

# Excessive Lexical Borrowing

## *Restraining the Absorption of English Vocabulary into Indonesian through Translation*

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**Abstract:** The presence of the national language (Indonesian) among the regional languages in this country and the need for mastery of foreign languages (especially English) indicates the occurrence of language contact, competition or conflicts that, to some extent, led to the situation of interplay between languages. The effect of foreign languages, especially English has become a real dilemma because, on the one hand, it provides an opportunity for Indonesian to evolve towards a modern language capable of bearing the vehicular load to express all aspects of life. On the other hand, however, the uncontrolled lexical borrowing conducted independently without reference to a general guideline will be a boomerang for Indonesian. The adaptation shows that there has been additions of new words derived from foreign vocabulary but due to the frequent use, over time become Indonesian vocabulary. Unfortunately there are a lot of loan words seem to be excessive and unnecessary for Indonesian has certain lexical items to express the same meaning. And translation, in addition to adaptation, could be used to restrain this excessive measure so that the borrowing does not impact negatively on the development and preservation of both national and regional languages.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian language is bound to grow under the influence of the plurality of local and foreign languages. Foreign language imposing a very significant influence these days is English as an international language. The presence of foreign languages, Indonesian and local languages within Indonesian society indicate an interaction between languages. And this linguistic phenomenon manifests itself as a mutual influence of language interplay and language conflict or competition. This is also indicated by Hardini and Grange (2017) that “when two languages come into contact, they exert a reciprocal influence, often unbalanced. A phenomenon that often occurs in case of language contact is the absorption or borrowing of lexical elements, which will enrich the vocabulary of the receiving language.”

Most languages in the world are inevitably influenced by other languages. Indonesian also experienced the same thing. In the Indonesian context, these effects mainly come from nations that

once colonized the country and the nations that had traded with the inhabitants of the land. In its development, the Indonesian language historically has been colored by the absorption of a variety of foreign language elements such as Sanskrit, Tamil and Hindi, Chinese, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, until the most prominent language today, i.e English. Contact between languages through translation also allows the enrichment of terms of different disciplines in a language since the application of a number of translation procedure such as borrowing (Vinay and Dalbernet, 2000), transference and naturalization (Newmark, 1988) and also pure borrowing and naturalized borrowing (Molina and Albir, 2002) gave rise to the term adoption and adaptation from the source language into the target language. The adoption of the elements of foreign language into the national language is meant to improve the ability of the national language (Indonesia) to bear the vehicular load as a lingua franca in the development of science, technology and art.

The foreign language that has very significantly influenced Indonesian is English as an international language. On the one hand, English has brought

positive influence on Indonesian because it can increase the repertoire of Indonesian vocabulary itself so that Indonesian could further develop due to the demands of time (globalization). But on the other hand the uncontrolled absorption and use of foreign languages can lead to the good and right use of Indonesian into a mess. This is evident from the frequent unnecessary code switching, creation of language combinations and even code mixing. To some extent the pragmatic attitude of speakers in their speech activities voluntarily or involuntarily indicate excessive borrowing. The high tendency of borrowing either pure or naturalized from English in the Indonesian vocabulary is very interesting to study for this sociolinguistic phenomenon can significantly contribute to describe how foreign terms are adopted into Indonesian. This article tries to discuss the excessive borrowing of English words in practice to find an alternative use of the language and how to control the absorption so it does not impact negatively on the development and preservation of both national and regional languages in the future. In particular, this study aimed to (1) identify and describe the profile of borrowing and (2) provide alternative strategy of absorption of foreign elements through translation to restrain excessive lexical borrowing.

## 2 METHOD

This study is based on the philosophy of phenomenological qualitative approach. The corpus of data in this study is in the form of words or expressions derived from English used in the mass media based on personal observation through television and the surrounding community as well as the newspaper with the consideration that the language used in the mass media has a powerful magical power in influencing and shaping opinions of the speaking communities. In other words, through the mass media the attitude of language use in the speech community can be reflected and established. The collected data were further analyzed by descriptive qualitative method. The analysis was done by relying on the sociolinguistic theory especially about borrowing and loanwords and theory of translation, especially the translation procedure. Since the analysis was done qualitatively, the result of analysis is presented in descriptive narrative manner supported by inductive and deductive techniques.

## 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 The category and domain of borrowed Indonesian vocabulary

Language change is normally tracked in the field of vocabulary. Lexical borrowing appears on the surface as lexical adoption and adaptation with adjustment. In this study the enrichment of national language vocabulary through such borrowing can be viewed from various angles, including (1) the category of borrowed Indonesian vocabulary, (2) the lexical borrowing based on the field / domain, and (3) translation as an alternative to control the uptake of English in the repertoire of vocabulary enrichment and improvement.

Linguistically, the borrowings are identified in various categories including Noun, Verb, Adjective, and Adverb. However, most of the data indicate that the words adopted into the repertoire of Indonesian are classified as noun. As far as the data available a conclusion could be made in relation to the profile of lexical borrowings from English into Indonesian including (1) pure borrowing or direct borrowing (such as: *snack*, *coffee break*, *proposal*, and *complicated*) in daily communication; (2) borrowing with the adaptation of spelling and pronunciation (such as *camera* /'kæməɾə/ → *kamera* /kamera/); (3) the adaptation of spelling without adaptation of pronunciation (*design* /dɪ'zain/ → *desain* /desain/); and (4) the adaptation of pronunciation without adaptation of spelling (*bias* /baɪəs/ → *bias* /bias/)

Viewed from the field or domain perspective, the data showed that the borrowing from the English language can be grouped into various areas including (1) the domain of property like *apartemen* (derived from Apartment) and *kondominium* (from condominium), (2) tourism sector such as *akomodasi* (from accommodation), *vila* (from villa), and *hotel*, (3) communication and transportation *transportasi* and *infrastruktur* (4) sports like *turnamen* and *liga* (from league), (5) politics such as *republik*, *demokrasi*, and *legislatif*, (6) law such as *naturalisasi* and *konvensi*, (7) economics like *investasi*, *manajemen*, and *korporasi*, (8) education such as *edukasi*, *kampus* and *evaluasi*, (9) environment like *ekologi* and *polusi* (10) health / medicine such as *diagnose*, *kanker*, and *kolesterol* (11) social community like *komunitas* and *grup*, (12) arts and entertainment like the words *artis*, *fiksi*, and *royalti*.

Translating words or foreign terms has several advantages. Besides enriching the Indonesian vocabulary with synonyms, translation also increases the expressing power of the Indonesian. However,

prior to absorption through translation it should be examined whether the adopted vocabulary into Indonesian language has nothing in common with the meaning of the Indonesian words. Otherwise, unnecessary or excessive borrowing can lead to the occurrence of competing words in its use. There are a lot of words permeated into the repertoire of Indonesian that have actually existed originally in Indonesian as seen in the following data:

Table 1: Competing words resulting from excessive borrowing.

Lexical Category	Borrowed Indonesian Vocabulary	Derived from the English Vocabulary	Original Indonesian Vocabulary
Noun	<i>Aksen</i>	Accent	<i>Logat</i>
	<i>Decade</i>	Decade	<i>dasawarsa</i>
	<i>Aktivitas</i>	Activity	<i>Kegiatan</i>
	<i>Edukasi</i>	Education	<i>pendidikan</i>
	<i>Eksistensi</i>	Existence	<i>keberadaan</i>
	<i>Figure</i>	Figure	<i>Tokoh</i>
	<i>Identitas</i>	Identity	<i>Jatidiri</i>
	<i>Kapabilitas</i>	Capability	<i>kemampuan</i>
	<i>Opsis</i>	Option	<i>pilihan</i>
Verb	<i>Servis</i>	Service	<i>layanan</i>
	<i>Respek</i>	Respect	<i>menghargai</i>
	<i>mendistribusikan</i>	to distribute	<i>Membagikan</i>
	<i>Didesain</i>	Designed	<i>Dirancang</i>
	<i>Beraksi</i>	to act	<i>Bertindak</i>
	<i>Mentransfer</i>	to transfer	<i>Pengalihan</i>
	<i>Memonitor</i>	to monitor	<i>Memantau</i>
	<i>dikategorikan</i>	Categorized	<i>Digolongkan</i>
	<i>mengevakuasi</i>	to evacuate	<i>Mengungsikan</i>
	<i>mengaplikasikan</i>	to apply	<i>Menerapkan</i>
Adjective	<i>Mengetes</i>	to test	<i>Menguji</i>
	<i>Aktif</i>	Active	<i>Giat</i>
	<i>Harmonis</i>	Harmonious	<i>Rukun</i>
	<i>Relative</i>	Relative	<i>Nisbi</i>
	<i>Otentik</i>	Otentic	<i>Asli</i>
	<i>Loyal</i>	Loyal	<i>Setia</i>
	<i>Temporer</i>	Temporary	<i>Sementara</i>
	<i>Historis</i>	Historic	<i>Bersejarah</i>
	<i>Implisit</i>	Implisite	<i>Tersirat</i>
	<i>Kalem</i>	Calm	<i>Tenang</i>
	<i>Sensitive</i>	Sensitive	<i>Peka</i>

All the above borrowed Indonesian vocabulary are considered unnecessary since Indonesian language has equivalent words to express the same meaning or concept. The enrichment of vocabulary can be tolerated when an equivalence of foreign word does not exist in Indonesian vocabulary. The use of borrowed vocabulary that already has equivalent in the Indonesian language is often heard or seen to some extent motivated by various reasons including prestige, individual, and collective needs to enrich the potential of vernacular.

### 3.2 Translation as an alternative measure to restrain excessive borrowing

Conceptually absorption of lexical terms contains the notion of translation because in the process of absorption translation occurs, that is to say, transferring meaning of the source language to the target language. From the perspective of translation the model of absorption is determined by the strategy of translating words or terms of the source language (English) into the target language (Indonesia). The definition of strategy in this paper is identical with the understanding of the methods used Vinay and Darbelnet (in Venuti (ed.), 2000: 84 93), the procedure by Newmark (1988: 68 93), and adjustment by Nida (1964) and Larson (1998), which is a way of achieving equivalence between the source text and the target text. There are many alternative strategies to address the problem of a mismatch (non-equivalence) in the translation process. Various matching strategies have been proposed by various experts. Vinay and Darbelnet (in Venuti, 2000: 84 93) for example, saw a lot of alternatives matching and categorize into two broad categories: (1) direct translation and (2) oblique translation, which consist of seven different strategies

### 3.3 Direct Translation

Direct translation appears formally and semantically in the form of borrowing resulting in intact adoption and literal equivalent such as the English word *menu* is also the same in the Indonesian language *menu*. Baker (1991: 36) calls it a loan word that is applied to lexical item having *culture-specific* meaning and modern concepts. The number of new Indonesian vocabulary through borrowing strategy is relatively large including, for example, *formal* equivalent to English word *formal*, the Indonesian borrowed word *editor* derived from the English word *editor*. The new Indonesian vocabulary through literal translation, ie the transfer of direct source text into equivalent target text grammatically and idiomatically (See Vinay and Darbelnet in Venuti (2000: 86 88) includes *cottage* equivalent to *pondok*, *developer* → *pengembang*, *gate* → *pintu*, *gerbang*, *air port* → *bandar udara*; *joint ventura* → *usaha patungan*, *show unit* → *unit contoh*, *direct free kick* → *tendangan bebas langsung*, etc.

### 3.4 Oblique translation

Oblique translation is a strategy that is oriented to the target language or the impact of translation by

descriptive equivalent that is an explication, the translation that is done by providing a description and sometimes combined with functionality (Newmark, 1988: 83-84) such as the English expression *kick off* translated into *tendangan awal pemain*; *check out* → *Lapor keluar hotel*; *Shoreline* → *Garis pantai*; *left winger* → *Pemain sayap kiri*; *Fairway* → *Alur pelayaran*, and *goal getter* → *Pencetak gol terbanyak*.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

From the overall discussion and analysis it can be emphasized that the effect of English has become a real dilemma because, on the one hand, it has made Indonesian possible to evolve towards a modern language capable of bearing the vehicular load to express all aspects of life. On the other hand, the excessive lexical borrowing conducted independently without reference to a general guideline will be a boomerang for Indonesian and unnecessary for Indonesian has certain lexical items to express the same meaning. Translation, in addition to adaptation, could be used to restrain this excessive measure so that the borrowing does not impact negatively on the development and preservation of both national and regional languages. The translation process as far as possible should try to preserve the authenticity of its linguistic characteristics. When the perfect formal correspondence can not be achieved an innovation to create a new term should be taken into consideration.

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