

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the study objects and the related phenomenon, which is a translation technique in website localization of McDonald's, one of the largest fast-food companies in the world. The mentioned website source is in English while the localized website is in Indonesian, with the present issue which is going to be discussed is related to localization, and some earlier studies that deal with localization are also provided.

1.1 Background of the study

McDonald's is one of the major fast-food chains in the world. The "McDonald's System Inc." restaurant system began in 1955 by Ray Kroc, since then it began to expand across the United States, and in 1967 the first restaurant outside the United States was opened in Richmond, British Columbia (McDonald Inc.).

McDonald's is famous for its iconic hamburger, Big Mac. Aside from hamburgers, they also sell several fast-food items such as cheeseburgers, soft drinks, french fries, and desserts. Since its' expansion to various countries around the world, McDonald's has adapted its menu to the local's culture to avoid unwanted problems. The company often readjusted the menu to their target customer's taste to accommodate their cultural beliefs and palate.

Restaurants should be wise when creating and choosing their menu because the menu represents an essential part of their image (Hrubá, 2015, p. 10). This branding technique is widely used by various restaurants; Wendy's & McDonald's

are known for their burgers while Domino's Pizza & Pizza Hut are known for their pizzas, therefore it can be said they build their restaurant image in line with their menu. In addition, Hrubá (2015, p. 10) also stated that a restaurant menu is one of the first things that a customer comes into contact with after entering a restaurant. A restaurant menu should be appropriate for its target customers since an inappropriate menu will not attract customers and made the restaurant close.

Since branding and menu customization is important for restaurants seeking to open new branches in different countries, the research topic of this thesis is going to be the localization and translation techniques used by McDonald's since the differences in cultures and beliefs affect the menu they're offering in different countries.

One of the main problems faced by the food industry is when the food cannot be sold due to circumstances. For instance, according to the United States' Food and Drug Administration (FDA), every food ingredient list must accurately portray what the food contains. Thus when the FDA received complaints from the U.S. firms and attorneys alleging that the imported juice concentrate's label was not honest, the agency swiftly made an investigation (FDA, 2017).

To avoid this kind of circumstantial problem, McDonald's offers separate menus specifically tailored to fit various countries' standards. For example, in Asia, it's common for a restaurant to serve or sell a bowl of soup, while in the West it's more common to sell beers instead. This kind of strategy is also used by McDonald's; there are special menus for each country that cannot be bought in the U.S. McDonald's such as McDonald's India's Veg

Pizza McPuff and McPaneer Royale, McDonald's Thailand's Samurai Pork Burger, and McDonald's Korea's Shrimp Burger (Schlossberg, 2015).

The custom menu is made to honor the Hindu's belief which prohibits the consumption of beef due to their principle opposing violence against all life forms (Doniger, 2017). On the other hand, in Indonesia where the majority of the population is Muslim, most of the foods being sold and served need to be certificated as Halal. Halal, according to the Oxford Online Dictionary, is a denotation or relation to the meats prepared as prescribed by Muslim law, in which no pork or bacon may be eaten by Muslims.

Not only the menu is tailored to correspond to the local customs, but it's also made to fit the locals' palate. Local items such as McRice, McSoup, Buryam (chicken congee), and Sambal sauce are added as an attempt to made familiar food available and attractive to the local customers. Further attempt to attract customers is to offer seasonal foods within a limited period. For example, during the Chinese New Year's, they sell Beef Prosperity Burger; during Ramadan, they sell Ayam Kremes; while during Indonesian Independence month, they sell Burger Sate, McFlurry Rujak Pedas, and Markisa soda tea (McDonald's Indonesia). This kind of localization is also followed by other big fast-food chains, such as A&W and KFC who include soup and rice in their menu.

Food is a necessary need for our body and health. But the role of food doesn't stop there; food is also deeply connected and embedded in our cultural and social identity. Since the dawn of the globalization era, restaurants offering

international cuisines have popped out in various countries, offering foreign food and delicacies. The term “globalization” itself first emerged from the economic field, defined as continuous activities of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology (Levin Institute, 2016).

The fast-food restaurant’s image in its early years is seen as a modernized food restaurant due to the serving speed, similar taste, drive-thru innovation, and the repetitive process to keep the quality everywhere is the same. The early target customers of the fast-food restaurant are the urban middle-class family. The fast-food restaurant is also marketed as a gathering spot for families and communities (Rachel, 2019). Even until now, fast-food restaurant is still considered as a gathering place for communities and families.

In the case of the menu, the U.S. McDonald’s serves a full course dinner to its customers. A full course dinner may consist of three to four courses: first course, main course, and dessert (United States Dining Etiquette Guide, 2019). Every culture, nation, and race have differences and similarities in consuming and serving food. The cause of cuisine choices may vary, depending on the phenomenon which may be influenced by cultural, geographical, or even historical aspects. After all, food brings an important cultural identity to humans, which has been pointed by the author in chapter I, with the example of how people in the Asia and the U.S. have different cuisine choices and preferences.

Nowadays, anyone can get access to the internet and surf the web, they can browse any kind of websites, play games, and chats with each other without

worrying about the geographical barrier. A website is a homepage that usually contains hyperlinks to each other on the same server and maintained by a person, group, government, or organizations. Also, the internet has become a field of opportunity for wider business advertisements. The widespread internet market is a game-changer, making people completely change their shopping habits. People now prefer to buy things from the internet since it's comparatively easier and practical compared to offline shopping.

This kind of practice is made possible by the advancement of communication technology. Internet, website, and social media play major roles in making companies able to advertise their products and services to the international customer base. While English is the de-facto main international language, companies are still offering their services in various languages. This is important because it able to reach a larger international customer base, especially those whose spoken language is not English. To make this possible, companies are using translators' service to translate and localize their web.

Indeed, globalization and the development of information technology support economic globalization, but it also gave birth to localization (Hariyanto, 2015, p. v). Examples of localization mentioned by Hariyanto (2015, p. v) are *tetikus*, *unduh*, *galat*, *tembolok*, and *unggah*. Globalization in the economic field requires the use of various languages in the global promotional materials since people around the globe do not speak one single language (Hariyanto, 2015, p. 21). Therefore, the use of the proper translation of source language is necessary for the

service provider to serve foreign users. For the purpose of context in this research, the provider is McDonald's and the service user is the customer.

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Globalization in the economic field has required the use of the language spoken by the people in the global companies' promotional materials since people living around the globe do not speak one single language (Hariyanto, 2015, p. 21). Therefore, the use of proper language translation of source language is necessary for the service provider to adapt to service user language, in this research, the provider is the restaurant, *McDonald's*, and the service user is the customer.

Globalization in the field of trading also means the creation of a local version, therefore, there is a need for a translation. The translation itself is a process to translate words or text from one language to another since English is a *lingua franca* for the world trade, while globalization involves a "translation" of any language into English (Hariyanto, 2015, p. 21). The translation aims to reproduce various kinds of texts including religious, literary, scientific, and philosophical texts from other languages and thus making them available to wider readers (Ordurari,

2007). Translation needs an equivalent option in the target language for the readers to understand. Translation in modern days is not always about translating a source language (SL) into the target language (TL). In a case when the SL lack an equivalent, the translator may translate the SL by using illustration or omission as long as it does not harm the translation as mentioned in Baker (2011).

However, translation is not a simple task. Some factors that have to be taken into consideration when doing translating work involves language and culture. When translating into the target language, we should consider the cultural elements that could affect the translation process. As mentioned by Guerra (2012, p. 1), culture causes many translating difficulties since words or phrases are deeply rooted in the source language's culture. In this research, the source of data is taken from McDonald's websites, the American version as the SL, and the Indonesian version as the TL.

When the customer orders food, they will order the most appealing item or their favorite item or item familiar for them, therefore, the restaurant had their menu adjusted to the customer taste. We can discover this phenomenon easily in a local restaurant, however, what if the restaurant is an international restaurant that wants to expand its customer grasp? The solution of this issue is most often solved by making a signature menu; Carl's Jr. is recognizable for their "chargrilled" hamburgers, KFC for their "original recipe" chickens, and Pizza Hut for their "authentic" pizza. When they open their branch overseas, they must adapt their menu to the targeted customer's palate. In this process, they might include more menu or omit menus that are not suitable for customers.

The previous research related to the current research has been done by three researchers. The first study, titled ‘The Translation of Fast-food Advertising Texts from English to Arabic (Al-Agha, 2006). The result of the study shows the need for an appropriate examination of fast-food advertising translation which at the same time able to engage in close comparative textual analyses since the Descriptive Translation Studies cannot provide the necessary research instruments for the study.

The second study, ‘Product localization in the fast-food industry’ was conducted by Chen, Li, & Liu in 2013. The study discovered the importance of the customer as a strategy to develop the market for local. The importance of localization is a determiner for the restaurant to keep its customer, since food influences people's habits & behavior, and to access local customers to balance between standardization and localization.

The third study is ‘Targeting language markets through Web localization: A case study of a digital cloud service’ (Taanoen, 2014) by using Finnish cloud service, *younited* by F-secure. The result of Taanoen study showed the role between local language and users. For a website to reach the majority of users requires localization. The issues from Taanoen study are the limitations of the respondents and the survey instrument was tested for the first time in this field of study.

The fourth study is ‘The Translation of Czech Restaurant Menus into English’ (Hrubá, 2015). The result of the study reveals that English translations of Czech restaurant menus often contain a lot of mistakes which may result in providing foreign customers with misleading information.

The fifth study is ‘Localization in Fast-food Industry: A Case Study on McDonald’s Strategy in India’ conducted by Panwar & Patra in 2017. Their study discovers the success behind McDonald’s India. The strategy being used is to avoid food prohibited by the major population’s religious belief but still able to deliver their menu to the local customers, such as changing the meat. Instead of using beef, McDonald uses mutton and also using eggless recipes for vegetarians.

From those previous studies, food, localization, and translation are involved and heavily linked. Each of those studies uses different subjects for the research, the first study used a food advertisement, the second used a digital service, and the third used a translated restaurant menu. In this research, the researcher uses the international fast-food restaurant menu and the localized version of the fast-food restaurant's menu from each website as the source of their data. This research analyzes McDonald's fast-food restaurant menu from the American website as a source website and localized Indonesian website.

1.2 Research questions

The research question was to study the process of translation techniques and localized menu on a major fast-food restaurant website, McDonald's. In this research, based on the background study, the researcher inquires:

1. What are the food names and descriptions that are localized and not localized from English to Indonesian?
2. What are the translation techniques used in localizing food from English to Indonesian?

Hopefully, the answer to these questions will benefit academic researchers and international companies by increasing their knowledge of the role of language related to this study field.

1.3 Research objectives

This part was conducted to reveal the elements that are concerning the researcher's research question. This step benefits for discovering the study point at issue and for further research, and as a reference for related studies in company marketing strategy, especially in the localization category. The objectives of this research concerning research questions are:

1. To analyze and identify the localized and not localized list of food names and descriptions.
2. To analyze and identify the translation techniques used in translating the TL into SL.

1.4 Significance of the study

Since this research concerns translation strategies and translation techniques of the localized website as the source of data, there are a theoretical and practical contribution and significance related to this study. This study will enrich the knowledge of translation study, especially in localization.

On the theoretical aspect, it is expected that readers and fellow researchers will have a better understanding of translation strategies and translation techniques of food localization, the elements of the menu that needs to be localized, and the theories necessary to do food localization. This study also aims to contribute and

expand the translation field necessity since language is how humans communicate and by translation, the bridge between different language users can be connected.

On the practical aspect, through localization, global scale companies can manage and widen their market since they need an appropriate language and other modes to avoid the possibility of breaching sensitive cultural issues. This research may be useful for further research involving localization and translation techniques. This study also benefits to learn how inseparable the relation between translation & culture and to reveal the translation strategy & translation technique used by the multinational company.

1.5 Scope and limitation

This research goal is to investigate the website localization of SL (source language) food menu names and descriptions. Therefore this research limits the source of data to only consist of the food menu names and descriptions from both websites. Any material considered not related to the studies will not be analyzed. The object of this research only consists of: 1) SL McDonald's food menu names and description; 2) TL McDonald's menu names and description. The researcher chose the Indonesian website since there's the lack of quality of translation and because this research is conducted in Indonesia where the author resides.