

## TRANSLATING THE ENGLISH PREPOSITION “OF” INTO INDONESIAN

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**Abstract:** *This paper is an attempt to seek solution to the problem of translating the source language containing the English preposition “the” into well-accepted form in Indonesian as the target language. Some equivalent alternatives such as dari, tentang, sebagai, terhadap, untuk, dari antara, -nya and its zero equivalent signified as  $\emptyset$  are discussed. The Analysis of the samples of the data taken from Newton’s “Twentieth Century Literary theory” indicates that the equivalent words such as “dari” and “ $\emptyset$ ” have appeared as the first and second most frequent equivalents.*

**Keywords:** *translating, English preposition, Indonesian*

**Abstrak:** *Tulisan ini merupakan sebuah upaya untuk mencari pemecahan masalah penerjemahan Bahasa sumber yang mengandung preposisi Bahasa Inggris “the” kedalam bentuk yang lebih berterima dalam Bahasa Indonesia sebagai Bahasa targetnya. Beberapa alternatif lainnya yang ekuivalen seperti dari, tentang, sebagai, terhadap, untuk, dari antara, -nya dan ekuivalen nul-nya yang disimbolkan dengan  $\emptyset$  juga dibahas. Analisis dari sampel data diambil dari Newton’s “Twentieth Century Literary theory” mengindikasikan bahwa kata-kata yang ekuivalen seperti “dari” dan “ $\emptyset$ ” muncul sebagai ekuivalen yang paling sering muncul pertama dan kedua.*

**Kata kunci:** *menerjemah, preposisi Bahasa Inggris, Bahasa Indonesia*

### INTRODUCTION

#### Theoretical Overview

Translation is basically an attempt to transfer ideas from one language (source language) into another language (target language). The process of transferring involves many factors, both inside and outside the languages concerned (linguistic and extralinguistic factors). Both of these two factors have to be considered if equivalent ideas are to be derived (cf Deenay, 1983). This is also in accordance with Newmark’s ideas (1981) that a good quality of translation will be

capable of transferring to the target language of the whole message and original meaning derived from the source language.

Equivalent ideas to be rendered from a translation process is basically attributable to meaning-based translation (Larson, 1984). In this process, the surface structure of the target language is to meet the demand to express the original ideas coming from the source language. The end product of translation is the translatability of the original ideas

into well-accepted surface forms of the structures of the target language.

The process of translation often involves some attempts of adaptation : on one side, an attempt to be able to re-express the original ideas from the source language as well as, on the other side, an attempt to be able to adjust the expression of the original ideas to well-accepted forms of the target language. Those adjustments due to some alternative meanings as well as their different ways of expressing them are worth being identified so as to enable a successful transfer of meaning from the source language to the target language.

Since this paper focuses on the translation of the English preposition “of”, it would be noteworthy to consider

what some grammarians have to say about it. Huddlestons (1984, p 336) defines preposition as “...a word that indicates a relation between the noun or pronoun it governs and another word, which may be a verb, an adjective or another noun or pronoun”. He gives an example of the English preposition “of” in the following sentence :

1) *Her opinion of us improved.*

Huddlestons (cf also Berkoff, 1975, pp. 107-108) gathers that the preposition “of” as exemplified above signifies existing relation between *opinion* (Noun) and *us* (Pronoun). He also differentiates the preposition “of” in (1) as simple preposition from another group of the preposition “of” called as complex preposition as exemplified as follows:

<i>because of</i>	<i>by dint of</i>	<i>by means of</i>	<i>in lieu of</i>
<i>in spite of</i>	<i>instead of</i>	<i>by virtue of</i>	<i>for the sake of</i>
<i>in case of</i>	<i>in front of</i>	<i>in view of</i>	<i>on account of</i>
<i>on behalf of</i>	<i>on the strength of</i>		

Leech et al (1986, p. 42) classifies complex prepositions as idiom on the reason that, on one hand, they may behave like preposition but, on the other

hand, they may behave simply like a set of words.

The translation process of the sentence (1) containing preposition “of” may be diagrammed as:

SOURCE LANGUAGE → TARGET LANGUAGE

*Her opinion of us improved*

*Pendapatnya tentang kami (telah) meningkat.*

It could be misleading to say that the end product of translation always produces one equivalent word without having any other alternatives. Empirical evidence based on the corpus for this research would readily indicate that preposition “of” may have some alternative equivalents depending on its linguistic context within the sentence.

The Indonesian main prepositions are *di* (“in, at”), *ke* (“to”) and *dari* (“from”). In addition, there is another set of preposition that could be of relevance as equivalent translation in the target language such as : *untuk*, *terhadap*, *antara* and *tentang* (Keraf, 1970, p.p. 87-88). The first two main prepositions *di* (“in, at”) and *ke* (“to”) in Indonesian may

be considered less relevant as equivalent words in the target language as the two commonly precede Adverb of Time. In translating the original idea of the source language into the forms of the target language, the English preposition “of” may also take the form of *-nya* or *sebagai*. This could be well understood

since equivalent translation sometimes may take different part of speech in the target language.

So the given example above may have some alternative equivalents that have to be chosen by the translator as follows:

*tentang*  
*\*dari*  
*\*antara*  
 - *Pendapatnya*      *\*nya*      *kami (telah) berkembang.*  
*\*terhadap*  
*\*sebagai*

Possible equivalents noted with asterisks are not chosen on ground that they do not re-express the original meaning from the source language; whereas, the word “*tentang*” is considered as a more acceptable surface form re-expressing the original meaning in the target language, Indonesian.

## METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research paper was descriptive as it attempts to describe the phenomena under study factually and accurately (cf. Isaac & Michael, 1981, p. 42). Whereas the source of data used for this research is used Newton’s “Twentieth-century Literary Theory (1988). However, considering that the book is an anthology containing excerpts from some different

writers also having different styles, the researchers decided to place his point of observation on the introductory parts of each chapters characterizing the style of the same person – the editor. So the whole collection of the introductory parts of the chapters in the book is treated as the population of the study.

## Finding and Discussion

### 1. Frequency of occurrence of the translated preposition “the”

For counting the frequency of the occurrence of the translated preposition “the” in the target language, it is necessary to posit the linguistic form  $\emptyset$  indicating that no surface equivalent is given in the target language. The following table indicates the frequency of the translated items:

**Table1 : Frequency of translated preposition “the”**

No	Equivalent in the target language	Population (pages being examined)	Frequency of occurrence	
			Number of Pages	Number of Items
01	<i>Dari</i>	27	24	139
02	$\emptyset$	27	26	122
03	<i>Tentang</i>	27	14	16
04	<i>terhadap</i>	27	4	4

05	-nya	27	4	9
06	Untuk	27	2	2
07	Sebagai	27	2	1
08	dari antara	27	1	1
09	daripada	27	1	1
10	Miscellaneous	27	9	12

## 2.1 “dari” as equivalent word

The equivalent word “*dari*” for the English preposition “of” is generally chosen if the element preceding the preposition has more specific idea or becomes the focus of the idea on the element following the preposition. The following are some examples of the preposition “of” that is rendered as “*dari*” :

1) *The subject of literary science* is not literature, but literariness ... .

(*Pokok bahasan dari ilmu kesasteraan* bukanlah kesusasteraan, tetapi kesasteraan ... .)

2) They particularly stressed *the importance of Aristotle’s Poetics* ... .

(Mereka secara khusus menegaskan *arti penting dari Poetikanya Aristoteles*... .)

3) ... *the operation of consciousness* can be analyzed phenomenologically.

(... *cara kerja dari kesadaran* dapat dianalisis secara fenomenologis.)

From the examples above, it is obvious that the structural order will be as follows:



In most cases, generally in texts loaded with ideas, the element preceding preposition consists of noun functioning as Head and the element following preposition functions as Modifier. In this case, the English construction having the structure M(odifier) + H(ead) is generally translated into the target language, Indonesian, as H(ead) + M(odifier). This is represented by the following examples:

4) . . . . one should distinguish between *different types of literary discourse* . . . .

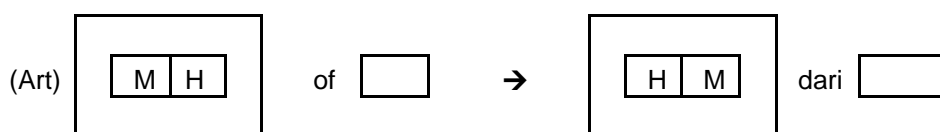
(. . . . kita semestinya membedakan antara *jenis yang berbeda-beda dari wacana*

*susastra* . . . .)

5) . . . . *the horizontal relations of language* have to be considered as if they are vertical.

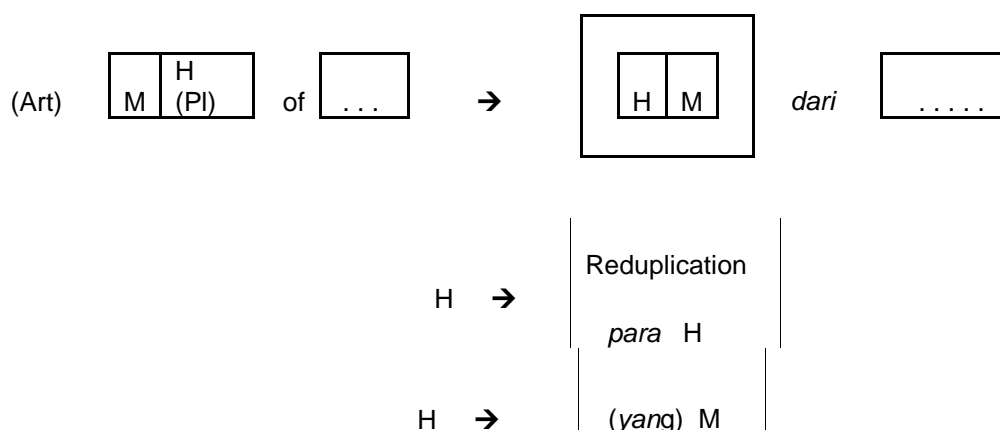
(. . . . *pertautan-pertautan horizontal dari bahasa* harus dipahami seolah-olah mereka vertikal)

So the pattern of translating the structure of modification on the element preceding preposition may be represented by the following diagram:



The nominal unit undergoing modification referred to as nominal group may come before or after preposition depending on the thickness of the bundles of meaning to be expressed. In some cases, H in English is in the plural form (Plural = Pl), of which has the equivalent translation in Indonesian in the form of reduplication or equivalent translation preceded by the plural marker

“*para*” if the plural meaning is meant to be foregrounded in the target language as it is probably considered significant. In addition, in some contexts, M in the target language needs to be preceded by the relater “*yang*” that may be optional in any other contexts. So the above diagram representing the translation may be improved as follows :



## 2.2 “*ø*” as equivalent word

The equivalent word “*ø*” is a means to say that the preposition “of” in some context in the target language is not given any equivalent lexical item at all. If the equivalent lexical item in the target language were given, the translation would sound superfluous. The following are some examples :

- 1) ... he argues that *the perceiver of a work of art* must be seen in social-terms, as *a product of society* and its ideologies.

( ... dia berargumentasi bahwa *pemaham ø suatu karya ø seni* harus dipahami dalam

*pengertian sosial sebagai suatu produk ø masyarakat dan ideology-ideologinya).*

- 2) ... *the interpreter of a text* has a moral duty to understand it in relation to its original context.

(... *penafsir ø suatu teks* mempunyai suatu tugas moral untuk memahaminya dalam

kaitannya dengan konteks aslinya).

3) Roman Jakobson ..... in his later career developed *a theory of literature* that had its basis

in linguistics.

(Roman Jakobson ..... dalam karirnya di kemudian hari mengembangkan *suatu teori* Ø

*susastra* yang berbasis pada linguistik).

The examples above represent the translation process in which the element

preceding the preposition "of" is generally in the form of noun and is not involved in the process of modification. In cases whereby noun is involved in the structure of modification by the presence of a modifier, 2 alternative translation may be rendered as found in :

4) ..... *a diachronic study of language* .....  
(.....*suatu kajian* Ø *bahasa* (yang *diakronik* .....), of which can structurally be represented in a linear order as:

Art 

M	H
---	---

 of 

--

 → 

H
---

 Ø 

--

 (yang) M  
(secara)

5) ..... *the sociological context of language* ..... ,

( ..... *konteks sosiologis* Ø *bahasa* ..... ), of which can structurally be represented in a linear order as :

Art 

M	H
---	---

 of 

--

 → 

H
---

M
---

--

### 2.3 “tentang / mengenai” as equivalent word

The English preposition “of” often has equivalent translation as “*tentang / mengenai*” if the element following the preposition expresses a state of being, or a further specification of the element preceding the preposition. The following are some examples :

1) *Richards’s concept of the literary work* as pseudo-statement ..... was fundamental to the

New Criticism .... .

(*konsep Richards tentang karya sastra* sebagai pseudo-pernyataan ..... adalah fundamental bagi Kritik Sastra Baru .... .)

2) ..... the realism of the realistic nineteenth century novel ..... incorporates *a recognition of*

*the contradictions* with the bourgeois society.

( ..... *realisme dari novel realistik abad sembilan belas* ..... mengikutsertakan *suatu*

*pengakuan tentang pertentangan-pertentangan dengan masyarakat borjuis.*)

### 2.4 “Untuk” as equivalent word

In some contexts the English preposition “of” has its translated equivalent as “*untuk*” (or sometimes also “*guna*”). In this context the element following the preposition “of” generally expresses some idea concerning objective, purpose or utility as expressed

by the element preceded the preposition. The following are some examples:

1) He developed *methods of studying consciousness* . . . . .

(Dia mengembangkan *metode-metode untuk mengkaji kesadaran* . . . . .)

2) Wilhelm Dilthey (1833 – 1911) . . . . attempted to found hermeneutics on a more

scientific basis for *the purpose of studying* the human sciences . . . . .

( Wilhelm Dilthey (1833 – 1911) . . . . . berusaha membangun hermeneutika pada basis

yang lebih ilmiah bagi *tujuan untuk mengkaji* ilmu-ilmu kemanusiaan . . . . .)

## 2.5 "dari antara" as equivalent word

From the population being studied only one sentence containing the preposition "of" having the equivalent word "*dari antara*" can be found. Such equivalent is given if the element preceding the preposition expresses one out of some possible ideas in the element following the preposition using comparative or superlative degree of comparison as follows :

1) Northorp Frye has been *the most influential of those critics* . . . . .

(Northorp Frye adalah *yang paling berpengaruh dari antara* para kritikus tersebut . . . . .) .

## 2.6 "sebagai" as equivalent word

The equivalent word "*sebagai*" is rendered if the element following the preposition "of" is a metalanguage of the idea as expressed by the element preceding it. In the population being researched there is only one sentence containing two prepositions of this type :

1) He uses the term 'rhetoric' not *in the classical sense of persuasion* but rather *in the sense*

*of those techniques* and devices an author uses to enable his work to communicate in the way he wishes to the reader.

(Dia menggunakan istilah 'retorika' bukan *dalam pengertian klasik sebagai persuasi*

*melainkan dalam pengertian sebagai teknik-teknik dan saran-sarana tertentu* yang

digunakan oleh seorang pengarang untuk memungkinkan karyanya berkomunikasi

sejalan dengan yang diinginkannya)

## 2.7 "terhadap" as equivalent word

The equivalent word "*terhadap*" is rendered from the English preposition "of" if the element following the preposition "of" becomes the target of the idea as expressed by the element preceding it. In the population being researched two sentences containing preposition of this types can be found as follows :

1) A *theoretical justification of Lewis's position* can . . . . be formulated . . . . .

( Suatu *pembenaran teoritis terhadap posisi Lewis* dapat . . . dirumuskan . . . . .)

2) . . . . the greatest literary works . . . . incorporate in their form *a critique of these*

*ideologies*.

( . . . . karya-karya sastra teragung . . . . menyertakan . . . . dalam wujudnya *suatu kritikan*

*terhadap ideologi-ideologi ini.*)

## 2.8 "-nya" as equivalent word

In some contexts in the target language in Indonesian the equivalent word "-nya" is deemed to be obligatory

as it expresses some special meaning. However, it is noteworthy that such rendered equivalent is often regarded as unnecessary by some Indonesian traditional grammarians as found in the construction : *rumahnya* Ali. The following are examples of this type :

1) Kenneth Burke might be called *the Baktin of the New Criticism*.

( Kenneth Burke bisa dijuluki *Baktinnya Kritik Baru*.)

2) E.D. Hirsch, probably the most important defender of *the traditional hermeneutic*

*approach of Schleiermacher and Dilthey* . . . .

(E.D. Hirsch, mungkin pembela terpenting dari *pendekatan hermeneutik tradisionalnya*

Schleiermacher dan Dilthey.).

The presence of the rendered equivalent word “-nya” does really convey some special meaning and it does really help clarify the meaning as originally expressed in the source language.

## 2.9 Miscellaneous equivalent words

In some cases the English preposition “of” is part of some idiomatic expressions and therefore the preposition is part and parcel of the whole idiomatic expression as follows :

1) He goes *part of the way* with Brook’s type of formalism . . . .

( Dia mengikuti *sebagian* corak formalismenya Brook . . . . )

2) . . . . one cannot *leave out of account* sociological and psychological factors.

(. . . . kita tidak dapat *mengabaikan* faktor-faktor sosiologis dan psikologis.).

In some cases, one also has to pay attention to the use of the preposition “of” in constructions that are recognized as being formal in nominalization as found in :

*His opinion is of interest to us* can be rendered as less formal in *His opinion is interesting to us* as found in the data :

1) . . . . the arguments he uses to justify his refusal are *of considerable theoretical interest*.

This sentence can be paraphrased as follows :

1) . . . . the arguments he uses to justify his refusal are theoretically very interesting.

As found in this example, the preposition “of” functions as a marker of formal construction. Therefore the important thing is not how to translate the preposition “of”, but how to translate the meaning of the whole construction into a construction in the target language having equivalent degree of formality. As a case in point, the above construction in the source language is rendered in the target language based on its paraphrase :

(. . . . *argument-argumen yang dipergunakannya untuk membenarkan penolakannya secara teoritis sangat menarik*.).

It is also worthy of note that the principle of economy must be considered in the choice and use of lexical items in the target language (Indonesian) :

1) . . . . yet one can know *the meaning of the whole* only through knowing *the meaning of its parts*.

(. . . . tentunya kita dapat memahami makna *Ø* keseluruhan hanya melalui memahami makna *dari* bagian-bagiannya.).



cf \* ( . . . . tentunya kita dapat memahami makna \**dari* keseluruhan hanya melalui

memahami makna *dari* bagian-bagiannya.)

2) . . . . as a result *of* the impact *of* the philosophy *of* Martin Heidegger . . . . .

(. . . . sebagai akibat *dari* dampak  $\emptyset$  filsafatnya Martin Heidegger . . . . .)

cf \* (. . . . sebagai akibat *dari* dampak \* *dari* filsafat  $\emptyset$  Martin Heidegger . . . . .)

From the two examples above, it is clear that attempts have been made to avoid the repetition of the rendered equivalents in the target language.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the population of this research paper a conclusion may be drawn as follows:

- 1) Preposition "of" depending on their context may have some equivalents in Indonesian  
such as : *dari*, *tentang*, *sebagai*, *terhadap*, *untuk*, *dari antara*, *-nya* and  $\emptyset$  representing dummy equivalent.
- 2) From various equivalent available, the equivalents *dari* and  $\emptyset$  are most frequently rendered.
- 3) The process of translating the preposition "of" to be rendered as *dari* may be formulated according to its linear order in Indonesian as H - M - *dari* - X.
- 4) The frequency of the dummy equivalent is high. The decision to give a lexical equivalent in place of the dummy equivalent may result in less natural translation in the target language.
- 5) The equivalent *tentang* / *mengenai* for the preposition "of" is rendered if the element following the preposition constitutes a state of being or further specification.

- 6) The equivalent *untuk* for the preposition "of" is rendered if the element following the preposition expressing objective, purpose or benefit with regards of the idea expressed on the element preceding the preposition.
- 7) The equivalent *dari antara* for the preposition "of" is rendered if the element preceding the preposition constitutes a unit of ideas out of another greater unit of ideas.
- 8) The equivalent *sebagai* for the preposition "of" is rendered if the element following preposition "of" constitutes a metalanguage of the idea as found on the element preceding preposition.
- 9) The equivalent *terhadap* for the preposition "of" is rendered if the element following the preposition constitutes the target.
- 10) The equivalent *-nya* for the preposition "of" is rendered if it states ownership of the element following the preposition.
- 11) Preposition "of" is a means for the construction of nominalization in English that marks it as formal.
- 12) Economy in the choice and use of the equivalent lexical items in the target language must be given proper consideration in the translation process.

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