translation Quality Assessment

Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) refers to the process of systematically evaluating the quality of a translated text on specific parameters. In translation studies, TQA can assist to show the extent to which the message or meaning of the SL can be preserved to the TL (Hasibuan, et. al, 2025). One of the most commonly used theory in assessing translation quality is the model proposed by Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012). In this research, the TQA proposed by them is used to assess the translation quality of informal English expressions as translated by DeepL. According to the model proposed by Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012), a qualified translation must fulfill three aspects; accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

1. Accuracy

Accuracy is a term used in translation evaluation to refer to whether the SL and TL are equivalent or not. The concept of equivalence refers to the similarity of the content between the two. Therefore, reducing or adding to the content should be avoided (Nababan, et. al, 2012).

2. Acceptability

Acceptability refers to whether a translation has been expressed in accordance with the rules, norms, and culture that apply to the TL. It is an important aspect, because even if a translation is accurate in terms of content, it will be rejected by the target

audience if its expression contradicts the rules, norms, and culture (Nababan, et. al, 2012).

3. Readability

Earlier time, the term readability was associated with the activity of reading. Later, it was used in the field of translation because every translation activity cannot be separated from the activity of reading. In the context of translation, readability refers not only to the readability of the SL but also the readability of the TL (Nababan, et. al, 2012).

In this research, the TQA framework by Nababan, Nuraeni, Sumardiono (2012) is used to assess the translation quality of informal English expressions, specifically slang, abbreviations, and memes, translated by DeepL. The evaluation is conducted by a professional translator practitioner to ensure credibility.

2.5. Social Media X

Among the various platforms that have emerged during the Web 2.0 era, X, formerly known as Twitter, is one of the most influential microblogging sites. The platform was first launched in July 2006 as a “microblogging” platform that is designed to let others know a user’s “status,” (Murthy, 2024). However, it rebranded to X in 2023 following its acquisition by the entrepreneur Elon Musk. The social media platform Twitter, now known as X, has been systematically reviewed in a variety of disciplines, methods, and subject areas (Murthy, 2024).

Twitter offered a form of communication where users could post short messages known as “tweets,” that later known as “posts.” Initially, tweets were limited to 140 characters. However, following the platform’s rebranding and development, the character limit increased to 280 characters for unverified users, and up to 25.000 characters for verified users on X

subscribed to X Premium. This expansion allows for more detailed, longer interactions and greater content flexibility. In addition to posting text, users can also engage through features such as hashtags, threads, replies, repost (retweet), likes, and media sharing. As stated by Gayatri, Rosyid, and Wijayanti (2023) that X is a free online instrument that enables the spread of contents and interaction with other users that historically were referred to as tweeting, retweeting, and quote tweeting.

X stands out due to its open and real-time environment that encourages informal language use. As confirmed by Hadist (2024), there have been many variant uses of language on X. This is characterized by creative abbreviations, internet slang, and memes that continue to evolve. The use of these expressions became popular due to the limited characters for writing a post on X (Murthy, 2024). Users on X tend to engage in wide dialogues ranging from casual jokes to political discussion. As a discourse system, X reflects how language use is deeply tied into the platform's participatory nature. The unique characteristics of X make it a valuable platform for translation studies, especially in the realm of informal English. For translators, the platform may present distinct challenges due to its conciseness, quick pace, and the creative language it continues to foster. It is essential to understand the communicative environment of X, especially to analyze informal English language or expressions that will then be translated into Indonesian while preserving the contexts.

Therefore, this study chose X as the object of the study because it offers authentic sources of trendy informal English expressions. Its open, text-based, and fast-evolving nature makes it an ideal platform to examine how informal languages, slang, abbreviations, and memes, are creatively used and how these expressions pose both linguistic and cultural challenges in translation. By focusing on X, this study aims to capture the dynamic between language innovation and translation practice in the digital era.

2.6. Informal Language on Social Media

Informal language is characterized by a casual form of conversation that deviates from standard grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. It is commonly used in relaxed settings, for instance, used between friends or within communities. The expressions are typically marked with spontaneity and non-standard linguistic features.

With the rise of internet communication and social media platforms, the use of informal language has increased prominently, especially on platforms like X. The rapid evolution of informal language expressions is highly relevant and plays a dominant role for its dynamic and interactive nature. As Panjaitan and Patria (2024) explained, digital communication platforms not only facilitate immediate and interactive exchange that prioritize brevity but also contribute significantly to the creativity over official language rules. They also stated that “one of the most visible effects of social media on language evolution is the rapid spread of neologisms and viral language,” (p. 54).

This phenomenon aligns with what Crystal (2001) coined as “Netspeak.” Netspeak is a type of language that display unique features to the internet and is often driven by the immediacy and interactivity of online platforms, particularly among younger generations who actively contribute to the creation and adaptation of new linguistic forms. Puspitasari (2024) supported this by noting that social media interactions reflect Netspeak beyond the unusual, as users engage in forms of unique communication in the digital platforms.

Social media platforms, therefore, serve as spaces for linguistic experimentation. Among these informal language include slang, abbreviations, and memes. Slang expression is often credited and popularized by younger users that later manage to stick around and spread, both on online and offline (Panjaitan & Patria, 2024). The brevity of digital platforms also extends the creativity over language, which led to linguistic simplification, where abbreviations spellings like “u” for “you” or “lol” for

“laugh out loud” emerged, especially in platform like X with its characters limit (Panjaitan & Patria, 2024). Another form of linguistic experimentation is meme culture. Memes are integral to online spaces and typically presented in visual formats such as images, texts, or GIFS. As defined, memes are part of the online culture and understanding sometimes them need a remarkable level of expertise of spending so much time online (Mukhtar, et. al, 2024). These informal expressions are reflecting the current social dynamics and function not only as linguistic shortcuts but also as markers of belonging to certain groups or trends, which provides a sense of community and shared understanding.

The use of these Informal English online has become increasingly more common, with many youths being exposed to this style of language on a daily basis (Johannesson, 2022). Informal language on digital platforms is often marked by linguistic creativity, brevity, and strong context-oriented. As a result, its evolving nature presents significant challenges for machine translation tools. Therefore, this research focuses on evaluating how DeepL handles the translations of informal language to Indonesian.

2.6.1. Slang

Slang is the common informal, non-standard expressions often used by specific groups or subcultures. It is often associated with youth culture, teenagers, in entertainment and digital spaces such as social media platforms. According to Maurer (2023), although the precise origin of the word slang itself is unknown and obscure, it is believed that the term emerged around the mid-18th century. Despite the uncertainties, some scholars suggest that the root might come from Scandinavian influence, while others link its rise due to the massive usage in the 18th century, where “slang” was referred to as the language of disreputable criminals in London, where it served as a kind of coded speech.

Slang is an ever-changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within

a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large (Eble, 1996). His statement underscores the dynamic and socially grounded nature of slang. Slang is not merely about informal words but it has a functional role in social inclusion and exclusion; it helps to distinguish from being an outsider.

According to Coleman (2012), he points out that slang is a subject that provokes strong emotions. Which is why it is confined as words or phrases that are restricted to a particular group of people and it can function as a secret language by them. This idea is supported by Hertsovska and Leushyna (2016), who further emphasized that slang is also the most effective when used among friends because it draws upon common social and emotional experiences to give meaning to the terms.

In digital space for a platform like X, slangs are often born from internet subcultures and viral trends. The collaborative and fast-paced nature allows slang to continue to contribute creativity to online discourses, spread and shift meanings, and also help social bonding in a way where computer-mediated communication is heavily used.

2.6.2. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are shortened forms of words or phrases that people typically use to save time in writing or speech. According to Britannica (2025), the use of abbreviations dates back to ancient times, where they were first recorded in 1400-1450. The word is believed to have originated from the Latin word *abbreviātiō*, Middle English *abbreviation*, and French *abbreviation*, which all hold the same meaning: to abbreviate. However, the first known use of the abbreviation in English is from the 15th century.

Abbreviations were perhaps originally intended to save materials and labor by using symbols for arduous entities repeated often in writing and, as in the art of shorthand, to aid in the speed of recording (Kadhim, Mahdi, & Maktoof, 2022). Thus why, they are created by leaving out certain letters or syllables, and often use capital letters or periods; these includes

initialisms (e.g. “LOL” for “laughing out loud”), acronyms (e.g. “TTYL” for “talk to you later”), and truncations (e.g. “info” from “information”).

According to Crystal (2008), the term abbreviation has been refined by linguistics as part of the study of word-formation, distinguishing several ways in which words can be shortened. Supporting this view, according to M. Y. Lyman (2021), from the beginning of the 21st century, the English language has been experiencing a “neological boom” that confirms the constant change of language and its modernization. And she continues to explain that abbreviation (or shortening) serves as a kind of word-forming, the result of which is the emergence of new types of shortenings that serve for the fixation of new or renewed lexical units.

Abbreviations are not only rooted in historical writing practices but have become essential to the modern age. From their limited function into a dynamic where they become huge on fast-paced digital platforms, where efficiency and creativity are crucial to communication. Their extensive and creative usage presents specific challenges for translators who must balance between the cultural context and communicative clarity. Ultimately, understanding how abbreviations function in digital discourse is key to developing effective translation strategies in today’s evolving era.

2.6.3. Memes

Memes are one of the most distinctive and influential forms of informal digital expression. The term meme was originally coined by the biologist Richard Dawkins in his book *The Selfish Gene* (1972), where he described it as a unit of cultural transmission, corresponding to genes in biological evolution.

According to Dawkins (1972), stated that “We need a name for the new replicator, a noun that conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit *of imitation*. ‘Mimeme’ comes from a suitable Greek root, but I want a monosyllable that sounds a bit like ‘gene’. I hope my classicist friends will forgive me if I abbreviate *mimeme* to *meme*. If it is

any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory', or to the French word *meme*. It should be pronounced to rhyme with 'cream'." (p. 192).

With the rise of the digital world and particularly Web 2.0, the term meme underwent a significant transformation. It is important to note that memes are exposed to the evolutionary process and it should not be seen as something rigid and unchanging (Baurecht, 2020). Memes typically combine textual and visual components, allowing for a synergistic blend that helps convey their creators' intended message more effectively to the audience (Fachrezi & Mahadian, 2022). It was adopted by online communities that memes are multimodal texts, usually a combination of image, text, and humor, that spread rapidly across online platforms. Memes on platforms like X serve multiple purposes; they can express political views, mock social norms, celebrate fandoms, or simply convey relatable daily situations.

Memes use highly contextualized language that may include exaggeration, irony, abbreviations, slang, and other informal elements. They can be seen as complex units of communication that encode shared knowledge within a small piece of content, which makes them particularly interesting to translation studies, as their meaning is frequently implied rather than explicitly stated.

2.7. Previous Studies

Several studies have explored the use of translation of informal English expressions across various media, particularly in social media and books. Each of these studies provides valuable insights on how slang, abbreviations, and memes function in communication and translation, which support the current thesis focus.

Hutauruk, Agatha, Manurung, Sinaga, Aryani (2024) with their research titled "*Slang language in Social Media X (Twitter)*," investigated the phenomenon of slang usage on X with the aim to identify various forms

of slang and understand their functions within online communication. This study highlighted how slang facilitates communication, especially in a digital space, and how it fosters community on the platform. The findings of this research provide empirical evidence of slang, which also includes abbreviations, usage patterns on X, which then can support the need for effective and appropriate translation methods to convey the original messages' nuances and cultural significance.

Jabbar and Hilman (2024) in "*Evaluating the Quality of Translations Produced by Machines as Opposed to Human,*" conducted a comparative analysis of collocations, idioms, and fixed expressions from the novel "Animal Farm" using various machine translations such as Google Translate, DeepL, and Microsoft Bing Translator, and human-produced ones. Using Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012) translation quality assessment model, they evaluated both outputs in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The research provided empirical data showing that human translation scored highest overall, but machine translation tools are competitive.

Nurcahyani, Adika, and Widiasari (2024) in their research titled "*Translating the Untranslatable: DeepL and ChatGPT on Academic Idioms,*" examined how DeepL handles idiomatic and figurative language commonly found in academic English. While DeepL showed strength in producing grammatically and lexically accurate translations, the research showed persistent issues in rendering idiomatic expressions naturally in Indonesian.

In terms of quality assessment, this research is also drawn to the translation evaluation framework proposed by Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012), which has become a foundational model in Indonesian translation studies. The model assesses translation quality based on three aspects: accuracy, acceptability, and readability, and are adjusted to a scale of 1 to 3 score.

Overall, existing studies have emphasized and addressed the complexity in assessing informal English in various media contexts, such as social media, novel, and academic text. However, these studies tend to only focus on either a single category of informal language, such as slang or idioms, and they often rely on less interactive media like novels and books. There is currently a lack of research that explores how multiple types of informal English expressions, such as slang, abbreviations, and memes, are translated by machine translation tools, particularly DeepL, on a dynamic digital platform like X.

This study offers a fresh contribution to translation studies by assessing three types of informal English expressions within the scope of a single research. The data were collected from three selected public or viral accounts on X from January 1st to June 4th, 2025, allowing this research to reflect contemporary language trends and the dynamic nature of online discourse. Unlike the previous studies, this research examined how these expressions are translated from English to Indonesian by DeepL Translator. The translations are then evaluated using the Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) model by Nababan, Nuraeni, and Sumardiono (2012). The assessment in this study is carried out by a translator practitioner to ensure that the evaluation is conducted by a professional with expertise in both languages. To further enrich the analysis, the DeepL-generated translations are examined using Newmark (1988) framework, including his translation methods and translation procedures.

In addition to the TQA and the analysed DeepL translations, this research also provides contextual Indonesian translations produced by a human translator (the researcher) as supporting references for each expression. The findings of this research are expected to benefit not only translators, but also language learners, and researchers, that are interested in informal language and machine translation studies.