CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

Culture and language are difficult to be separated since they have strong relationship. Culture is exist in language and vice verse. Bassnett and Mc. Guire (1991) stated, "No language can exist unless it is stepped in the context of culture, and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language". From this statement, it can be said that language and culture are two entities that relate to each other. According to House (2006) culture can be defined as a group' shared values and conventions which act as mental guidelines for orienting people's thought and behavior. So people of a social group have different values, beliefs and conventions to initiate thier existence among the others.

Related to the translation that a process of reproducing the closest equivalence of the source language massage in target language (Nida and Taber: 1969), a translator should be aware of these values, beliefs and conventions when transferring a text from one culture into another. Translation can be considered as a cross cultural communication (Glodjović: 2010). From this notion, culture is the important element in this case. The translator do not only translate linguistics forms, but also deals with the whole text which are culturally embedded. Consequently, the translators convert written material from one or more source languages into the target language. They ensure that the translated version conveys the meaning of the original as clearly as possible where the text is

culturally and linguistically adapted to suit the reader. Moreover, to evoke the same feelings and to provide the readers to the content of the text a good translators should be familiar with the culture, customs, and social settings of the source and target language speakers. They should also be familiar with different styles of speaking, and social norms of both languages (Levý 1983).

One of the difficult problems which the translator may face is translating an object and event which is absent in the target culture. In other word, the translator has difficulty to find the equivalence of the text because there is no direct and right equivalence which is used to express the massage of source language in word or phrase of target language (Baker: 2011). In this situation, the translator is not only faced with language differences, but also he should be careful about cultural differences which can cause difficulties in the process of conveying the massage between source and target language. Therefore, the translator also need to be familiar with both cultures.

Specific terms in a culture known as the culture-specific items make the translation process becomes problematic and challenging at the same time. Culture-specific items are products of cultures. According to Baker (2011), it may relate to a religious belief, a social custom, or even a type of food. In translation, they are basically regarded as the items or concepts that are specifically found in the source language culture and thus unlikely present in the target language culture in the same way. They tend to possess unique features that are hardly replaced in the target language and hardly represent the same situation in the target language culture. Culture-specific items can cause difficulty for translator in the process of translation because the target readers are not familiar with the

source culture. It is problematic and challenging because every culture possesses exclusiveness that rarely shares the same description or meanings. Even if there are close equivalents between two languages which represent reality in two different cultures, they would not convey the massage entirely and absolutely, Aixela (1996).

According to Baker (2011), all of culture specific items which occur in source language but unknown in target language cause the problem in finding the equivalence. The type and level of difficulty posed can vary tremendously depending on the nature of non-equivalence. Different kinds of non-equivalence require different procedures, some very sraightforward, others more involved and difficult to handle. So, translators should be aware of these problems and try to use the most appropriate strategies. There are different strategies proposed for translating culture-specific items by different scholars. Kussmaul (1995) believes that when a translator confronts a problem, he should decide to choose the appropriate strategies by consideration of text-function within situation within culture. He adds that the translators as the key agents of the process of translation and intercultural communication should improve their awareness of cultural differences. In other words they should be bicultural as well as bilingual, and they should have an excellent grasp of both source and target cultures.

Since translation is basically an activity of meaning transfer from the source language to the target language, it is worth the attention to be aware meaning equivalence realized in the target language. Catford (1965) defines translation equivalence occurs when source language and target language or items are related to the same relevant features. In other words, The translation is

equivalent when there is meaning closely transferred from the source language to the target language and it is non-equivalent when there are different meanings transferred to the target language or when the meaning is not realized in the target language.

Translating book containing cultural terms becomes a challenge, as the translator has to find appropriate strategy to translate it. Nida (1964) states "Differences between cultures may cause several complications for the translator than do differences in language structure". Therefore, culture specific items from different languages are translated by using different strategies to get the accurate meaning and understable to the readers. The translator must be aware of cultural terms occurring in the book, they will become a problem when the translator fails to find the right translation.

In making the decision on how a translator does the work of translation, it needs to consider about the translator ideology. Hatim and Mason (1997) perceive the ideology in translation as a choice made by the translator in bringing the target text either towards mass readership (the receptors' culture) or towards the individual voice of the text producer (the author). Therefore, a translator needs to consider about the author and the target reader of his translation work. In other word, a translator has to choose between whether keeping the ideas of the author in such languages and cultures in source text by being faithful to the author or transferring them into the target culture, so the reader could understand the text more easily.

Considering the emergence of the culture-specific in literature works due to the different cultural pattern, the translators have to pay more attention to the

culture-specific items in the text of source language. Translating novel for instance, it is different from translating the other form of texts. When translating novel, the translators are required to possess sufficient knowledge of culture-specific items. As proposed by Newmark (1988) cultural words are categorized into some typical examples of (1) Ecology: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills: 'tundra', 'plateau', selva (tropical rain forest), savanna; (2) Material culture (artefacts): food, clothes, houses and towns, transport; (3) Social Culture: workand leisure (4) Organizations, customs, activities, concept; (5) Gestures and habits. This categorization is needed to translate book containing cultural text such as novel.

There are some Indonesian literary works which have been translated into English. One of them is *Negeri Lima Menara* that is written by Ahmad Fuadi a former Tempo & VOA reporter, photograpy buff, and a social entrepreneur. Becoming national best seller in Indonesia, this novel was then translated into English entitled *The Land of Five Towers* two years later after the first published in 2009. The translator, Angie Kilbane, is an American experienced translator who has translated another best literary work from Indonesia, *Laskar Pelangi* becoming *Rainbow Troops. Negeri Lima Menara* is a novel inspired based on true story that tells Alif's journey at a pesantren, an Islamic boarding school, in East Java. There, he met friends who came from six different place of Indonesia, different local languages, and different cultures. Therefore, in this novel, one can find many culture-specific items that represent the Indonesia situation at that time. It contains a large number of references to Indonesia culture. By reading this novel, the reader is able to catch a glimpse not only of a pesantren, but also of

many of the ethnicities and language across the country. Therefore, it is significant to conduct the study on this novel.

Here are some of cultural specific items found in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* and its translation in English translated version entitled *Land of Five Towers*.

SL: *lebih dingin dari **secawan es tebak***
TL: colder than **a glass of shaved ice made by a spinning machine**

Secawan es tebak can be decided as culture-specific item due to the fact that it is traditional drink derived from West Sumatera. It could be seen that the translator chose *a glass of shaved ice made by a spinning machine* as the most equivalent meaning for *secawan es tebak*. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*.

> "*Es tebak adalah minuman tradisional Minang, terbuat dari adonan tepung beras, sagu, air kapur sirih, adonanya disaring sehingga berbentuk seperti mi, disajikan dengan cincau, tapai, kolang-kaling, susu, sirup, diminum dengan es.*"

By using illustration strategy, the translator tends to describe this culture-specific item *(secawan es tebak)* by how it is made not its ingredients. Whereas, in the culture of source language there some kinds of ice are made by spinning machine at the time such as *es teller, es campur,* and *es tebak*. In addition, each ice has its own characteristics and ingredients. In this case, the translator did not convey the massage of source text accordingly and entirely due to minimize the strangeness of source text for the target readers. As stated in the background above, it is problematic when translating culture-specific items. This strategy is a useful option if the word which lacks an equivalent in the target language refers to a physical entity which can be illustrated. Another example of translating culture-specific items:

SL: *walau begitu, __badan setelan melayuku__ tetap menggigil*
TL: even so, __my Indonesian body__ still shivered

The example above is the translation by using more general word (superordinate) strategy. In this case, to overcome a relative lack of specificity in the target language *badan setelan melayuku* is translated into *my Indonesian body* to be more general. Here, "*melayu* as an ethnic in Sumatera, (KBBI)" represents Indonesia as a country. The translator thought that Indonesia is more recognizable than Melayu. Here, the translator tends to reduce the foreign term instead of to promote the culture-specific items *(Melayu)* to the target text. Consequently, the massage of the source text is not delivered absolutely because *melayu* is only one of thousands ethnics in Indonesia.

From the two preliminary data above, it can be seen that translating culture-specific items is problematic for the translators. When the translator is faced to the culture-specific items from different classification, then it is translated by using different strategies to be held the equivalence of meaning and understable to the reader. In contrary, if the translator get failed to get the equivalence of the source text, the reader will not catch the massage of the source text and text will be unreadable. Another problem, they have to choose to keep the source massage in the text fully in the target language or to reduce the source massage as foreign text to the target language. Besides, reduction changes, addition and modification from the intrinsic element such as culture-specific items on the novel are often unavoidable. As stated by Bassnett (1996) that the translation activity always embraces certain tendencies within. They can be either a source language-oriented or a target language-oriented. It is not easy to translate a literary works such as novel in order to bridge two languages and cultures.

Therefore, the translators should be able to undertand the both languages linguisticaly and culturally.

This study aims to analyze translation strategies from Indonesian into English used by the translator. It is to know if there is another strategy used besides those strategies above found when translating culture specific items in the novel *Negeri 5 Menara* into English.

1.2. The Problems of the Study

Based on the brief explanation stated above, the problems of the study are formulated as following:

1. What are the classifications of culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara*?

2. How are the strategies used to translate culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* into English?

3. Why are the culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* translated into English in the ways they are?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to answer the three research questions, as formulated above. To be more specific, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the classification of culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara.*

2. To describe the strategies used to translate the culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* into English.

3. To find out the translator's ideology to translate culture-specific items in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* into English.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

This study deals with the culture-specific items found in novel *Negeri 5 Menara* and its English translated version with the title *The Land of Five Towers*. The culture-specific items is classified into some categories in this study. Then, the strategy to translate culture-specific items into English is focused to reveal the translator's ideology.

1.5. The Significances of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be relevant and significant theoretically and practically.
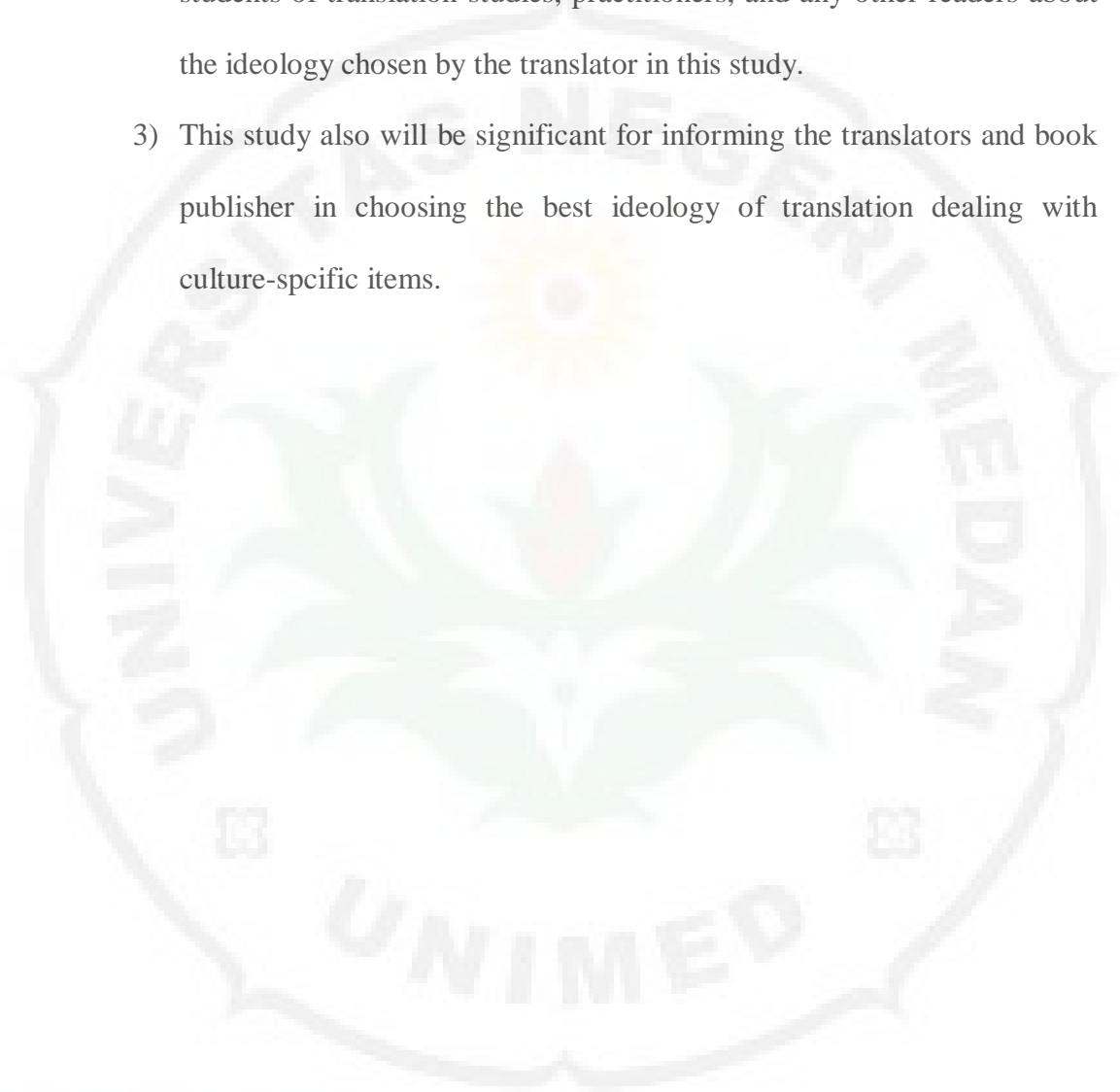
Theoretical Significance

1) Theoretically, this study can enrich the knowledge about the classification of culture-specific items in Indonesian culture.

2) This study also serves as a reference for the cultural promoters of Indonesia in sharing the culture-specific items to other countries.

Practical Significances

Practically, the usefulness of findings is described as the following:

1) By knowing the classification of culture-specific items, it is expected to the translator will find the appropriate strategies that is related to its classification of culture-specific items.

2) It would like to contribute information to the prospective translators, students of translation studies, practitioners, and any other readers about the ideology chosen by the translator in this study.

3) This study also will be significant for informing the translators and book publisher in choosing the best ideology of translation dealing with culture-spcific items.