

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Translation studies deal with the transference of meanings from the source language into the target language. However, the process of translation is not an easy task. Paul (2009) mentions in his book that the translator's job is to reconstruct the texts originally, sensitively, and equally from the source to the target language. It means that in order to transfer the meaning correctly, the translator has to overcome certain factors and problems. These problems, however, occur in many different kinds of texts from technical texts to literary texts, and one of the texts that is considered to be problematic to translate by many scholars is poetry.

Poetry, as a way of saying, is indirect, and because of its indirectness, the use of figurative language becomes necessary. Lethbridge & Mildorf (2003) agree to the statement and they say that simply speaking, the definition of poetry is that it is perceived as fictional, it uses specialized language, and in many cases it lacks a pragmatic function and is also ambiguous. Poetry itself, philosophically, is a language which expresses the experience of the writer (Brooks, 1960). Thus, the essential meaning of poetry itself is difficult to define since it contains very subjective meanings (Klarer, 1998). On the other hand, compared to other literary texts, poetry is unique one way or another. This uniqueness is, of course, different in every language, as can be found in English and Indonesian poetry. They are different in terms of poetic elements (Kadarisman, 2011).

However, in translating poetry, it is not only the words that have to be translated. The poetic elements from the poetry have to be considered and is inseparable from the poetry itself. Lethbridge and Mildorf (2003) mention that poetry uses elements such as sound patterns, verse and metre, rhetorical devices, style, stanza form or imagery more frequently than other types of text that makes it more difficult to translate.

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Moreover, many scholars have debated whether translating poetry is acceptable or not, and whether poetry is translatable or not. Grossman (2010) for example, believes that to translate poetry is a useless effort since poetry represents certain concepts, emotions and responses in a particular manner based on what language that it is written. This statement is also supported by Racz (2010) who believes that poetry is simply untranslatable due to five aspects:

First, the entire structural, sonic, and semantic complex; second, the particular historical state of that complex at the time the work was written; third, the individual poet's deployed version of that language, his or her idiolect; fourth, the poetic voice, or style, of the poet; and fifth, the particular development of that idiom in this individual poem (p.20).

On the other hand, some scholars believe that it is possible to translate poetry. Lefevere (1975) for example, proposes seven strategies in translating poetry. The strategies are phonemic translation, literal translation, metrical translation, poetry into prose, rhymed translation, blank verse translation, and interpretation.

However, the result is barely a perfect translation, as one knows that every translation is not meant to be perfect. Bennet (2002) claims that in translating poetry, there are two possibilities that may occur: to translate as literally as possible and, perhaps, lose the beauty of the poetry, or to translate the elements of beauty of the poetry and lose the essence behind the poetry itself. It means that one has to consider whether to keep the meanings or the forms of the poetry. Thus, the meanings and the forms of poetry are related to the functions of poetry. Newmark (1988) states that to translate poetry, the translator has to decide whether to keep the expressive function, which deals with meaning or aesthetic function, which deals with form. It means that while the original forms of poetry have both expressive and aesthetic functions, the translation results cannot retain them both.

Looking at this dilemma, it can be perceived translation results are something that are intended at the first place. The goal of the translators toward the result itself will determine how the translation results will be. However, for a text to be translated

from the goal into the translation results, there are some decisions that the translators need to take, and one of them is the choice of strategies. Chesterman (1997) mentions that the choice of strategy is purpose driven, and used when the text from SL cannot be translated literally or by using dictionary to the TL. Therefore, the use of the strategies might affect the poem itself whether from the lexical thematic dimension, visual dimension, or rhythmic acoustic dimension (Klarer, 1998). The elements of the poetry might change from TL to SL in the translation process, and the changes can be used to identify what effect the strategies give to the poems. Different translators might have different perception of goal in translating, especially when translating literary works such as poems. Moreover, there are previous researches that investigate the issues that are being talk about regarding the different strategies used by different traslators. Kolahi (2012), analyzed the poetry translation of Soehrab Sepehri, a Persian poet by using the seven strategies employed by Andre Lefevere as the main framework in order to see what strategies that are used the most by three different translators.

Similar with the study conducted by Kolahi, this study also deals with how different translators approach the same poems in their translation process. There are two translators that are involved in this study. The first translator is John Paul McGlynn. He is an American translator who focuses on translating Indonesian literary works. He lives in Indonesia since 1987, the time when he first established Lontar Foundation alongside four Indonesian poets. His dedication towards Indonesian literature can be seen from his work that mostly talks about Indonesian culture and literature. According to *Tempo* magazine, he has worked extensively in promoting Indonesian literature around the world (Yuliasuti, 2015). He is also the first non-Indonesian who won Teeuw award on August 2015 (Husein, 2015). The second translator is Harry Aveling. He is an Australian translator who focuses on translating Malay literature. He teaches Malay literature at Monash University, Australia. He lived in Malaysia for three years in 1970. He also has translated several Indonesian literary works such as Pramoedya Ananta Toer's. The object of translation

of both translators is poems written by Sapardi Djoko Damono, an Indonesian famous poet whose works are widely acknowledged and who is also one of the founders of Lontar Foundation.

Furthermore, based on a preliminary observation, there are different strategies used by the two translators since their approach towards the poems seem to be different. The assumption is that if the source texts, poems, are the same, the two translators will translate the poems similarly. However, apparently, the translation results from the two translators are different. Therefore, this study aims to analyze what strategies that are used the most by the two translators and tries to fill the gap of several previous studies. The gap is how their decisions of choosing particular strategies affect their translation results.

1.2. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What strategies do the translators use to translate the poems?
2. How does the use of particular strategies affect the translation results of the poems as reflected in the texts?
3. Which translation results are nearer to the SL, McGlynn's or Aveling's?

1.3. Aim of the Research

1. To find what strategies used by both translators to translate the poems.
2. To investigate the implications the strategies give to the translation results of the poems.
3. To find which translation results are nearer to the SL poems.

1.4. Scope of the Research

This research only focuses on the translation strategies used by the two translators and the implications of the strategies used, based on textual evidence and a biographical analysis. Extra-textual analysis such as reader oriented approach is not covered in this study.

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1.5. Significance of the Research

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the literature on strategies of translating poetry. Particularly, it is hoped that this research can enrich the work of Lefevere's seven strategies in translating poetry by providing a wider range of examples in a different target language and also give more explanation about the translation practice, especially in translating poetry.

1.6. Clarifications of Key Terms

In this research, there are several key terms that proposed by some scholars that needs justification in order to prevent misconception regarding those terms.

1. Translation

Translation is a process of transferring information from a language into another. This process of transferring information involves the interpretation from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL) where equal meanings are required (Bassnett, 2005)

2. Poetry

According to Mohamad (2011), poetry is an attempt to deliver something private indirectly and unconventionally.

3. Strategies in translating poetry

Many different scholars have their own opinion about defining strategies. As for the case of poetry, Lefevere (1975) proposes more specific ways in translating strategies: (1) phonemic translation; (2) literal translation; (3) metrical translation; (4) rhymed translation; (5) poetry into prose; (6) blank verse; and (7) interpretation.

1.7. Organization of the Research Paper

This research is organized within five chapters. The chapters are as follows

1. Chapter I

This chapter contains an introduction of the study, which covers the background behind it, the statement of problems, research questions, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and organization of the research.

2. Chapter II

This chapter describes the details of the theoretical frameworks used in the research, which serve as the basis for examining the problem. Some previous studies related to the research are also included in this chapter in order to illustrate researches that have been conducted previously.

3. Chapter III

This chapter encompasses the methodologies used in the research, scope of the research, how the data are collected, and how the data are analyzed.

4. Chapter IV

This chapter discusses the findings of the analysis and how they relate to the research questions.

5. Chapter V

This chapter contains the conclusion of the research and suggestions for further research.