

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Comics are not merely entertainment but are complex, multimodal texts that require both linguistic and visual literacy to be fully understood (Hatfield, 2018). Comic books represent a unique form of literature that blends visual art and narrative, which could vary depending on the artist and the author. Unlike conventional novels, comics combine concise dialogue, sound effects, and striking illustrations, offering readers an immersive storytelling experience, making them accessible and engaging for a broad audience. One of the main reasons comics are appealing is that they can be enjoyed by readers of all ages. Comics are considered a cross-generational medium, offering content suitable for children, teenagers, and adults alike (Michael & David, 2017).

The language used in comics tends to be straightforward, direct, and often informal, which contributes to their readability and accessibility (Bramlett, 2016). Dialogues are typically concise due to space limitations in speech bubbles, making word choice and phrasing particularly important. Sound effects (onomatopoeia), narration boxes, and stylized text are vital linguistic elements that convey mood, intensity, and action. This makes comics significantly different from traditional texts in terms of translation. Unlike translating books or academic works, where language is the primary means of conveying meaning, translating comics requires the translator to consider how words function visually and contextually within the layout of each panel. Small changes in word choice can impact tone or character portrayal. Therefore, translating comics requires more than language conversion; tone, mood, cultural allusions, and visual-linguistic harmony must all be maintained. For this reason, the writer chose comics, specifically *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, as the object of study to analyze the translation methods.

There are varying translation methods that encompass eight approaches, focusing on different levels of fidelity to the source text and its target audience (Newmark, 1988). These methods range from word-for-word, literal, faithful,

semantic, adaptation, free, idiomatic, and communicative translation, providing clear criteria for analyzing how a text has been translated. The writer chooses to focus on translation methods, specifically Newmark's translation methods, because Newmark offers a structured way to analyze and categorize the methods translators use when transferring meaning from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). These methods are particularly useful in the context of comics, where translators often face constraints such as limited space, informal language, and unique expressions. By applying these methods, the writer can critically assess the translator's decisions in *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, determine whether the translation preserves the tone, intent, and meaning of the original, and identify patterns in how certain expressions or cultural elements are handled. As such, analyzing translation methods also opens the path to analyzing idiomatic expression, as the effectiveness of a method often depends on how well it achieves the meaning and impact in the target language.

Idiomatic expressions are especially important in comic book translation because they often carry meaning beyond their literal interpretation. Idioms can be described as indivisible units whose components can only be altered within specific limits (Fernando, 1996). These expressions, such as “spill the beans” or “kick the bucket,” are deeply rooted in the source language culture and often cannot be translated word-for-word without losing their intended effect. In comics like *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, idioms contribute to the personality, tone, and emotional nuance of the characters. This research, therefore, examines how these expressions are translated into Indonesian and to understand the meanings behind SL and TL. Translating idioms often requires adaptation, communicative translation, or free translation to ensure that the target readers understand the intended figurative meaning, even if the exact words differ.

Through this research, the writer seeks to answer the statements below. By answering these questions, this study hopes to contribute to the field of translation studies and serve as a useful reference for other students and scholars interested in the intersection of comics and translation.

## 1.2 Statements of the Problem

This Research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What translation methods are used in the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction* according to Newmark's theory of translation methods?
2. What is the meaning behind the idiom, and what types of idiomatic expressions are used in the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, according to Fernando's theory of Idioms?

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this Research Proposal is as follows:

1. Identify the translation methods used in the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*.
2. Identify the meaning and the types of idiomatic expressions used in the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of translation studies, particularly in the area of comic book translation, which remains an underrepresented medium in academic discourse. The significance of this study is outlined below:

### 1.4.1 Theoretically

Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the exploration of translation methods as proposed by Peter Newmark (1988) and idiomatic expressions as analyzed by Fernando (1996), specifically in the context of idiomatic expressions found in comic books. By analyzing the translation of idioms in *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, this study provides insight into how linguistic meaning is transferred from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) when dealing with non-literal, culturally bound expressions.

#### **1.4.2 Practically**

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to benefit a wide range of audiences involved in the field of language and translation. For translators and translation students, this research provides valuable insight into how idiomatic expressions can be rendered effectively from English to Indonesian, especially in a complex medium like comic books, where both linguistic and visual elements must be considered. It offers real examples of translation strategies that prioritize clarity, naturalness, and cultural relevance. Educators and researchers may use this study as a reference or teaching material in translation theory classes or comparative studies. Finally, general readers with an interest in comic books, translation, or cross-cultural communication may also gain appreciation for the complexities of language transfer, particularly how meaning is negotiated between cultures in creative texts.

#### **1.5 Methodology of the Study**

The type of research that the writer used is a descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative research is grounded in rich, detailed descriptions of experiences or events (Ghorbani & Matourypour, 2020). This research focused on translation, especially finding the translation methods in *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, knowing which methods were dominantly used, and understanding how the methods impact the readability and accuracy of the translated text. Qualitative data consists of non-numeric information, typically textual or narrative, such as focus group notes, open-ended interview responses, or observation notes (Seixas et al., 2018). The technique used to analyze the research is content analysis. Content analysis method is a research technique used to conclude by identifying specific characteristics of a message in an objective, systematic, and theoretically grounded manner (Astuti et al., 2023). Objectivity refers to the use of standardized procedures that enable other researchers to replicate the study and obtain similar results. Systematic implies that categories and content are determined based on consistent rules, ensuring unbiased data selection and coding. Generality means that relevant theoretical frameworks should support the findings (Yules et al., 2025).

The data source for this research is the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*. Both the original English version (Source Language/SL) and the Indonesian translated version (Target Language/TL) are used, with particular focus on the texts that contain idiomatic expressions. The data collection is observations, and the process begins by first obtaining both the SL and TL versions of the comic. After that, each panel is carefully read and compared to locate idiomatic expressions in the English text and their corresponding translations in the Indonesian version.

Once identified, the selected data are transferred into a comparative table consisting of five columns. The first column contains the source language (SL), while the second column presents its target language (TL). The third column records the page number of both SL and TL versions. The fourth column identifies the translation method used, based on Newmark's (1988) classification of translation methods, and the idiomatic expression, based on Fernando's (1996) will be bold in the phrase or sentences and below the table is full total of translations methods based on Newmark's (1988) classification of translation methods, and Fernando's (1996) theory of idiomatic expressions. For example:

**Table 1.5 Example Table of The Findings**

NO	Source Language	Target Language	Pages	Translation Method	Idiomatic Expression	
1.	Freezing our butts off	Membeku sampai mati	Page 7	Free Translation	Pure Idioms	
NO	Translation Method		Total	Types of Idioms		Total
1.	Literal		3	Pure Idioms		10
2.	Semantic		5	Semi Idioms		9
3.	Adaptation		2	Literal Idioms		2

After completing the table, the analysis continues by identifying the translation method used in each case and categorizing the idioms found. The translation methods are determined using Newmark's (1988) theory, while the types of idiomatic expressions are analyzed using the framework presented by Fernando's (1996). To support the identification of idioms and clarify their meanings, this



research also makes use of two dictionaries that specialize in idioms, “McGraw-Hill’s Dictionary of American Idioms, The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms,” and two websites, “The Free Dictionary by Farlex and The Idioms: The largest Idioms Dictionary.” The findings are then discussed in detail, focusing on translation patterns, strategies for handling culturally loaded idiomatic expressions, and how the translator balances source language fidelity with target language readability.

### **1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This study focuses exclusively on the analysis of translation methods and idiomatic expressions applied in the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, based on Peter Newmark’s (1988) translation methods theory and Fernando’s (1996) theory of idiomatic expressions. The research is limited to this specific volume and does not extend to other comic volumes in the *Hellboy* series or any of its film adaptations. The analysis focuses on identifying the types of translation methods employed when translating idiomatic expressions from English (Source Language) into Indonesian (Target Language) and the types of idiomatic expressions. Other linguistic features, such as grammatical structures, cultural references beyond idioms, or visual elements of the comic, are not the focus of this research. The aim is to evaluate how effectively idiomatic expressions are translated and to what extent the methods used preserve the meaning, tone, and readability of the original text.

### **1.7 The Status of the Study**

Through the research conducted by the writer, there are not many researchers at the Faculty of Literature at Indonesian Christian University discussing the comics or the comic book *Hellboy*, but there are plenty of research studies discussing the topic of *Hellboy* from movies and several different comics. First, the study by Hitao (2025) This study examines the subtitle translation of *Hellboy* on Tencent Video and Youku Video using Skopos Theory. It focuses on how character nicknames and dialogues are translated, comparing literal and free translation strategies. The findings show that free translation works better for nicknames, while a balanced

approach suits regular dialogue. The study highlights the importance of adapting translations to both the context and the audience, offering practical insights for improving subtitle translation in superhero films. While Hitao emphasizes purpose-driven translation in audiovisual media, this study explores how meaning and tone are preserved in the comic's limited text space. In contrast, this research examines the comic *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction* using Newmark's translation methods and Baker's theory of equivalence.

The second study by Andalus (2024) analyzes the translation methods used in translating the movie *Encanto* into Indonesian subtitles. Following Newmark's classification of eight translation methods, the study found that free translation (48.5%) was the most dominant method, followed closely by literal translation (48.4%), with faithful translation (3.1%) used less frequently. Free translation helped the translators adapt culturally specific expressions and idiomatic language, making the dialogue more accessible and natural for Indonesian audiences. The research shows that adapting language freely is often necessary when translating movies that include many culturally bound terms, songs, and expressions. In contrast, this research analyzes *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction* in comic form, where translations require a balance of space and text. Unlike Andalus's focus on audiovisual subtitles, this study emphasizes the interaction between text and image, requiring different considerations in applying translation methods and achieving equivalence.

The third study by Lestari (2014) examines the translation methods applied in the Indonesian subtitles of *The Croods* film, focusing especially on compound-complex sentences. Based on Newmark's (1988) and Baker's (1992) theories, the study finds that communicative translation is the most commonly used method, followed by semantic and faithful translation. Communicative translation prioritizes making the dialogue easily understandable for a wide audience while maintaining the original meaning. Additionally, textual equivalence was found to be the most frequently achieved type of equivalence, ensuring that the translated subtitles maintained the cohesion and information flow of the original English dialogue. The key differences are, first, the object of research: Lestari's study analyzes a 2013 animated film, while this study focuses on a 2018 comic book.

Second, the unit of analysis differs: Lestari focuses on syntactic structures, while this research examines idiomatic expressions, which pose unique challenges in translation due to their figurative meanings and cultural specificity.

The fourth study by Akbar (2020) examines idiomatic translations found in *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn* novel and its Indonesian version, *Awal yang Baru*, using Newmark's (1988) theory of translation methods. The analysis focuses primarily on identifying instances where the idiomatic translation method is applied and comparing them briefly with other methods to confirm their classification. The key differences are, first, Akbar's study analyzes a prose novel, while this study focuses on the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*, a multimodal text that combines visual and verbal elements, or in short, a comic book. Second, Akbar's research centers on proving the presence of idiomatic translation based on Newmark's theory, whereas this study integrates Newmark's (1988) methods with Baker's (2018) idiom framework and Fernando's (1996) classification to analyze multiple translation methods, idiom types, and meanings. Third, novel translation deals primarily with narrative flow and prose style, while comic translation requires balancing linguistic choices with visual constraints, character voice, and space limitations.

The fifth study by Oktaviela (2022) examines the types of idiomatic expressions, translation techniques, and translation quality in the Webtoon comic *Winter Wood*. Using a descriptive qualitative method with data from the comic and three purposively selected raters, the research identifies 94 idioms, five of the six types found in the data: phrasal verbs, prepositional phrases, idioms with a verb, noun, or adjective as a keyword. Six translation techniques are applied: idioms with similar meaning and form, idioms with similar meaning but different form, paraphrase, borrowing, omission of the idiom's play, and omission of the entire idiom. The study also evaluates translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, finding an overall score of 2.73, which indicates the translations are generally accurate, acceptable, and readable. The key differences are, first, *Winter Wood* is analyzed for idiom types, translation techniques, and quality assessment, while this study on *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction* examines idiomatic expressions specifically through Newmark's (1988) translation methods,



Baker's (2018) idiom framework, and Fernando's (1996) classification. Second, Oktaviela incorporates rater-based quality assessment, whereas this study emphasizes method identification, idiom categorization, and meaning interpretation without quantitative scoring of quality. Third, while both works deal with comic translation, *Winter Wood* focuses on translation techniques in general, while this research investigates multiple translation methods alongside medium-specific constraints such as visual-textual balance and space limitations.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This research consists of four main parts:

#### **Chapter I – Introduction**

This chapter contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, method of the study, scope and limitations of the study, status problem of the study, and the organisation of the study.

#### **Chapter II - Review of Related Literature**

This chapter addresses the many sorts of analysis and methodologies employed. The theories used in this study will be thoroughly addressed in this chapter. The theory employed has been determined by the data obtained.

#### **Chapter III - Findings and Discussions**

This chapter presents the findings and outcomes of the data from the comic book *Hellboy: The Seed of Destruction*. There will be research designs, samples, data collection, data tools, and data analysis. This part collects and analyses a large amount of data that researchers require. The example contribution provides numerous objective insights for acquiring the required data.

## Chapter IV - Conclusion and Suggestions

This chapter includes recommendations for readers or researchers who are interested in studying the same research topic, as well as inferences drawn from the data discussion and results.

