

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

A translator plays an important role in a worldwide communication. The translator works very hard to translate various documents from one source language to a target language of the readers. The documents translated by the translator are expected to help the readers to understand what are written in the documents as it is meant by the writer of the source language without any changes in meaning.

The expectation of the readers to the translated documents should be facilitated and fulfilled by a high quality translation. The quality translation can only be done by a professional translator who is systematically taught in a reputable educational institution, continuously trained by a professional trainer and experienced to do some practices in the adequate fields of expertise. Professional translators can be categorized as translators born or as translators made (Newmark, 1991). As the translators born, it is a gift that the translators have a capacity of creative imagination. The creative imagination of the translators relates to the sense when they translate some literary works such as poetry, prose and drama. However, the translator needs skills and practices in order to reduce a mechanical operation since the translation process is considered too complex. In line with this, Nintai (1994) in Dollerup and Lindegaard (1994, p. 42) reiterate that:

Arguments range from insistence that the ability to translate is a gift (and so cannot be formalized and transmitted), that the translation process is too complex to be reduced to a mechanical operation (hence the failure and improve only through practice and experience. Even if one admits that literary translation requires a certain 'creative gift', there are ground to posit that training could enable those who are not gifted to acquire and improve the necessary skills (Nintai, 1994 in Dollerup and Lindegaard, 1994, p. 42).

Meanwhile, as translators made, the ability of the translators can be made by formal training. The functions of the formal training are to enhance the performance of the translators to the full realization of their potential, to develop the translators' skill, and to improve students' passive and active knowledge of foreign language rapidly (Gile, 1995, p. 22). The formal training can be conducted in the academic institution. Schaffner and Adab (2000, p. x) claim that the academic institution is considered the most effective institution to teach translation since it is known that the academic institution generally provides courses leading to professional qualifications.

In addition, in order to produce a quality translation, a translator is then required to have several competences. Neubert (2000) in Schaffner and Adab (2000, p. 6) identifies five competences that should be owned by a professional translator: (1) language competence; (2) textual competence; (3) subject competence; (4) cultural competence; and (5) transfer competence. In the context of classroom setting, for instance, the five competences can be taught to students in the translation courses. The teaching of translation courses is then considered essential to accumulate the students' knowledge and skills to be good translators. The students taking the translation courses are expected to achieve minimum standards of expertise as translators through some intensive practices and regular trainings.

Considering the required competences and urgencies in terms of intensiveness of practices and the adequate number of trainings for the translators, courses at the university level should be designed comprehensively to provide the students with the above necessities. It should cover some aspects of skill, science and art, the understanding of linguistics, translation theory, principle and methods of translation as well (Newmark, 1991). The design of the translation teaching then would be more effective and accurate when it is based on some research on the practices of translation teaching.

Some examples of research on the teaching of translation have been made by overseas translation experts. Li (2012, p. 148-150) identifies six problems in

the translation teaching in China: (1) insufficient translation teaching faculty; (2) insufficient class hour; (3) unreasonable translation textbook; (4) the absence of modern translation technology; (5) the negligence of translation ethics education; and (6) the students' lack of translation practice. Then, Li (2012, p. 150-151) offers some solutions to the problems in the translation teaching in China, e.g. training sufficient translation faculty, providing sufficient class hour, compiling proper translation textbooks, introducing translation technology into the class, educating translation ethics to students and guiding the students to take part in more translation practices.

In addition, Parker (2009, p. 5-6) classifies the teaching of translation in a particular area, e.g. literary translation, in three pedagogical categories: (1) the academic study of literary translation as a part of a traditional literature program; (2) literary translation as an optional module within traditional 'pure' translation studies program, or within an 'applied' translation program; and (3) some specialized courses solely concerned with literary translation.

In relation to the teaching of literary translation, Porcaro et al. (1999) reiterate the importance of teaching which is based on the accumulation of research over the years covering some activities, such as consultation with the students, careful planning and preparation, and detailed attention to the students' work. In term of giving an assignment, for instance, it is then specified about the nature of the students' problems, e.g. word choice, meaning, accuracy, grammar, usage, word order, and fluency.

Then, Gabr (2001) conducted an insightful and inspiring research on the teaching of translation held in Egyptian National Universities. In this research, the conclusion and recommendations drawn by Gabr (2001) indicate that the teaching of translation at the universities may date back to the 1950s since there is no serious research conducted to evaluate the criteria set for designing and implementing the translation programs being taught. Then, the results of the research show that the students are not satisfied with some aspects, e.g. the

adequacy of the content, the adopted teaching methods, and the performance of the lecturers of the translation classes that they attended.

The above samples of research on the teaching of translation done in some countries like in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, China, Japan, and Egypt show that the practices of teaching translation courses are mostly implemented based on some research findings, except in the case of Egypt. In the case of Indonesia, for instance, the research in the teaching of translation in Indonesia has not seen to be the same case as it is done overseas. Textbook translation in the fields of science, technology, economy, politics, literatures that have been done in the recent time have given a big contribution as reading materials both in Indonesian and in English. The tendency of translation is getting broader not only as media to transfer science and technology but also as intercultural media. As a result, translation as cross cultural media can be media to introduce literary works by translating them into other languages. By translating these literary works, for example, both from Indonesian into English and from English into Indonesian, the literary works in one country can be known and read by people in other countries with different cultural and language background. It is undoubtedly that, these translation activities that are known as literary translation (Bassnett, 1991, p. 7-8), then, getting more and more needed. Therefore, some higher education institutions offer literary translation as one of their subject courses offered in their curriculum.

Based on the above phenomenon, there is an urgent need of doing some research in the teaching of translation courses in terms of either process or product oriented approach. Among the three translations courses, the first two courses, Translating: English-Indonesian and Translating: Indonesian-English do not show any specific subject knowledge in their names of the courses, while the last course, Translating Literary Works, has already indicated a specific subject knowledge on the name of the course. Therefore, a research on the process of teaching literary translation is worth considering.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research is going to answer the following research questions:

1. What translation competences are taught by the lecturers in the literary translation course?
2. What do the lecturers do in the process of teaching literary translation?
3. What are the students' responses to the teaching of literary translation course?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the research are to:

1. Describe and analyze the translation competences taught by the lecturers in the literary translation course;
2. Describe and critique the activities done by the lecturers in the process of teaching literary translation;
3. Describe and analyze the students' responses to the teaching of literary translation course.

## **1.4 Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research can be viewed from three aspects: theoretical, practical, and social aspect. From the theoretical aspect, this research can enrich the literature of translation studies, especially for the study of literary translation in the educational setting since the research on the process of teaching literary translation is considered rare.

Then, from the practical aspect, the identifications, thick descriptions, and analysis on the activities done by lecturer in the process of teaching literary translation course can give insights into some variety of horizons on the teaching of literary translation and provide some inspirations for novice lecturers in the teaching of literary translation at the higher education institution.

Finally, from the social aspect, this study would also provide with some information on the comprehensive description and analysis on the students' experiences in learning literary translation course. In addition, some practitioners and theorists of translation can also take the advantages of these research findings

for better teaching practices and for further studies. Some decision makers may design a curriculum in translation studies based on some relevant research findings in the translation courses.

### **1.5 Clarification of Key Terms**

1. **Translation** is the process of transferring a written text from Source Language (SL) to the Target Language (TL), conducted by a translator, or translators, in a specific socio-cultural context (Hatim and Munday, 2004).
2. **Literary translation** is the translation concerned with any kinds of literary works (Hermans, 2007, Lambert, 1982 in Baker 2001: 130).
3. **Teaching process** is the process which is focused on the teaching practices that occur within a program, how these can be characterized and how quality teaching can be achieved and maintained (Richards, 2001).

### **1.6 Organization of the Paper**

This paper is organized in five chapters. Chapter One describes the introduction of the research. Chapter Two proposes some relevant translation theories to support the research. Chapter Three explains the methodology applied in the research. Chapter Four presents the findings of the research and provides with some interpretation of the research findings. Finally, Chapter Five draws the conclusions of the research and gives some suggestions for further research.