

WORD FORMATION FOR TRANSLATORS

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Abstract

Translators often encounter challenges in choosing the best meaning from source text into target text during translation process, in this case, transferring from English language into Indonesian language. One of the influential factors in word or phrase choice in such action is the translator's understanding of the source language and text. Word formation atau 'pembentukan kata' is one of the knowledge the translators have to learn since translation definitely engages with meanings in words and phrases that are mostly related to word formation. This paper merely describes ten word formations in English language, which can be applied to Indonesian language, the translators need to know that will surely help them to have the right meaning and finally decide the best language choice in translating.

Keywords : word formation, lexical items, suffix, prefix

Pembentukan Kata Bagi Para Penerjemah

Abstrak

Dalam proses penerjemahan suatu teks, penerjemah acapkali menghadapi tantangan dalam mengolah makna dari teks bahasa sumber dan mengalihkannya ke teks bahasa sasaran yang tepat dan benar, misalnya pengalihan bahasa dari Bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa Indonesia. Salah satu faktor ketepatan pemilihan kata atau frasa dalam bahasa sasaran tersebut dipengaruhi oleh pemahaman si penerjemah akan teks bahasa aslinya. 'Word formation' atau pembentukan kata merupakan salah satu hal dalam ilmu linguistik yang hendaknya dikuasai oleh seorang penerjemah untuk memudahkannya dalam proses pekerjaan pengalihan bahasa tersebut karena proses ini bertautan erat dengan makna suatu kata atau frasa. Ada sepuluh macam 'word formation' yang umum ditemukan dalam teks bahasa Inggris. Penguasaan pembentukan kata dalam teks bahasa sumber, yakni Bahasa Inggris akan memudahkan para penerjemah mengalihkan makna dari teks bahasa sumber ke teks bahasa sasaran dengan tepat.

Kata kunci: pembentukan kata, leksikal, sufiks, prefik

A. INTRODUCTION

Translators perform as mediators and have direct interface with text to achieve efficiency in translating process. Since translation concerns about the meaning

of the written text, it demands the translators not only to understand what the author wants to say but also being ingenious enough to transfer the several abstract meanings found in the text in which he or she might not familiar with. Thus being able to understand and examine the patterns of the source language shall lead translators to become more than proficient to comprehend the meaning of the language so that the meaning can be accurately transferred into the target language. One of the language pattern studies in linguistics is morphology which studies the internal structures of words and how new lexical items are formed, as Kamil (2007) clearly enunciates in **Morphology**:

Morphology is the part of linguistics that deals with the study of words, their internal structure and partially their meanings. It is also interested in how the users of a given language understand complex words and invent new lexical items. As morphology is concerned with word forms it is akin to phonology (which describes how words are pronounced), it is also related to lexical studies as the patterns examined by morphology are used to create new words. Furthermore, it is also linked with semantics as it deals with the meanings of words.

B. DISCUSSION

Translation Studies covers enormously wide areas that have many fields include in learning and studying the translating process. Culture, tradition, norm, value, etc have impose semantically both on source and target text, therefore a translator should be able to mind the gap between them by being able to observe the text. Newmark (1991, p.56) shows the correlation between linguistics and translation studies:

The more structured the text, the more important and useful the findings of text linguistics to the translator. . . Halliday rightly wrote that all grammatical units of language: sentence, clause, group, word, morpheme *had equal value* [italics added]... An important aspect of text linguistics' application to translation is the prosodic analysis of discourse, which gives it a third dimension of 'relief', showing what elements in a sentence are new, give an answer to an implicit question or an obscure remark, or are to be emphasised.

Hence linguistics could help the translator not only to understand a text or word, but also to give “a third dimension of ‘relief’” which means that linguistics gives him some sorts of enlightenment in understanding of vague sentences and texts. One of the field in morphology is the study of word formation, of which there are two large categories:

1. inflectional differences that produce different words from the same combination of letters
2. formation of words related to another single word

Dictionary is one of the best tools for translator to find new lexical items when translating a text. However, what is its relation with word formation and linguistics studies? Rogers and Anderman (1996, p.11) said in their book that:

What then can we learn from dictionaries about the process of word formation in English? It seems that over half of all the ‘new’ lexical items appear to be formed by reshuffling existing elements through processes known as derivation and compounding.

Learning word formation in linguistics may help translator to acknowledge English words in particular and the way they are formed new words through combination and the like. According to Brinton, word formation is where morphs are combined or altered to form new words and the most significant factors in influencing this process in derivation and compounding. Other than those, there are several processes which are also take part in forming new words in English. There are ten types of word formation in linguistics that translators need to notice when translating English text in particular (Brinton, 2000, p.85-:

1. Derivation

Derivation forms a word with a meaning and/or category distinct from that of its base through the addition of an affix.

It is probably the most common word formation process in the English language. It is achieved by adding affixes: prefixes – are added at the beginning of a word, suffixes added to the end of a word, or infixes which are inserted inside a word, but infixes are unusual in English. English prefixes include for example *re-*, *un-*, *mis-*, *a-*, *pre-*, *dis-*; suffixes include for instance *-ful*, *-less*, *-able*, *-or*.

Some shifts in word class that happen in derivation:

In suffix:		In prefix:	
Noun	verb, adjective	Noun	noun
Adjective	verb, noun, adverb	Verb	verb
Verb	adjective, noun	Adjective	adjective

Examples:

Verb base →	Noun	Noun base →	Noun
Edit	<i>edit-or</i>	Lord	<i>over-lord</i>
Collect	<i>collect-or</i>	Wife	<i>ex-wife</i>
Healthy	<i>un-healthy</i>	Abortion	<i>anti-abortion</i>
Do	<i>un-do</i>		

Thus, in translating English into Indonesian word also needs to see the element involved in it. For example, in the word *rebuilt*, there are three distinctive elements: (1) prefix *re-*, with an implicit meaning ‘to do it again’, and (2) *built* in past form of *build*. The word *rebuilt* means ‘to build again’ yet it is signalling the past action.

2. Compounding

Compounding is a morphological process when the combination of lexical categories, such as Noun (N), Adjective (A), Verb (V) or preposition (P), constitutes a larger word.

For example *flower-pot* is a compound made of two words: *flower* and *pot*, but it does not denote two things, yet it refers to one object. Some English compounds include: *windmill*, *waterfall*, *fingerprint*, and *scarecrow*. Compounds are pronounced as one unit and some compounds are written with hyphens: *full-time*, *good-looking*; some are written separately: *bank account*, *mini skirt*; and some can be written in both ways.

Examples:

N + N	A + N	V + N	P + N
doghouse	barefoot	support level	ongoing
country road	white-collar	washcloth	downturn
oil price	blackboard	scrub lady	in-group

For example, translating *doghouse*, where the translator can see the two elements: *dog* and *house*. Those two words carry two different things as well as their meanings, however, it refers to one object and meaning because it is the compound word, which means a house intended for a dog only, not for human being to live in.

3. Conversion or Zero Derivation

Conversion is a process that assigns an already existing word to a new syntactic category. Even though it does not add an affix, conversion looks like derivation because of the change in category and meaning and for this reason; conversion is also sometime called zero derivation.

Examples:

V derived from N

Butter (the bread)

Nail (the door shut)

Ship (the package)

N derived from V

(an easy) report

(a new) suit

(a long) walk

V derived from A

Dry (a shirt)

Empty (the basket)

Right (a wrong)

In some cases, conversion can even apply to a compound such as when the compound Noun *grandstand* is used as a Verb (he likes to *grandstand*) in the sense of ‘show off’ or the compound Noun *bungee jump* is used as a Verb in a sentence he hates to *bungee jump*.

Thus, in translating into Indonesian, those sentences will be: (1) *ia senang menonton pertandingan olah raga* – in Noun, *grandstand* means ‘a large structure with rows of seats and a roof, where people sit to watch sports’ (Longman). By having knowledge and information from the previous meaning, the translator would be able to encounter and find its equivalence in the target language without reducing its contextual meaning.

4. Clipping

Clipping is a process that shortens a polysyllabic word by deleting one or more syllables. Clipping is also known as "truncation" or "shortening." It is very common in English that can be seen on the following examples: information is clipped to info, advertisement to *advert* or *ad*, influenza to *flu*, telephone to *phone*.

Examples:

Gasoline	gas	Popular	pop
Biology science	bio	Memorandum	memo
Computer science	com-sci	Doctor	doc
Mathematics	math	Influenza	flu
Laboratory	lab	Science fiction	sci-fi
Examination	exam	Middle culture	midcult

Clipping is also exist in Indonesian vocabulary items, and surprisingly there are new-coming clipped words born almost every day mainly in colloquial and slang language among youngsters and urban people in Jakarta, i.e. *hape* for *handphone*;

5. Blending

Blending a process where the words that are created from non-morphemic parts of two already existing items. It is very similar to compounding, but it is characterized by taking only parts of words and joining them. Famous English examples include: *smog* which combines *smoke* and *fog*, *motel* made of *motor* and *hotel*, *Spanglish* which is combination of *Spanish* and *English*; and *guesstimate*, from *guess* and *estimate*.

Blending is also commonly used by the media and fans to describe celebrity with his or her couple, for example *Tom Cruise* and *Katie Holmes* were formed into *TomKat*.

In Indonesian, the clipping usually found in place name category, i.e. *Benhil* (Bendungan Hilir – an area in Central Jakarta), *Senci* or *Sensi* (Senayan City shopping mall in Jakarta); *gaptek* (gagap teknologi); business category, i.e. *warteg* (warung Tegal); food, i.e. *batagor* (*baso-*

tahu goreng or fried tofu and meatballs), and many more areas cover the clipped word found in Jakarta colloquial language.

Examples:

Breakfast and lunch	brunch
Spiced and ham	spam
Information and commercial	infomercial
Motor cina	mocin
Informasi selebritis	insert
Warung tegal	warteg

6. Backformation

Backformation is a process that creates a new word by removing a real or supposed affix form another word in the language.

It is a process in which a word changes its form and function. Word of one type, which is usually a noun, is reduced and used as a verb. To show it on an example: the English word *arms* meaning weapon was backformed to *arm* to mean provide weapons, similarly edit was backformed from editor, or typewrite from typewriter.

For example, the noun *resurrection*, and the verb *resurrect* was then backformed by removing the *-ion*. This element of *resurrection* into *resurrect + ion* was possible because English had many examples words that had verb and verb+*-ion* pairs — in these pairs the *-ion* suffix is added to verb forms in order to create nouns in *resurrect*.

Examples:

Resurrection	resurrect
Housekeeper	housekeep
Donation	donate

Orientation	orientate
Book-keeping	book-keep
Air-condition	air-conditioning
Baby-sitter	baby-sit
Biography	biograph
Burglar	burgle
Head-hunter	head-hunt

7. Acronyms

Acronyms are formed by taking the initial letters of some or all of the words in a phrase or title and reading them as a word. In translating, acronyms are commonly be found in non-literary text such as science, politics, etc. the translator needs to be more careful in transferring in the target audience who has little knowledge of the issues. For example, GAM is the acronym of *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*. In translating for a less educated readership, then it should be translated *Free Aceh Movement* which is equivalent to the SL – source language. There are others which are familiar to the Jakartans, for example, *PR* or *pe-er* for *pekerjaan rumah* (homework); *PRT* for *Pembantu rumah tangga* (housemaid, house assistant hired to clean house), etc.

Examples:

ISO	International Standards Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
USA	United States of America
VISA	International Service Association

8. Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is words whose sound represents an aspect of the thing that they name. Onomatopoeic words exist in every language, although they are different in each. Some other very common English-language examples include *hiccup*, *bang*, *beep*, and *splash*. **Machines** and their sounds are also often described with onomatopoeia, as in *honk* or *beep-beep* for the horn of an automobile, and *vroom* or *brum* for the engine. In Science fiction the sounds made by laser weapons are often described as "zaps"

Examples:

The imitation of animals' sounds like: *Buzz*, *cuckoo*, *hiss*, *meow*, *woof-woof*, etc.

9. Reduplication

Reduplication is a process of forming new words by doubling all or part of a morpheme which is similar to derivation with a slight of phonological change. English language does not have this process, but in some languages may do, for instance, Indonesia has so many words formed by reduplication, especially in plural forms, and most of them usually by doubling the morpheme. Below are some examples of reduplication from Indonesian language:

Singular		Plural	
Rumah	house	rumah-rumah	houses
Ibu	mother	ibu-ibu	mothers
Fly	lalat	lalat-lalat	flies
Sayur	vegetable	sayur mayur	vegetable

When translating a text from Indonesian into English or vice versa, it is necessary to consider reduplication because misinterpretation may cause both changes in lexical categories and shift in meanings.

10. Coinage

Coinage is the creation of a entirely new word. This word formation process is not frequent; however large corporations attempt to outdo one another to invent short eye-catching names for their products. Some examples of these could include: *aspirin*, *Revlon* or *Xerox*.

In Indonesian language, similar phenomenon happens in advertising industries. Therefore many Indonesians know very well some of these words: *pepsodent* – for all tooth pastes and sometime even they are in different brands, *rinso*, *molto*, *indomie*, etc.

Sometimes the products that the companies want to sell simply take over the name of the creator or inventor. They are very frequently used in science where units of measurement are named after people, like: *hertz*, *volt*, (degree) *Celsius*, *diesel*, etc.

C. CONCLUSION

Linguistics as a language discipline, which concerns with how meaning is formed within, particularly in the process of word formation, to help the translator in interacting with the source language and target language text. It is a great deal for translator to be able to see the valuable things in language as well as its natures and functions. There are other fields for further research in translation and linguistic scope in extension of this paper has not covered, such as the linkage between translation, morphology and semantic, preparing translators training in dealing with linguistic issues in different language and culture, correlation between syntax and morphology are potential fields of research either in translation for practical and academic settings or purely applied linguistic research. Translation and linguistic are perfect combination for future research area where there are always enough rooms for new discovery and invention.

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