CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to offer a brief description about the topic that is related to and discussed in this study. This chapter provides the research background, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Research Background

“All animals have some system for communicating with other members of their species, but only humans have a language which allows them to produce and understand ever-new messages and to do so without any outside stimulus (Kreidler, 1998:3).” Therefore human is special, they have language as the most important thing that determines the social life runs. It is used to communicate, deliver, and receive ideas among the people. Without language, we may not be able to communicate with other people and say what we intended to do.

On the other hand, in many parts of the world, within a number of societies, all of them have different forms of language. People speak a number of languages and they may not be aware of how many different languages they speak. This condition is called by Wardhaugh (2006:2) as “plurilingual; that is, many speakers may use more than one language.” They speak many languages because they need to do that in order to live their lives. However, when it comes to the condition when two people who speak different languages meet, how can they understand each other? A body language might be sufficient, but that just
works in simple condition. A complicated situation might be difficult to be explained through gestures/body language itself.

Therefore, English is chosen as a lingua franca, a language which is widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other’s and where one or both speakers are using it as a ‘second’ language. However, when the condition is not possible to learn the lingua franca or another language, there is a “language-saver” namely translator, whose job is to make link from one language to another.

Transferring the idea from one language to another language or as we called translating is not an easy thing to do. Language from one to another society is different, and it also contains different culture which is a must for the translator to understand it. Treating the cultural aspects in a source text (ST) and express these aspects in the target language (TL) appropriately are the everlasting problems that faced by translators (James, 2002:2). According to Munday (2008:5), translation involves changing an original written source text in the original source language into a written target text in a different language. Translation can refer to the general subject field, the translated text, or the translating process. Also, Karimi (2006:2) defines translation as “converting one language (Source Language) to another (Target Language) so that the target language could convey the intended message in source language.” In other words, it is a process through which the translator decodes SL and encodes his understanding of the TL form.

Translation involves re-structuring, from one structure of a certain language to another structure of another language. It is not a simple thing to do,
translator has to be aware of not only the structure itself, but also the domains of equivalent which are mentioned by Karimi (2006:2) that covers linguistic units such as morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, idioms and proverbs. “If a specific linguistic unit in one language carries the same intended meaning / message encoded in a specific linguistic medium in another, then these two units are considered to be equivalent.” However, to make an equivalent translation product is a complicated task for the translator, because there is almost no language that has exactly the same characteristics with another language. Thus, finding equivalent is the most problematic stage of translation.

The existence or absence of expression in target language is influenced by the culture that comes from different society, each society has its own culture, and its own language. Each language has its own uniqueness, the thing which makes the language different from another. The uniqueness of every different expression from different societies covers linguistic units such as morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, idioms and proverbs. One of the uniqueness that is interesting to be analyzed is idioms of which the meaning cannot be easily translated equivalently as the source language. Baker (1992:63) states that idioms are frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and it often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components.

In addition, the combinations of idioms are fixed as to form and their meaning come from the combination. According to Ahmadi and Ketabi (2011:10), all languages have idioms, which is a string of words whose meaning is different from the meaning conveyed by the individual words. Translating idioms is a challenging task for the translator. The meaning of each word in idioms can be
different from the meaning that usually we found in daily life. The meaning of the words is implicit, carrying the cultural background of the language itself. Therefore, translating idioms does not require knowledge of only one language (for example, target language only), but it requires the knowledge of at least two languages (source language and target language).

Almost similar analysis on the topic of translating idioms has been done by the students of University of Muhammadiyah Malang. Safitri (2008) found that the ability of students in translating English idioms into Indonesian is different from each other, but the average translation result is good, with the percentage 70.8% when the task given is in sentences. Another previous research finding from Wati (2010) investigated that there were four strategies used by students when they were translating idioms. Those were strategy 1 (similar meaning and form), strategy 2 (similar meaning different form), strategy 3 (paraphrasing), and strategy 4 (omission). The most frequently used strategy in translating idioms in recount text was by paraphrasing. These two previous writers focused on the students’ ability in translating and the strategies used to translate. The writer, therefore, is interested in identifying the problems and the solutions the students applied in translating idioms. For these reasons, the writer wants to conduct a study entitled A Study on Problems in Translating Idioms in Narrative Text by Students Specializing in Translation.
1.2 Statement of Problems

1. What are the problems in translating idioms in narrative text by students specializing in translation?
2. How do the students specializing in translation cope with their problems in translating idioms in narrative text?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

1. To identify the problems in translating idioms in narrative text by students specializing in translation.
2. To explain how the students specializing in translation cope with their problems in translating idioms in narrative text.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is expected to enrich student’s knowledge about strategies to solve problems in translating idioms in narrative text. This research is also expected to give deeper knowledge to the lecturer about the problems and their solutions in translating idioms in narrative text, so that the lecturer may determine another way to teach idioms based on problems faced by the students. For the next researcher, it is expected to use this research as the reference when they want to conduct a similar study.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this research, the scope of this study is the problems and the solutions for translating idioms in narrative text. The limitation of this study is the 8th
semester students of English Department in Muhammadiyah University of Malang who choose translation as an elective course.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

**Idioms** - a string of words whose meaning is different from the meaning conveyed by the individual words. The combinations of idioms are fixed as to form and their meaning comes from the combination. (Ahmadi and Ketabi, 2011:10)

**Translation** is converting one language (Source Language) to another (Target Language) so that the target language could convey the intended message in source language. In other words, it is a process through which the translator decodes SL and encodes his understanding of the TL form. (Karimi, 2006:2)

**Narrative** is a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do. (Abrams and Geoffrey, 2009:208)