

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, which explains the academic rationale underlying the research. It then formulates the research questions that guide the issues addressed in this study and outlines the objectives of the study to clarify the goals and focus of the research. The chapter also discusses the significance of the study by highlighting its importance. The scope and limitations of the study are defined to establish the boundaries of the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

Translation quality is central to scholarly communication across language boundaries. Academic publishing still runs primarily in English, which leaves research written in other languages largely inaccessible to international audiences (Han, 2020). Scholars working outside English-language institutions increasingly depend on translated materials to follow international research and contribute to it (Sun et al., 2025). Well-executed English translations tend to reach more readers and generate more citations, largely because they reduce the cognitive effort required to engage with the work (Whyatt et al., 2024). For researchers writing in other languages, translation often determines whether their work enters broader scholarly circulation or remains confined to a regional audience.

The abstract of a thesis does more work than it looks like it does. It is the first thing a reader encounters, and it often decides whether they keep reading (Litvan, 2024). Linguistic mistakes in abstract translations, such as awkward phrasing or word choice errors, can confuse readers and misrepresent the research (An-Nashir & Maisarah, 2022). Translated abstracts with unclear language or inconsistent terms can make the research difficult to understand and may lead international readers to ignore the full text (Chen & Huang, 2023). A bad translation, in other words, can quietly undermine research that would otherwise reach a broader audience.

The translation process gets harder when applied to specialized fields such as law, which is characterized by unique conceptual and linguistic challenges. Legal language is bound to its originating legal system, as many legal terms are embedded

in jurisdiction-specific concepts that do not easily map to other systems (Jumabayeva, 2025). Concepts in Indonesian law, for instance, may lack precise equivalents in common law systems, making translation fraught with interpretive risk (Luo, 2024). In addition, legal translation demands strict accuracy, as even the slightest change in meaning can alter the rights and obligations described, thereby compromising the integrity of the text (Zhou & Hu, 2024). Therefore, a legal translator must understand the differences between legal systems, a task that requires not only bilingual proficiency but also specialized knowledge in the field, as errors are likely to occur if the work is done by someone who is not an expert in the field.

Research on the translation of law students' thesis abstracts at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura has previously been conducted. a study by Amalia (2020) examined translation shifts in law students' thesis abstracts by comparing Indonesian source texts with their English translations. The study identified various category and structure shifts based on Catford's framework. As a result, there is no existing data on how these translations perform against the widely accepted quality metrics of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, which are considered essential for a thorough quality assessment. However, the study focused primarily on describing shift phenomena and did not evaluate the resulting translations using standardized quality criteria or involve raters to assess translation quality. For example, the Indonesian phrase *Tindak Pidana* translated as "Crime" was classified as a structure shift according to Catford's framework, illustrating how the syntactic arrangement changes between the two languages. However, although such analyses provide detailed descriptions of category and structure shifts, the study did not employ raters or any standardized instrument to determine whether the resulting translations were accurate in meaning, natural-sounding, or easy for an international reader to understand. This reveals a clear research gap that there is a need to build upon the existing structural analysis by conducting a comprehensive quality assessment that evaluates the translation's real-world effectiveness and links it to the full range of translation techniques employed by the students.

Therefore, further research is needed to examine the translation techniques employed in law students' thesis abstracts and to evaluate the quality of translated

legal terms in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. By identifying the translation techniques used and assessing their impact on translation quality, this study provides evidence-based insights into current translation practices. These findings may contribute to improving students' translation competence by highlighting areas that require further development (Faizi et al., 2025). In turn, such evidence-based findings can inform institutions in refining their language and translation curricula to align more closely with international academic standards (Mesquita et al., 2025). This research aims to fill the identified gap by offering practical strategies to enhance the quality of academic translations and raise the international visibility of research produced at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What translation techniques are used in translating legal terms found in Law students' thesis abstracts from Indonesian into English at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura?
2. How is the translation quality of the legal terms in Law students' thesis abstracts in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To classify the translation techniques employed in translating legal terms found in Law students' thesis abstracts from Indonesian into English at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.
2. To describe the quality of legal terms in law students' thesis abstracts based on the criteria of accuracy, acceptability, and readability based on the assessment results obtained from the rater and respondents.

1.4 Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical significance

This study will contribute to Translation Studies by providing empirical findings on the translation techniques used in legal term translation and their resulting translation quality. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on Indonesian-English legal academic translation, particularly in the context of law students' thesis abstracts.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to educational improvement by providing valuable insights for both students and educators. The results can serve as a practical reference for students learning translation, particularly in translating academic and legal texts, and for lecturers in improving teaching strategies in academic writing and translation courses. In addition, this study provides baseline information on translation practices in undergraduate law thesis abstracts translated into English, which may support and inform future research in legal translation and academic translation quality assessment.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this research is confined to two main areas. First, it covers the identification of translation techniques based on the framework proposed by Molina & Albir (2002). Second, it covers the assessment of translation quality based on the three aspects of accuracy, acceptability, and readability, as defined by Nababan, et al. (2012). The object of study is the Indonesian-English translation of seven law thesis abstracts from Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.

This study has limitations. First, the data are limited to seven law students' thesis abstracts from Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura selected through purposive sampling. As a qualitative study, the purpose of this research is not statistical generalization but an in-depth analysis of translation techniques and translation quality within a specific context. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the selected data. Second, this study does not identify the categories of legal terms. Third, the quality assessment was conducted using evaluations from three raters and three respondents. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the perspectives represented by these evaluators.