

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the English Department Faculty of Letters Udayana University, translation is taught as a skill. It is hoped that after learning translation, the students are able to translate a text from English into Indonesian and vice versa. It opens the prospect to be a professional in the field of translation.

Bernardini (2005) states that translation is quite a long process that involves the human mind's mental processes in analyzing the source text to get the source message, transferring the source message into the target message and restructuring it into the final product. An investigation is needed to reveal these mental processes. It would give great contribution in understanding what is really going on in the mind of a translator while working on a translation. So far, translation studies in the English Department Faculty of Letters Udayana University are in the form of product analysis. The analysis conducted is based on what the researchers have thought might be going on in the mind of the translator in the process of translating; and therefore, they have not been able to provide necessary insight into the problems faced by the students in doing their translations. Bernardini (2005) states that it is not possible to directly investigate human mind at work. An indirect access to the translator's mind is by using Think-Aloud Protocols, which is an attempt to ask the translators to reveal their mental process while performing a translation task.

The students at the English Department of Faculty of Letters of Udayana University still have problem in coping with translation, especially the translation from Indonesian into English. Moreover, the students often face some problems when

many socio cultural contents are encountered. Some cultural content may be untranslatable. Armellino (2008) in Badawi (http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/41/df/d0.pdf,06/15/2009) stated that one of the most challenging tasks for a translator is how to translate culture-bound words in a source language into a target language. Furthermore, Armellino (2008) stated that “with culturally-bound words is often impossible to replace a message or statement in one language by the same message or statement in another language”. Central to translating culture is translating culture-bound expressions that involves metaphors, proverbs, idioms and collocations. He argued that it is impossible to replace culturally-bound words or idioms in one language by the same words or idioms in another since there is a meaning which lies behind the idiom that always linked to the specific culture where the texts originates.

The students at the English Department of Faculty of Letters of Udayana University, take the translation class since it is required by the curriculum. They learn translation for two semesters. Moreover, they also learn about Balinese culture as a subject which is also included in the curriculum. So far, studies on translation at the English Department are in the form of product analysis. Therefore, they have not been able to provide necessary insight of the core of the problems faced by the students in doing the translation task. By using think-aloud protocols, therefore, it was hoped that the difficulties of the subjects in translating Balinese cultural concepts would be revealed.

1.2 The Problems

Considering the background of this study, the following major research question was formulated: What difficulties did the students encounter in translating Balinese cultural concepts?

Translation is a cognitive process that involves understanding, transferring, and restructuring. Understanding is an effort to comprehend the meaning of the source language; transferring is the changing of the source language into the target language; and restructuring is the reorganizing of the target language. The process is not linear but goes back and forth until the translator comes up with the best equivalent translation of the original text. The culture of linguistics is relatively homogeneous. In other words, there are thousands of language and culture around the world and they differ to one another. In relation with translation, a person who engages in translating from one language into another ought to be constantly aware of the differences of the range of culture represented by two languages. Thus, translating without understanding text is non sense and understand text without understanding its culture is impossible. Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1990: 29) argues that “language is mould of thought, so that our ways of thinking and conceptualizing are determined by the language”.

Therefore, these following minor research questions were formulated:

- a. What difficulties do the students encounter when transferring Balinese cultural concepts into English?
- b. What difficulties did the students encounter when restructuring Balinese cultural concepts into English?

1.3 The objectives of the Study

Derived from problem statement above, this study was intended to find out the difficulties that the students encountered when translating Balinese cultural concepts. Following are the minor objectives of this study:

- a. To describe the difficulties in transferring Balinese cultural concepts into English
- b. To describe the difficulties in restructuring Balinese cultural concepts into English

1.4 Theoretical frameworks

This study used cognitive theory of translation. The theory states that translation is a cognitive process which includes understanding, transferring, and restructuring. Understanding is the process of analyzing the source text to get the source message. Then, transferring is the process of transferring the source message into the target message. Restructuring is the process of restructuring the meaning into an accepted form of the TL. In order to reveal those processes, think-aloud protocol is used to elicit the translators' thoughts or cognitive processes that illuminate what comes into their mind while they are in the process of translating.

1.5 The Significance of the study

The results of the study were expected to give a useful contribution to the translation lecturers and students of the English Department. The teacher can explain to the students the general difficulties encountered by a translator when translating culture-bound texts and then they can anticipate what problems are in store in the process of translation especially when they are translating culture-bound texts. It is hoped that the findings of the study may help improve the teaching of translation in the English Department.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the study

Based on the cognitive theory of translation, there are three stages of translation process. The stages include understanding or the analysis of the source language text, transferring the source message into the target message and restructuring the meaning into an accepted form of the TL. In this study, the writer focused on the process of transferring and restructuring at the phrasal level. The participants of this study were the students of the English Department, Faculty of Letters, Udayana University who having Balinese background. Since the text is about

Balinese culture, it was assumed that the subject had already understood about the content of the cultural text. They did not have a problem in understanding process.

To limit the study, the writer takes the best ten students and asked each of them to translate two texts on Balinese culture from Indonesian into English. The subject should fulfill these criteria: GPA is above 3.00, the translation score is A. It was assumed that the subject could produce a good translation during the translation process.

1.7 Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions:

- a. It is assumed that the difficulties of any translators can be traced back through his thinking aloud protocol.
- b. The culture-bound texts exploited are valid for the translation material to be translated in this study.

1.8 The Definitions of key terms

Certain key terms are used in this study. To avoid misunderstanding, they are defined in the following:

- **Difficulty** is a condition or state of affairs almost beyond one's ability to deal with and requiring great effort to bear or overcome (<http://www.hyperdictionary.com>, 05/11/2009).
- **Translation** is a cognitive process that includes understanding, transferring, and restructuring
- **Understanding** is the process of analyzing the source text to get the source message
- **Transferring** is the process of transferring the source message into the target message

- **Restructuring** is the process of restructuring the meaning into an accepted form of the TL
- **Think-Aloud Protocol** is data collection instrument in which students are asked to verbalize whatever comes to their mind while performing a certain task (Abdul and Aly, http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1b/c0/b7.pdf, 04/17/2009).
- **Culture** is all the ways of life which includes all aspects of a human right during his life includes code of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, norms of behaviors and system of belief. (Koentjaraningrat :1974)
- **Balinese Cultural Concepts** is a unique combination of spirituality, religion, tradition and art (<http://www.ppbali.com/balinese-culture.php>)