CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction of the research paper, which describes the background of the research, research questions, purpose of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, hypothesis, research methodology, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

As one of the basic skills of language, reading is no doubt a means of gaining knowledge and information. In the process of reading, we receive information through the eyes, discriminating letter shapes, associating the letter with language and associating the text with meaning. Most of information is presented in written language such as manual book, newspaper, magazine, internet, and so on. Although there are many televisions that ease human to receive the information, they do not provide more practices for our brain. By reading we can develop our creativity, critical thinking and even writing skill. We have to imagine the characters we read in a novel, and we can have opinion on someone's writing in newspaper. Reading can also develop students' spelling and vocabulary.

An adequate reading ability is very important in our society as English is considered the first priority in school. The existence of text books and learning activities which are usually in English makes it necessary for

students that they should have proper command over English. If they can overcome the problems of reading then they are not only able to understand the written material either in the text books or in magazine but also easily understand the lectures delivered in the class and can interact with their teachers.

Reading is a continuous process of translation, and the way the translator looks at every word and investigates its rhythmic power and its semantic possibilities reaffirms that the act of reading, seen through the translator's eyes, is dynamic and not static (Schulte 2009, cited in Mahmoud Ordudari. 2007). In short, students can not produce a good translation when they have difficulty in comprehending the reading.

Sight translation is a complex process requiring various skills of language, in which reading comprehension is an important element of sight translation (Sampaio 2007). Many people believe that the better the reading comprehension the better the quality of sight translation (Shapiro 2005; Ersozlu 2005).

Translation is understood as a transfer process from a foreign language or a second language to the mother tongue or vice versa. There are some essential characteristics that any good translator should have: (1) Reading comprehension ability in a foreign language, (2) Knowledge of the subject, (3) Sensitivity to language (both mother tongue and foreign language), and (4) Competence to write the target language dexterously, clearly, economically and resourcefully. In the other words, a good quality

of students' translation depends on their reading comprehension. Students who are well in comprehending the reading, they will be able to translate well too.

This study is aimed at investigating whether there is a correlation between students' reading comprehension and their translating ability. Reading comprehension plays an important role in the learning process, therefore it is expected that this study can give significant contribution to the world of reading and translating.

1.2   Research Questions

The problems to be discussed in this paper are summarized in the following research questions:

1.   What are students' perceptions on their reading ability?

2.   What are students' perceptions on their translating ability?

3.   Is there any correlation between students' reading comprehension and their translating ability?

1.3   Purpose of the Research

Given the research questions, the research is not only aimed at identifying students' perceptions on their reading and translating ability, but also investigating whether there is any correlation between students' reading comprehension and their translating ability. And if the correlation is proven

to exist, this study is also intended for examining the significance of the correlation.

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Research Design

The research method used in this study is descriptive method since the purpose of this study is to describe phenomenon about students' perceptions on their reading and translating ability. According to Gay L.R (1987), a descriptive method is a method of research that involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the status of the subject of the study.

The descriptive study determines and reports the way things are. Therefore, the goal of a descriptive method is to systematically, factually, and accurately describe or illustrate the facts.

This study was also conducted using descriptive method with correlational design since the purpose of the research is to find out the correlation between students' reading comprehension and their translating ability. Correlational design is a research design which involves data collection in order to determine whether and what degree a relationship exists between two or more variables rather than the cause-effect relationship (Hatch and Farhady, 1982:27). The reason for using this design is that the data are expected to represent the real condition of students' mastery in reading and translation skills. The research does not intend to increase or decrease the skills mastery.

The hypotheses of the research are proposed as follow:

H_o: There is no correlation between the students' reading comprehension and their translating ability.

H_a: There is a correlation between the students' reading comprehension and their translating ability.

The research will be conducted in SMKN 2 Kuningan. The reason for choosing this site is that SMKN 2 Kuningan has Accounting department where the students are familiar with both translating and reading skills covered in their subjects. Furthermore, the easy access to the school might support the research process.

The third grade students of accounting department of SMKN 2 Kuningan will be the population of this study. Samples to be investigated in this study are 24 third year students of Accounting Department.

1.4.2 Data Collection Techniques

1.4.2.1 Instruments

The research will use some instruments as a way for getting the data:

1) Questionnaires

In this study, the questionnaires will be addressed for answering the first and second research questions to find out the students' perceptions on their reading and translating ability. The

questionnaires are developed based on a literature review of previous studies of students' reading comprehension and translation.

The questionnaires used in this study were closed-form questionnaire. They were made up a series of set of questions and either provides a space for an answer or offers a number of fixed alternatives from which the respondents make choice.

The respondents were asked to identify the perceptions on their reading and translating ability with the method in giving score toward students' responses using Likert scale with five options. Those are always, often, sometimes, seldom, and never with the same interval so that the scores are 5,4,3,2 and 1.The questionnaires will be written in Indonesian for better understanding.

After respondents answered questionnaires, the data were classified based on the questions of questionnaires to be easier in describing the result of the research.

2) Test

In this study, the English-Indonesian translation test is used to obtain scores of students' translation. Each participant was given a three-paragraph text to be translated. Whereas students' TOEIC reading comprehension section scores were taken from

scores of their reading comprehension section in TOEIC. The researcher collected participants' TOEIC reading section scores, which were issued by SMKN 2 Kuningan. The reason for using the instrument is that it is considered to be the best way to collect the data, i.e. knowing students' level of mastery in the investigated skills.

1.4.3 Data Analysis

1.4.3.1 Questionnaires Analysis

There are two kinds of data to be analyzed, qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data are organized by using descriptive analysis. While, quantitative data are organized by calculating the questionnaires result into percentage or average. The analysis uses SPSS 15 (Statistical Package for Special Sciences) with the equations of Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of computation then is divided into three parts; Mean and standard deviation per item, Mean and standard deviation per point, and Mean and standard deviation all items.

1.4.3.2 Pilot Test Analysis

Pilot test is needed to examine the validity and reliability of the instruments that were applied in the research, to decide whether the instruments are appropriate.

The pilot test was given to the third grade students of SMKN 2 Kuningan, which also took the same major: Accounting. They were taken since they were considered to have the same level of ability with the samples of the research. The pilot test was only conducted on translation test since the English reading test is considered to be valid and reliable. This reading test was applied in TOEIC test, administered by a TOEIC standard institution. The validity and reliability of this test was granted.

1.4.3.2.1 Analysis of Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) states that validity is the degree to which evidence supports any inferences a researcher makes based on the data he or she collects using a particular instrument. Validity is a judgment of the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of measure for specific inferences, consequences, or uses that result from the scores that are generated. While reliability test refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one set of items to another. Reliability always depends on the context to which an instrument was used. Based on the context, an instrument may or may not submit reliable scores.

The analysis of validity and reliability was only conducted on translation test since the English reading test is considered to be valid and reliable.

Since translation test does not contain items, content validity is used in this study. Content validity is defined as any attempt to show that the

content of the test is a representative sample from the domain that is to be tested. This is usually done using experts' judgment. These may be subject teachers, or language teachers who have many years experience in teaching English.

The validity of the test can be tested by looking over the syllabus and curriculum of the school whether or not the content of the test is based on syllabus of the school.

The reliability of the instrument for this study was tested by using experts' judgment. These may be subject teachers, or language teachers who have many years experience in teaching English.

1.4.3.3 Data Analysis of Normality and Homogeneity of Variance

After scoring the result of reading and translation test, the process went on estimating distribution normality of the data of reading and translation test. The computation of normality uses SPSS 15 (Statistical Package for Special Sciences) with the equations of Kolmogorov-Smirnov.

Next, the process went on testing the homogeneity of variance. This test is used to know whether or not the different samples we are comparing have similar variance. To test homogeneity of variance, SPSS 15 (Statistical Package for Special Sciences) with the equations of Annova / Levene is used. The level of significance used for testing homogeneity of variance is 0.05 (two tailed decision). If the result is more than 0.05, it is considered that the variances of two or more data group are same. If the distribution was normal and the variances

were homogeneous, it is possible to apply Pearson Product Moment as the correlation analysis tool. Meanwhile, if the data were not normal and the variances were different, correlation analysis will use the Spearman rank order correlation technique.

After that, the process continued on classifying and interpreting the students' translation test scores. Then, the calculation of the relationship between two variables was conducted. As stated above, if data are normally distributed and have similar variance, the computation will use Pearson Product Moment. However, if in fact the data are not normally distributed and have different variance, the appropriate statistics to use is Spearman rank order correlation.

1.5 Clarification of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstandings, some terms which will be used in this study are clarified.

- Reading is the process of identifying and understanding the meaning of the characters and words in written or printed materials (Encarta Dictionary, 2006).

- Reading comprehension is a process of constructing meaning from written text through the interaction of the readers' knowledge, the readers' interpretation of the language and the situation in which the text is read (Maria, 1990:14-15, cited in Pebriyanti, 2007:8).

- Translating is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text (Newmark, 1988:5).