

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research background concerning the translation strategy in public signs. This chapter also presents the research question, the research objectives, and the significance of the research.

### **Research Background**

A public sign has content that gives the information to the public in form of signs, pointers, road signs, slogans, public notices and warnings (Ding, 2009) cited in Ko (2010). Luo and Li (2006) in Ko (2010) argue that a public sign is a kind of language which serves a special communicative function and provides information and instruction including road sign, advertisements, product brochures, tourism guides, propaganda materials and public notices that are displayed in a public place. In short, the public sign is a direction in a public place which displays information to people. The public signs make the visitor easier to gather the information as the guideline in public places.

To play its role as an instruction for people in public places, public sign utilizes language as a medium of instruction either in monolingual or bilingual form. Minghe and Jing (2015) state that since the English public signs essential for the foreigners to get the information in China, they need a translator to translate bilingual public signs and to complete the function of them. It can improve the number of foreigners to come and visit especially in China.

Similar to China to face the global development, Indonesia not only needs monolingual but also bilingual public sign to enhance foreigners' interest to have some trips in Indonesia. Currently, both monolingual and bilingual signs can be found in Indonesia. For example,

‘*Dilarang merokok di areal SPBU*’ is a kind of monolingual public sign that easily found in many public places in Indonesia furthermore bilingual public sign such as ‘No Smoking area: *kawasan bebas asap rokok*’ also can be found in several places. Both public signs’ examples exhibit differences in language style because every sign has its own language style depending on its form and aim.

Regarding its language style, Luo and Li, (2006) in Ko (2010) state that public signs are designed for particular groups of individuals to achieve special communication purpose, so that it has special linguistics style. In line with Luo and Li, Abramova (2016) states that “The appearance of English-language public sign in the countries where English does not have any official reflect language globalization trend, spread the brand names and involvement in the global market”. These statements prove that translation in public signs plays an important role to give information to the society. Therefore, it must be equivalent and accurate without any errors so it is understandable and advantageous for humanity.

The most important thing in translating public signs is that the function of public signs should be conveyed properly by providing clear and understandable words, phrase, or sentences (Ko, 2010). The aim of the public sign can be comprehended by the visitors. However, in the process of translating public signs, the translators often forget this point and directly translate without considering the impact of the result. Niu (2007) cited in Ko (2010) claims that problems in public sign translation lie in serious failure to convey the function of the public sign. The failure occurs because of some problems in terms of the linguistics error. The image bellow demonstrates this problem.



The figure shows that the problem in structure is still indicated in public sign translation in public places. There is a problem in a grammar that found in the text, the word “standing” must be “stand” because the word before is “don’t”. Based on grammatical structure the word “do” is auxiliary verb so that, the word after auxiliary verb must be infinitive.

Through the linguistic problem on the figure, it can be seen that public signs in several places in Indonesia are in poor condition. It reveals the very poor condition of public signs in Indonesia, this situation, the errors occur on public signs, will affect readers’ or visitors’ level of understanding as well as can cause misunderstanding. Therefore, this research will explore more about the public signs and aims to investigate the translation problem in bilingual public sign translations.

### **Research Question**

This research focuses on the following research question.

What are the problems in public sign translation?

### **Research Objectives**

Based on the research question, there is goal to attempt in this research as follows:

To examine the translation problems in bilingual public signs translation.

### **Research Limitation**

This research is focused on bilingual public sign translation which are provided for the foreigners. The bilingual public signs consist of Indonesian- English language found in Indonesia. There are many location of public signs such as public signs in public places and public signs in public transportations, but this research only focus on public signs in public places. It is conducted in Gorontalo as a main area and several developed regions in

Indonesia such as Makassar, Bali, Surabaya and Jakarta. Those provinces are selected based on the requirements such as foreigner destination, availability of the data and accessibility of the data.

There are four categories of translation error in Nord 2001 theory of functional translation. Those are pragmatic translation error, cultural translation error, linguistic translation error, and text-specific translation error. This research is focused only on linguistic site specially the structure, so that the most appropriate category is linguistic translation errors.

### **Research Significances**

This research is expected to be beneficial and useful for two primary reasons, theoretical and practical significances.

From a theoretical point of view, this research is valuable to enrich the knowledge of translation on public signs. Provide the suggestions that avoid the translation errors regarding to the research result. It can be a guideline for the translators to minimize the problems in translating the manuscript. For the readers, this research enlarges knowledge of the translation studies. This research also expands the references and information for the future researchers who are interested in translation study.

In terms of practical points of view, the present study marks several noteworthy contributions to the uses of translation in public signs as well as the idea of promoting the proper bilingual or multilingual public signs especially in Indonesia. The empirical findings of this study will provide a new practical approach to enhance the development and quality of translation in public places.