

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a means of communication. By using language people can express their thoughts, feelings, knowledge, etc. to other people. However, one thing that may hamper the process of expressing one's thoughts, feelings, knowledge, etc. is the fact that in this world people speak different languages.

In order to understand different languages, people should learn the languages themselves. For those who do not or cannot speak other languages, the role of translators is really significant. As the result, discourse translation becomes a big business. Novels, Films, articles, songs, literary works, and etc. are translated into many languages. Let's take an example of a book like "Harry Potter" which has been translated into many languages so that people of different languages can enjoy the book.

Making a good translation however is not an easy job to do. There are a lot of problems that may occur in translating a text. According to Gerding-Salas (2000:2), the first problem that usually appears is related to reading and comprehension ability in the source language in terms of semantics and cultural nature. Failing in producing the correct translation may cause misunderstanding, which in certain cases may cause laughter or even fatal mistakes. For example, the Indonesian idiom *keras kepala* has a negative meaning which is "stubborn" in English, but if the translator translates it into "strong head" the meaning is

changed. This kind of misunderstanding could happen if the translator does not really understand the meaning or the cultural content of the discourse. Another problem happens when a translator should deal with terms that are not even found in dictionary. An expert in the topic or a native speaker of the source language can provide us with a solution to convey an accurate meaning. For example, Javanese people have a special term “temon” for wedding ceremony which means bride and groom gathering whereas in other languages, such term does not exist. That is why the quality of translation will also depend on the competence of the translator, i.e. on his/her knowledge, skills, training, cultural background, expertise and even mood.

Related to the problems above, translation should be done very carefully in order to avoid making fatal mistakes in the result of the translation. This means that in order to make good criteria of translation, a translator should pay attention to both the content and the form of the message. According to Nida, as quoted by Adjat Sakri (1985: 72), content cannot be divorced completely from the form, as they often constitute as an inseparable bond, for example in religious text, in which concepts are often closely related to particular words or other verbal formulas. Since content and form are two crucial factors in translation, a translator should therefore keep the translation as closely and naturally as the original one. It means that the meaning should not be lost and the form should be restructured, so it becomes appropriate with the target language.

In religious activities, the use of translation is often seen, for example in bible translation and in gospel songs translation. Gospel songs, themselves are

Christian religious songs, which put God-inspired, anointed words, to anointed music for the sole purpose of winning the lost to Jesus Christ and to minister to the saved (Car, 2001:1). These songs are used to praise the Lord and to worship Him. That is why gospel songs are given an important role in church masses in order to help people to feel the presence of the Lord. In this case the translation of gospel songs is needed as a means to pass the message of the source songs into the target songs especially for those who do not understand the source language. In general, the translation of gospel songs should meet with the criteria of a good translation. However, in translating song's lyrics may not be the same as translating other types of discourse since this type of translation may be limited by the number of syllables for the number of notes in the songs. For example, in one gospel song, the word "lamb" in English consists of one syllable and takes one note to be sung. When it is translated in Indonesian, however it becomes *anak domba* which has four syllables, which means that it takes four notes to sing it. Therefore, based on the writer's experience in her church youth organization, she often found several differences between the translated version and the original lyrics, which is in English. One of those songs is "What the Lord Has Done in Me" by Reuben Morgan, with the Indonesian translation *PerbuatanNya bagiku* by Jacglien Celosse. In this song although, both the original and the translated version of the translation of the lyrics of gospel songs convey the same purpose, there are still differences in both the meaning and the form between the verses in the original and translated version of the gospel songs. Concerning this fact the writer is curious to know about the translation characteristics of gospel song's

lyrics “What the Lord has Done in Me”, based on Nida’s criteria for judging translation. It is done in order to see whether the meaning is preserved or distorted and whether the form is preserved or restructured.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

With reference to the background of the study the major problem of this study is formulated as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of gospel song’s lyrics translation based on Nida’s criteria for judging translation?

Based on the major problem above, two minor problem that are formulated as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of the meaning of gospel song’s lyrics translation?
2. What are the characteristics of the form of gospel song’s lyrics translation?

1.3 Research Objectives

The major objectives of this study is

1. To describe the characteristics of gospel song’s lyrics translation are based on Nida’s criteria for judging translation.

The minor objectives of this study are to

1. Describe the characteristics of the meaning of gospel song’s lyrics translation.
2. Describe the characteristics of the form of gospel song’s lyrics translation.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Hopefully the result of this study will give a meaningful contribution for Christian people, for the songwriters, and also for the improvement of translation of the lyrics of gospel songs.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

There are four theories underlying this study, which are: the theories of translation, the theories of songs and gospel songs, theories of translating song and poetry, and theories of evaluating translation. The first is the theories of translation which discuss about the meaning of translation, some fundamental sets of principles which function as the basis for judging what should be done in specific instances of translating and the processes of translation. Second is the theories of songs and gospel songs, which discuss about the characteristics of songs in general, the meaning as well as the purpose of gospel songs. The third is theories of translating song and poetry, which discuss about the similarities and differences between poetry and songs, the strategies use in translating poetry, and the uses of shifts. Fourth are the theories of evaluating translation, which discuss about, some aspects that are important to judge the quality of a translation. The theories of evaluating also include the theory for translation evaluation which classifies translation as bad translation (i.e. formal correspondence and paraphrasing) and good translation (i.e. dynamic equivalence). This theory is used as the parameter of this study.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This study deals with the translation of the lyrics of gospel song and therefore it only concerns with the translation of the lyric of gospel songs from English into Indonesian. The source language (SL) is English and the target language (TL) is Indonesian. This study is limited by the number of syllables which are in line with the number of notes in the song in order to keep the rhythm of the song. The writer only looks for the characteristics of the translation of gospel song's lyrics which are the meaning and the form. In this study, the writer considers the structure of the original song is correct, since poem has its own system of special grammar (Bassnett, 1980:102). As there are many translated songs the writer chooses only one song, which is "What the Lord Has Done in Me" by Reuben Morgan with the Indonesian translation *Perbuatannya Bagiku* by Jacglien Celosse. This song is chosen since it is a popular song that is often used in her church youth organization service.

1.7 Key Terms

For the better understanding of this study, the definition of the following terms will be given:

1. Gospel Song

Gospel song according to Carr (2001:1) is a Christian religious song, which put anointed words, to anointed music for the sole purpose of winning the lost to Jesus Christ and to minister to the saved.

2. Translation

Nida and Taber (1982:12) define translation as an activity which consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.

3. Characteristic

According to Oxford Dictionary (1995) characteristic is a typical feature or quality of something.

4. Meaning

Meaning is what is referred to or indicated by e.g. sounds, words, or signals. (Oxford Dictionary, 1995)

5. Distort

Oxford Dictionary (1995) define distort as the act to give something false account about something.

6. Preserve

Preserve is to keep something in its original state. (Oxford Dictionary, 1995)

7. Form

Nida and Taber (1982:12) define form as the overt structure of a discourse in terms of its words, grammatical classes, and syntactic and stylistic patterns; the vehicle by which the message is conveyed.

8. To restructure

According to Nida and Taber (1982:206), restructuring is changing the form of discourse without changing the contents of the message, especially, to transform the raw results of the transfer process into a stylistic form appropriate to the receptor language and to intended receptor.

9. Verse

Verse is one line of composition in songs. (Griffee, 1992:3)

10. Lyric

Lyric is the words in a song which are composed for singing. (Oxford Dictionary, 1995)

1.8 Organization of the Study

There are five chapters presented in this study. Chapter I is the introduction that deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II concerns with the review of the related literature. Chapter III deals with the research methodology. Chapter IV deals with data analysis and interpretation of the findings. Chapter V deals with conclusion and suggestion.