

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Study

Since translation in the Bible belongs to *interlingual translation*, the problems come to surface due to the fact that it involves two languages. Accordingly, this translation involves at least two different languages with many different aspects of language. The two essential components (two languages and message) are divided into two categories, namely: (1) form or the formal linguistic element of language, and (2) meaning or the message which is communicated by the features of form (Beekman and Callow, 1974:19).

One of the most important things in the world of English Bible translation is the establishment of the Bible of King James version by the King James I in 1603. This Bible is acknowledged as the worthiest and the best translation of all. It is considered as the most excellent translation, which is translated under the faithful translation (strictly literal) and done seriously. Due to this fact, the writer wants to find out whether the symbolic word has been translated properly into Indonesian or not.

The problems that occur frequently among translators especially to the bilingual translators (interlingual translators) are under constant pressure of the conflict between form and meaning. If he attempts to approximate the stylistic qualities of the original, he is likely to sacrifice much of the form. Meanwhile,

strictly loyal to the literal form, he will produce in a translation that sounds like a translation (unnatural translation).

According to Nida, there are some special problems involved in translating the Bible, which do not affect other types of translating to quite the same degree: (1) in comparison with purely contemporary materials, the Bible represents a document coming from relatively remote historical period; (2) the cultural differences between Biblical times and our own are considerable; (3) the nature of natural evidence, though in some ways very abundant (in contrast to other documents from classical times), is crucially deficient in many matters of word division and punctuation; (4) arbitrary traditional divisions into chapters and verses have tended to obscure meaningful connections; and (5) overriding theological considerations have in some instances tended to distort the meaning of the original message (1964:5).

The problems become more complicated since the interlingual translation is faced to the translation of symbolic words in the Bible that involves two different languages and socio-cultural aspects. As stated in Dictionary of World Literary Terms, there is something that stands for something else, not by exact resemblance, but by vague suggestion, or by some accidental or conventional relation in symbol (1970:321).

A symbol may be roughly defined as something that means more than what it is (Perrine, 1988:585). It signifies anything, of which range of reference is beyond itself (Abrams, 1981:195). An error in translating the symbols may destroy the messages and the meanings within them. The examples of

phenomenon concerned with the symbol translation in the text of the John's Gospel are as follows:

1. Son of God (John 1:12) ⇒ "Anak Allah," (not "Putera Allah")
2. Lamb of God (John 1:29) ⇒ "Anak Domba Allah" (not "Domba Allah")
3. Flesh (John 1:14) ⇒ "manusia" (not "daging")
4. Word (John 1:1-3) ⇒ "Firman" (not "kata")

Such phenomena stated above become the basic idea for the writer to analyze deeply about the symbolic words in the Gospel of John. They are the topics of analysis for the symbolisms (the symbolic words) and their translation in the Gospel of John published by Indonesian Bible Society (IBS).

1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic

Because the symbolic words in the Gospel of John and their translation have challenged the writer to analyze; they become the main reason for further analysis in relation to the symbolic words and their translation in the Indonesian language.

Most of symbolic words in the King James Bible are translated literally into English from the Greek Language. Some experts of the Bible (whom are the writer's colleagues) find many difficulties in revealing the intention and message in the Indonesian Bible. This fact is told by the writer's Pastors who know well about Bible translations. They say that the Indonesian language, which are adopted from many other languages in this earth, is a language that has very poor vocabulary. There are many sacred, gorgeous, and special words, terms, or idioms

that may be translated not in appropriate expression. By this study, the symbolic words and their translation will be analyzed in detail to make a deep and clear explanation of their existence in the Indonesian Bible (IBS version).

Due to the qualification of the translation, Beekman and Callow (1974:33) state that a translation which transfers the meaning and the dynamics of the original text is to be regarded as a faithful translation. The expression *transfers the meaning* means that the translation conveys to the readers or hearers the information that the original conveys to its readers or hearers.

The translated symbolic words may be still symbolical or non symbolical (changed). The meaning may be narrowed, broadened, shifted, or no change at all, while the message may not be lost, distorted or changed; it has neither unnecessarily gained nor lost information. As long as the meaning is easy to understand, the translation has no trouble. These are the fundamental reasons in analyzing the symbolic words and their translation in the Gospel of John in the IBS version.

1.3 The Limitation of Study

The data of study in this thesis are taken from the Holy Bible consisting of Old Testament (39 books) and New Testament (27 Books), which were written by at least 40 people in different times and backgrounds. The New Testament has four Gospels in the beginning of Books, namely: the Gospels of Matthew, of Luke, of Mark, and of John. The first three are called "Synoptic" because they

“see the whole together,” and present similar views about the life and teaching of Christ.

Matthew presents Christ as the Messiah; Mark emphasizes His activities and the popular reaction to Him; Luke stresses His humanitarian interests; and John’s Gospel is a collection of selected memoirs, carefully organized to induce belief (Bryant, 1967:203).

The Book (the source of data) that is taken by the writer for his analysis is the Gospel according to St. John (or the Gospel of John). This Gospel is also called “the Fourth Gospel.” The analysis will be focused to all selected symbolic words in the form of words, phrases or sentences, by keeping in touch with the holy aims of St. John’s writings (John, 20:31, “But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name”).

Further, the data that are researched here are limited to the selected symbolic words, phrases, or sentences and their relation to Indonesian renderings.

1. 4 The Statement of Problem

Translation involves several processes to produce an understandable rendering, while to find the appropriate rendering, especially symbol, is even more complicated if it is viewed through the translation theory. The faithful rendering of the symbolic words, in this case, also plays an important role to bear a faithful and dynamic translation.

In relation to the revealing of the symbolic words and their translation, there are four problems that concern with the analysis:

1. What is the meaning of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John?
2. What is the type of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John?
3. How are the symbolic words in the Gospel of John translated?
4. Is there any semantic change in the rendering of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John?

1.5 The Objective of Study

In line with the statement of problem, this research tries to answer the four questions stated above, namely:

1. to reveal the meaning of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John
2. to determine the type of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John
3. to seek the rendering change of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John
4. to find out some semantic changes of the rendering of the symbolic words in the Gospel of John

1.6 The Significance of Study

It is the researcher's hope that this study may contribute the readers, especially other researchers, something new and valuable to be used as a reference, for further research on the Bible translation from English to Indonesian. For the believers (the Christians), specifically, it is beneficial since this study may stimulate them to study the Gospel of John more comprehensively, especially the

symbolic words contained within the Bible. As a result, this study may be one of the alternatives for Indonesian Christians to understand the content of the Bible in a better way.

Finally, this study is also significant to give an alternative suggestion for all Indonesian Christians about the study of symbols (especially the symbolic words) in the Bible, and their translation in Indonesian.

1.7 The Method of Study

Method is a principle way used to achieve a goal, while research is an attempt to find, develop, and test the truth of science by using a scientific method (Hadi, 1986:4). As a result, a method of research or study is a principle way used to find, develop, and test the truth of science by using a scientific method.

From the source of data, this study applies library research because the data are taken from Holy Bible as the source of data and some other printed materials include of Internet Websites. From the data processing steps, this study applies the descriptive method because it involves collecting, classifying, and analyzing data (Surachman, 1978:132).