

Back-Translation as a Tool for Identifying Language Change

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Abstract—This study concerns the use of back-translation as a tool for identifying language change. This research is based on theories of back-translation (Baker, 1992) and language change (Campbell, 1998), focusing the use of this tool to identify shifts in language usage from lexical, morphological, and syntactical points of view. The original texts used for this study are the Indonesian novels *Sitti Nurbaya* (Rusli, 1922, ed. 2010), *Sukreni Gadis Bali* (Tisna, 1936, ed. 2013), and *Salah Asuhan* (Moeis, 1928, ed. 2013). The language used in these literary works is known as old Indonesian. All three novels have been translated into English: the first keeping its original title, *Sitti Nurbaya* (Fowler, 2009), *Sukreni Gadis Bali* as *The Rape of Sukreni* (Quinn, 2012), and *Salah Asuhan* as *Never the Twain* (Susanto, 2010). These English translations have in turn been translated back into Indonesian. The language used in these back-translated texts is present-day Indonesian, as used by speakers today. When the old Indonesian and contemporary Indonesian versions are compared, discrepancies may arise, even though the meanings of both texts are the same. These differences are considered to signify changes in the language. Our findings show that this back-translation method can be applied to understand changes in Indonesian usage. These include lexical changes, such as the word *sebagai* being replaced by *seperti*, or *sekalian* replaced by *semua* or *seluruh*; morphological changes, such as *diobat* changing into *diobati*, or *menghinakan* into *menghinia*; and syntactical changes, such as the term *suka kepada* being replaced by *suka*.

Index Terms—back-translation, old and present-day Indonesian, language change

I. INTRODUCTION

Every living language tends to develop over time in accordance with changes in various aspects of life. This implies that all languages may change and that this process cannot be prevented or avoided (Campbell, 1998, p. 3). Whether or not this change has occurred can be traced by comparing the language used nowadays with that used previously. When differences arise, it may indicate that there has been a shift in usage.

Indonesian is an example of a language that has exhibited many changes over the past century. There are numerous literary works written decades ago in a language now known as old Indonesian. When these are read by present-day speakers of Indonesian, some lexis and grammatical structures may be hard to understand. Readers often find that certain words and structures are not understandable, as the language used in these literary works is different from that used by modern Indonesian speakers. This is proof that Indonesian has changed in certain ways, including lexical and grammatical shifts.

Comparing old versions of Indonesian with new ones is one way to trace language change. Given the ways in which this comparative method is applied, this approach is much the same as the process of back-translation. Back-translation is a common term used in translation studies. It refers to the method of re-translating texts that have been translated into another language back into the original language in which they were written. This method is commonly used to assess translation quality. It is carried out by comparing the results of the back-translation with the original text. For example, when a work is translated from Indonesian into English, the translated English text will be translated back into Indonesian. The two Indonesian texts are then compared. When differences occur, they may be indications of translation errors in the target language version (Tyupa, 2011).

A number of translation experts believe that the value of back-translation as a tool to validate translation results is still debatable (Son, 2018). On the one hand, some consider that the process can strengthen awareness of linguistic differences between one language and another (Li, 2016; Guo, 2017; Rosyidah et al., 2017), with one study finding that back-translation has a positive effect on the quality of translation (Yanti et al., 2020). On the other hand, others argue that problems arising from the procedure of validating translation quality through back-translation are not clearly mentioned (Tyupa, 2011). When a difference occurs between the back-translated result and the original text in terms of word choices, but not in meaning, the target language version cannot be termed an error since the words are simply synonyms. In other words, whether the translation shows equivalence or not will depend on the result of the analysis or review process, which itself determines whether the two texts produce the same response or not (Nida & Taber, 1969, p.

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When the differences are those of meaning, the back-translation method can be considered a useful assessment tool to validate a translation and identify any errors. When the original and the back-translated texts do not show differences in meaning, this may be used as a measure of translation quality. This implies that the back-translation method can be applied to investigate other language phenomena, which makes it a tool of interest to researchers in other areas (Son, 2018; Ozolins, 2009).

Numerous studies have been concerned with translation quality. Some works focus on the quality of translation in dealing with culture-specific elements (Gümüş & Gültekin, 2021), such as the need for automated translation tools to translate certain cultural expressions (Çakir & Bayhan, 2021). Other researchers have explored the issue of translation quality more specifically by using the back-translation method as a tool. A study by Guo has explored how both language and translation method choices can be adapted to make an authentic, accurate, and smooth translation (Guo, 2017). Another study demonstrates that back-translation can be applied as a tool of language documentation (Son, 2018). Back-translation has been viewed from a variety of different perspectives, such as translation theories of intertextuality and interculturality (Cai, 2021), or the theory of acculturation (Chen & Li, 2018). Researchers have also demonstrated that back-translation can be used in a wide variety of research fields, ranging from medical texts (Ozolins, 2009) to literary works (Chen & Li, 2018). At an analytical level, applying contrastive analysis, back-translation tends to be viewed from the perspective of word choices, collocation, and sentence mechanics (Li, 2016).

Despite this large body of research, there are no studies which have examined back-translation in relation to language change. Therefore, deploying separate theories of back-translation (Baker, 1992) and language change (Campbell, 1998), this study is an attempt to prove another merit of back-translation as a tool for identifying changes in language use. Changes are discovered by comparing two related versions of the same or similar languages. They are revealed when the two versions show the same meanings but use different word choices, or when any aspect of an older linguistic structure cannot be found any more in the most recent version. The subject explored here is the Indonesian language. This investigation was carried out by comparing old Indonesian, used in novels written several decades ago, and their back-translated texts from English into modern Indonesian.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The key concepts of this study include back-translation and language change. The following descriptions of these concepts are used as references in elaborating the data.

A. Back-Translation

Back-translation is a common term in translation studies. This method has a popular function to validate the quality of a translation. As its name suggests, Baker (1992) defines back-translation as involving translating the target text back into the source language from which it is originally translated (p. 8). He also adds that in translating the already-translated text back into the original text, the text must be translated as literally as possible. The process of back-translation is as follows: firstly, the translated text is re-translated back into its source language; secondly, the result of back-translation is compared with the original text. Thirdly, any differences in meaning between the result of the back-translation and the original text are reconciled.

Li (2016) summarizes five functions of back-translation (p. 816) as follows: (1) as a tool to assess the quality of translation; (2) as a tool in language and translation teaching; (3) as a good way to preserve culture; (4) as an approach to improve language learning; and (5) as a tool for research. The function of back-translation as a research tool is based on observations by Baker (1992), that by performing a back-translation, learners can gain some insight into dealing with the various linguistic features of the languages involved in the translation process (p. 8).

B. Language Change

Language change is a fact of life which cannot be prevented or avoided (Campbell, 1998, p. 3). It is revealed in the comparison of related languages. Language change is different from language variation. In language variation, no one word or structure is inherently superior to another, since they may be dialects of the same language (Chineze et al., 2021, p. 748).

All aspects of a language's structure can change. Linguistically, these include lexical change, grammatical (syntactic and morphological) change, semantic change, sound change, borrowing, and orthographic change.

Lexical change concerns instances of loss of vocabulary items, which are then represented by other words. Old English shows lexical changes that are evident in Modern English; for example, *genēalæton* was replaced by *approached*, *cwædon* by *said*, and *gesweotolað* by *shows* and *reveals*. Lexical change may be accompanied by the creation of new words through analogy, borrowing, semantic change, or neologism. The sources of neologisms include new words created by authors or famous people, as well as place names, brand (trade) names, acronyms, compounding of words, and so forth. During the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous new English words were created that can be found on social media and in books, articles, and the news. New terms include "WFH" (for "working from home"), "new normal", "coronials", and "self-quarantine" (Nabila & Abdulrahman, 2021, p. 24).

Grammatical changes include both syntactic and morphological alterations. Syntactic changes involve three underlying mechanisms: reanalysis, extension, and borrowing. The reanalysis mechanism changes the underlying structure of a syntactic construction; the change does not modify the surface manifestation. Changes in grammatical categories and word order are examples of reanalysis. In the mechanism of extension, there is a change in surface manifestation; this does not involve direct modification of the underlying structure. Examples of changes of extension include a change in the subordinate clause or a move from reflexive to passive. Syntactic change can also occur because of syntactic borrowing. One language may borrow the syntactic structures of another, for example.

Semantic change concerns the change of meaning. This is understood as a change in the concepts that are associated with a word. Such semantic changes may occur through widening and narrowing of meaning, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, degeneration, elevation, taboo replacement, hyperbole, and semantic shifts due to language contact.

Sound changes constitute phonemic or non-phonemic changes. In general, they can be categorized into regular and sporadic sound changes. Regular sound changes occur and take place uniformly whenever the phonetic circumstances in which the change occurs are encountered: in other words, whenever the circumstances or environments that condition the change arise. In Spanish, for example, the original *p* regularly became a *b* when it occurred between vowels. This implies that whenever the sound *p* comes between vowels, it becomes a *b* sound.

By comparison, when sporadic changes occur, these changes are not generally applied. Such changes cannot be predicted and they only affect one or a few words. For instance, the Old English *spræc* lost the *r* in Modern English, becoming *speech*. Yet when other sounds appear within this context, the *r* is not generally lost as in *spræc*. One study dealing with language change, carried out on the Minang language and Sijunjung dialect in Indonesia, revealed that the Minang language and Sijunjung dialect have several prominent dissimilarities in terms of phonological aspects. The changes found include the change from the alveolar /r/ to the voiced velar fricative /gh/, from /r/ to /w/, from /a/ to /o/, and /a/ to /aw/ (Antoni et al., 2019, p. 92)

Borrowing takes place when one language takes words from another and includes it as parts of its vocabulary. Both need and prestige are considered as reasons why a language borrows words from other languages (Campbell, 1998). What can be borrowed is not restricted to lexical items. All linguistic items can be borrowed, such as sounds, syntactic patterns, phonological rules, grammatical morphemes, and so forth. Because of borrowing, many similar words can be found in different languages. One example is the Indonesian *tembakau*, the Finnish *tupakka*, and the Japanese *tobacco*.

III. METHOD

This study deals with changes that have occurred in the Indonesian language. The research was carried out by identifying the differences between Indonesian texts in their old and present-day versions. The texts were taken from three Indonesian novels which use old Indonesian. These novels were written and published nearly a century ago or more: *Sitti Nurbaya* by Marah Rusli in 1922, *Sukreni Gadis Bali* by Nyoman Pandji Tisna in 1936, and *Salah Asuhan* by Abdul Moeis in 1928. All of these novels have since been translated into English: *Sitti Nurbaya* as *Sitti Nurbaya* (Fowler, 2009), *Sukreni Gadis Bali* as *The Rape of Sukreni* (Quinn, 2012), and *Salah Asuhan* as *Never the Twain* (Susanto, 2010). The editions of the original Indonesian source texts used are *Sitti Nurbaya* (2010), *Sukreni Gadis Bali* (2013), and *Salah Asuhan* (2013).

To obtain the present-day Indonesian texts, the translated texts (TTs) were translated back into Indonesian. The TTs chosen were the ones which show adequate translations of the original or source texts (ST). Every text was translated by 10 students of English Department, Faculty of Letters, Warmadewa University, Bali, Indonesia. So, one translated text has 10 back-translated texts (BT1 up to BT10). The BTs were then considered as representing present-day Indonesian.

The changes which occurred in the Indonesian language were assessed according to the following steps. Firstly, the original texts in old Indonesian were compared with their back-translated texts. This analysis was carried out at the levels of lexical and grammatical change. In terms of lexical change, the words in old Indonesian were compared with their present-day Indonesian equivalent. When the two words compared showed different forms but the same meaning, the original text was considered to have undergone a language change. The same analysis was carried out for changes at the grammatical level, including morphological and syntactical changes.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the comparisons between the original texts, termed old Indonesian, and their back-translated texts, termed new Indonesian, show that differences exist between the older and present-day versions of Indonesian in terms of the lexis used but not in terms of their meaning, which are the same. These differences can be identified as evidence of language change. The research reveals that this change occurs at both lexical and grammatical levels. Grammatical changes include morphological and syntactic differences. This indicates that the method of back-translation can be used as a tool to identify language change, including lexical, morphological, and syntactic shifts.

A. Back-Translation Used to Identify Lexical Change

When the results of the back-translation are compared with the old Indonesian text, some changes are seen to have occurred. A number of old Indonesian words are found to have been replaced by other Indonesian terms in the new

version. These are elaborated in the following table.

TABLE 1
LEXICAL CHANGE OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE

No	SL	TT	BT	The Change
1	sebagai	like	seperti	<i>sebagai</i> replaced by <i>seperti</i>
2	sedemikian	like that	seperti itu	<i>sedemikian</i> replaced by <i>seperti itu</i>
3	sekalian	all	semua, seluruh	<i>sekalian</i> replaced by <i>semua; seluruh</i>
4	bilik	room	kamar, ruang	<i>bilik</i> replaced by <i>kamar; ruang</i>
5	terlebih	the most	paling	<i>terlebih</i> replaced by <i>paling</i>
6	kocek	pocket	kantung; kantong; saku	<i>kocek</i> replaced by <i>kantung; kantong; saku</i>
7	seroman	identical	mirip, identik	<i>seroman</i> replaced by <i>mirip; identik</i>
8	daripada	from	dari	<i>daripada</i> replaced by <i>dari</i>
9	bila	when	kapan	<i>bila</i> replaced by <i>kapan</i>
10	sejurus	a moment	sebentar, sesaat, sejenak	<i>sejurus</i> replaced by <i>sebentar; sesaat; sejenak</i>
11	dapat	able to	bisa	<i>dapat</i> replaced by <i>bisa</i>
12	belanja	the money	uang	<i>belanja</i> replaced by <i>uang</i>
13	reguk	gulp	teguh	<i>reguk</i> replaced by <i>teguh</i>
14	langsai	be erased	lunas, dibayarkan; dihapus	<i>langsai</i> replaced by <i>lunas, dibayarkan; dihapus</i>
15	diburu-burukan	in a rush	dengan cepat; dengan terburu-buru; terburu-buru	<i>diburu-burukan</i> replaced by <i>dengan cepat; dengan terburu-buru; terburu-buru</i>
16	bersedia-sedia	prepare	menyiapkan; mempersiapkan	<i>bersedia-sedia</i> replaced by <i>menyiapkan; mempersiapkan</i>
17	bercerai	separated	berpisah; terpisah	<i>bercerai</i> replaced by <i>berpisah; terpisah</i>
18	bersangka	thought	mengira	<i>bersangka</i> replaced by <i>mengira</i>
19	nanti	wait	menunggu	<i>nanti</i> replaced by <i>menunggu</i>

Translation 1.

Original text: “Pandangan matanya tenang dan lembut, sebagai janda baru bangun tidur” (Rusli, 2010, p. 2).

TT: “Her gaze was calm and soft, like someone who had just awoken” (Rusli, 2010, p. 2).

To identify any lexical changes from the original or source text, the TT was retranslated into modern Indonesian.

Five representative sentences are presented and the results of the back-translation (BT1-BT5) are as follows:

BT1: Tatapannya sangat tenang dan lembut, seperti seseorang yang baru bangun.

BT2: Pandangannya kalem dan lembut, seperti seseorang yang baru bangun.

BT3: Tatapannya begitu tenang dan lembut, seperti seseorang yang baru saja bangun.

BT4: Dia menatap itu tenang dan lembut, seperti seseorang yang baru saja terbangun.

BT5: Tatapannya tenang dan lembut, seperti seseorang yang baru saja terbangun.

One word shows a change. It is the word *sebagai*. When the TT is translated back into Indonesian, the translation equivalents of the word *like* as the equivalent of *sebagai* are as shown in the following table.

TABLE 2
CHANGE OF THE WORD *SEBAGAI*

SL	Pandangan matanya		tenang dan lembut	<i>sebagai</i>	janda baru bangun tidur
TT	Her gaze	was	calm and soft	like	someone who had just awoken
BT1	Tatapannya		sangat tenang dan lembut	<i>seperti</i>	seseorang yang baru bangun.
BT2	Pandangannya		kalem dan lembut	<i>seperti</i>	seseorang yang baru bangun.
BT3	Tatapannya		begitu tenang dan lembut	<i>seperti</i>	seseorang yang baru saja bangun.
BT4	Dia menatap itu		tenang dan lembut	<i>seperti</i>	seseorang yang baru saja terbangun.
BT5	Tatapannya		tenang dan lembut	<i>seperti</i>	seseorang yang baru saja terbangun.

From the point of view of its meaning, *like* is equivalent to *sebagai* and *like* is also equivalent to *seperti*. This implies that *sebagai* has the same meaning with *seperti*. Based on the results of BT1-BT5, all modern translators chose *seperti* as the equivalent of *like*. It can be concluded that the word *sebagai* is not used anymore. It changed and was replaced by the word *seperti*. This can be considered as a kind of lexical change, since the respondents did not find the word *sebagai* in the same context in present-day Indonesian. Although *sebagai* and *seperti* have the same meaning, based on the context above, the two words are in different positions. *Sebagai* is an old Indonesian, while *seperti* is present-day Indonesian; in other words, *sebagai* has changed and is now represented by *seperti*.

Translation 2.

Original text: "Mamanda, janganlah berpikir sedemikian! Ingatlah Nurbaya!" (Rusli, 2010, p. 163).

TT: "Don't think like that! Think of Nurbaya!" (Rusli, 2010, p. 132).

BT1: Jangan berpikir seperti itu. Pikirkan Nurbaya.

BT2: Jangan berpikir seperti itu. Pikirkan Nurbaya.

BT3: Jangan berpikir seperti itu. Pikirkan Nurbaya.

BT4: Jangan berpikir seperti itu. Pikirkan Nurbaya.

BT5: Jangan berpikir seperti itu. Memikirkan Nurbaya.

TABLE 3
CHANGE OF THE WORD *SEDEMIKIAN*

SL	Janganlah	berpikir	<i>sedemikian</i>
TT	Don't	think	like that
BT1	Jangan	berpikir	<i>seperti itu</i>
BT2	Jangan	berpikir	<i>seperti itu</i>
BT3	Jangan	berpikir	<i>seperti itu</i>
BT4	Jangan	berpikir	<i>seperti itu</i>
BT5	Jangan	berpikir	<i>seperti itu</i>

Sedemikian is equivalent to *like that*, while *like that* is equivalent to *seperti itu*. This means that *seperti itu* is equivalent to *sedemikian*. Among the five BT results, however, no translation uses *sedemikian* as the equivalent of *like that* and all use *seperti itu* as the equivalent. This shows that the word *sedemikian* is not used anymore. It has been replaced by the new term, *seperti itu*.

Translation 3.

Original text: Sekalian Penghulu di Padang ini beristri dua, tiga, sampai empat orang (Rusli, 2010, p. 19).

TT: All the district heads in Padang have two or three, even four, wives (Rusli, 2010, p. 14).

When the TT above is translated back into Indonesian, the translations are:

BT1: Semua kepala desa di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga, sampai empat istri.

BT2: Semua kepala kecamatan di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT3: Semua kepala daerah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT4: Semua kepala wilayah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT5: Semua kepala daerah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga, bahkan empat istri.

Equivalents of the word *all* as a single word are elaborated on in the following table:

TABLE 4
CHANGE OF THE WORD *SEKALIAN*

SL	<i>Sekalian</i>	Penghulu	di Padang	beristri	dua, tiga, sampai empat orang
TT	All	the district heads	in Padang	have wives	two or three, even four
BT1	<i>Semua</i>	kepala desa	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, sampai empat.
BT2	<i>Semua</i>	kepala kecamatan	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga bahkan empat.
BT3	<i>Semua</i>	kepala daerah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga bahkan empat
BT4	<i>Semua</i>	kepala wilayah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, bahkan empat
BT5	<i>Semua</i>	kepala daerah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, bahkan empat istri.

The analysis above shows that the word *sekalian* in old Indonesian has changed and been replaced by the word *semua* in present-day Indonesian.

B. Back-Translation Used to Identify Morphological Change

The back-translation method can also be applied to identify morphological change. These include differences in word formation through the affixation process. In the affixation process, in the case of the data found in this study, both Indonesian in its old version and Indonesian in the new version use the same base, but the number of the affixes used is different. The words identified are as follows:

Translation 4.

Original text: “Tatkala ia hendak menutupkan matanya, terdengarlah olehnya bunyi langkah orang ...” (Rusli, 2010, p. 221).

TT: “Just as she was about to close her eyes, Alimah suddenly heard the sound of footsteps ...” (Rusli, 2010, p. 177).

When the TT is translated back into Indonesian, the results are as follows:

BT1: Tepat saat dia menutup mata, Alimah tiba-tiba mendengar suara langkah ka

BT2: Ketika dia baru saja menutup matanya, tiba-tiba Alimah mendengar suara langkah kaki.

BT3: Tepat saat ia memejamkan matanya, tiba-tiba Alimah mendengar suara hentakan kaki

The translation equivalence of the TT in BT could be elaborated by an analysis of meaning, as shown below.

TABLE 5
CHANGE OF THE WORD *MENUTUPKAN*

SL	Tatkala	ia	hendak	<i>menutupkan</i>	matanya
TT	Just as	she	was about	to close	her eyes
BT1	Tepat saat	dia		<i>menutup</i>	mata
BT2	Ketika	dia	baru saja	<i>menutup</i>	matanya
BT3	Tepat saat	dia	baru saja	<i>menutup</i>	matanya

To give the same meaning as *menutupkan*, the translations show that the Indonesian word used nowadays is *menutup*. This constitutes a change from a morphological point of view. The two words, *menutupkan* and *menutup*, have the same base. The base is *tutup*. Morphologically, however, both words are formed through different affixation processes. The Indonesian in its older version, *menutupkan*, is composed of the base *tutup*, the prefix *me-*, and the suffix *-kan*, while the present-day Indonesian consists of the base *tutup* and the prefix *me-* only. Since the word *menutupkan* is not found any more in present-day Indonesian, this can be considered an example of language change, involving a different morphological process between the two words.

Translation 5.

Original text: “Nyonya Tuan Assisten Residen sudah menghina aku sampai ke tanah....” (Moeis, 2013, p. 130).

TT: “The Assistant District Commissioner’s wife even insulted me in public....” (Moeis, 2013, p. 94).

BT1: Istri komisaris distrik pembantu bahkan menghina saya di depan umum.

BT2: Bahkan istri asisten komisaris distrik menghina saya di depan publik.

BT3: Istri asisten distrik commisioner menghinaaku di muka umum.

TABLE 6
CHANGE OF THE WORD *MENGHINAKAN*

SL	Nyonya Tuan Assisten Residen	sudah	<i>menghinakan</i>	aku	sampai ke tanah
TT	The Assistant District Commissioner's wife	even	insulted	me	in public
BT1	Istri komisaris distrik pembantu	bahkan	<i>menghina</i>	saya	di depan umum.
BT2	Istri asisten komisaris distrik	bahkan	<i>menghina</i>	saya	di depan publik.
BT3	Istri asisten distrik commisioner		<i>menghina</i>	ku	di muka umum

From the point of view of meaning, the SL and BT texts are equivalent. The results of the back-translation use different word choices, however. No new translation uses *menghinakan*, since that word is not found in present-day Indonesian any more. The word used as the equivalent is *menghina*. This suggests that *menghinakan* in old Indonesian has been replaced by *menghina*. The words used are different in form, but not in meaning. That said, the two words are formed by the same base, which is *hina*. Only their suffixation processes are different. *Menghinakan* is formed by the base *hina* attached to the prefix *me-* and the suffix *-kan*, while *menghina* is formed by the base *hina* with the prefix *me-*. So, to mean *insulted*, old Indonesian used *menghinakan*, while present-day Indonesian uses *menghina*.

Translation 6.

Original text: "Bila penyakitku ini tiada diobat..." (Rusli, 2010, p. 219).

TT: "If this sickness of mine can't be cured..." (Rusli, 2010, p. 175).

BT1: Jika penyakitku tidak bisa disembuhkan.

BT2: Jika penyakit saya ini tidak bisa diobati.

BT3: Jika penyakitku ini tidak bisa disembuhkan.

BT4: Penyakitku ini tidak bisa disembuhkan.

TABLE 7
CHANGE OF THE WORD *DIOBAT*

SL	Bila	penyakitku ini	tiada	<i>diobat</i>
TT	If	this sickness of mine	can't	be cured
BT1	Jika	penyakitku	tidak bisa	disembuhkan
BT2	Jika	penyakit saya ini	tidak bisa	<i>diobati</i>
BT3	Jika	penyakitku ini	tidak bisa	disembuhkan
BT4		Penyakitku ini	Tidak bisa	disembuhkan

Be cured as the equivalent of *diobat* in old Indonesian has more than one equivalent when it is translated back into modern Indonesian. The equivalents include *disembuhkan* and *diobati*. There is no choice of the word *diobat* in present-day Indonesian, where it is not found in the current vocabulary. When there are two translation possibilities in the back-translation results, it means that the two words, *disembuhkan* and *diobati*, are synonymous. When the source text uses the word *diobati* as the equivalent, it shows that this word has the same base when compared to the word *diobat*. The base of the two words is *obat*. Although they have the same base, their morphological processes are different. The word *diobati* is formed by the base *obat*, the prefix *di-*, and the suffix *-i*. *Diobat* is formed by the base *obat* and the prefix *di-*. Thus, *diobat* and *diobati* have the same meaning, but they are different morphologically.

C. Back-Translation Used to Identify Syntactic Change

Syntactic changes also occur in the Indonesian language. When the translated Indonesian texts are translated back into Indonesian, some of these can be identified. The following includes some of these changes:

Translation 7.

Original text: "Bakhtiar amat suka kepada kue-kue..." (Rusli, 2010, p. 36).

TT: "Bakhtiar really loves cake..." (Rusli, 2010, p. 29).

BT1: Bahtiar sangat menyukai kue.

BT2: Bahtiar sangat suka kue.

BT3: Bahtiar sangat menyukai kue.

BT4: Bahtiar sangat menyukai kue.

From the point of view of their meaning, all BT texts are equivalent to the TT. The analysis of their meaning can be elaborated as follows.

TABLE 8
CHANGE OF THE WORD *SUKA*

SL	Bahtiar	amat	<i>suka</i>	<i>kepada</i>	kue
TT	Bahtiar	really		loves	cake
BT1	Bahtiar	sangat		<i>menyukai</i>	kue
BT2	Bahtiar	sangat		<i>suka</i>	kue
BT3	Bahtiar	sangat		<i>menyukai</i>	kue
BT4	Bahtiar	sangat		<i>menyukai</i>	kue

Based on the analysis above, the syntactic change which occurs in the Indonesian language involves the usage of the verb *suka*. In old Indonesian, *suka* is followed by the preposition *kepada*, followed by a noun functioning as an object (O), represented here by *kue*. The following phrase occurs in the SL text: *suka kepada kue*. When the equivalent of *suka kepada kue* is retranslated back into Indonesian, the translation choices which occur include *menyukai kue* and *suka kue*. The verbs *menyukai* and *suka* are synonymous. Both are found in present-day Indonesian. In terms of syntactic structure, *menyukai* and *suka* are directly followed by an object, as denoted by the noun *kue*. There is no preposition *kepada* following these verbs. This means that there is a difference between the structures of the SL and the BT or between the old and present-day Indonesian usages. To convey the meaning of *love*, old Indonesian used the structure of S + V (*suka*) + preposition (*kepada*) + O, while the present-day Indonesian uses the structure of S + V (*suka/menyukai*) + O.

Translation 8.

Original text: “Oh, sudah tentu Nyonya tidak kenal kepada saya....” (Moeis, 2013, p. 221).

TT: “Oh, of course you don’t know me....” (Moeis, 2013, p. 153).

BT1: Oh tentu saja, kamu tidak tahu siapa aku.

BT2: Oh, tentu kau tidak mengenaliku.

BT3: Oh tentu saja kamu tidak kenal saya.

BT4: Oh sudah jelas kamu tidak tahu saya.

TABLE 9
CHANGE OF THE WORD *KENAL*

SL	Nyonya	tidak	<i>kenal</i>	<i>kepada</i>	saya
TT	You	don’t		know	me
BT1	Kamu	tidak		tahu	siapa aku
BT2	Kau	tidak		mengenal	ku
BT3	Kamu	tidak		<i>kenal</i>	saya
BT4	Kamu	tidak		tahu	saya

This syntactic change in the Indonesian language concerns the usage of the verb *kenal kepada* in the SL. To express the meaning of *know* as the equivalent of *kenal kepada* in present-day Indonesian, there are several words that can be used. They include *tahu*, *mengenal*, and also *kenal*. When *kenal* is used, there is a difference in its use if it is compared with the verb *kenal kepada*. The two verbs have the same meaning. The way in which they are used is different because of their respective contexts: *kenal kepada* belongs to old Indonesian, while *kenal* is used in present-day Indonesian. Referring to Table 9, in old Indonesian the verb *kenal* is followed by the preposition *kepada*, while in present-day Indonesian, *kenal* does not need any preposition to make the sentence grammatical. The difference in syntactic structure is that old Indonesian used the structure of S + V (*kenal*) + preposition (*kepada*) + O, while present-day Indonesian uses the structure of S + V (*kenal*) + O.

To summarise, back-translation can function as a tool to validate translation quality if it is presented with two conditions. When there is a difference in meaning between the results of the back-translation and the original text, the translation is considered non-adequate; whereas, when the result of the back-translation uses the same word choices, the translation can be considered adequate. For example:

SL: Kami menganalisis beberapa data.

TT: We analysed some data.

BT: Kami menganalisis beberapa data.

The back-translation above shows that the TT is adequate, since the BT and the SL have the same forms and meaning. When the method of back-translation is applied and this condition arises, it can be considered a validation of the translation. Some back-translations present different results and different conditions: for example, they may not use the same word choices but they are all still equivalent.

Our research also indicates that the lexical items used in the SL and BT are different but they show the same meaning. If there are several variations in the BT, including the use of the same word as in the SL, this condition might imply that it is a problem of word choice. However, when the BTs involve around a number of translators and all choose the same word – which is not the word used in the SL – this implies that the original SL word is no longer in use, and has instead been replaced by a word or phrase that is understood by the translator(s) of the BT. There may indeed be several modern words that are equivalent, all of which are synonyms.

Original text: *Sekalian* Penghulu di Padang ini beristri dua, tiga, sampai empat orang.

TT: All the district heads in Padang have two or three, even four, wives.

BT1: Semua kepala desa di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga, sampai empat istri.

BT2: *Semua* kepala kecamatan di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT3: *Semua* kepala daerah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT4: *Semua* kepala wilayah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

BT5: *Seluruh* kepala wilayah di Padang memiliki dua atau tiga bahkan empat istri.

The method of back-translation in the datum above is applied to identify lexical change. The word *sekalian* in the SL text has the same meaning as *semua* and *seluruh* in the BT texts. However, *sekalian* is not used any longer, as evidenced by no BT using this word as the equivalent of the word *all*. It is replaced by the word *semua* or *seluruh*, both of which are synonyms.

TABLE 10
BACK-TRANSLATION METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING LEXICAL CHANGE

SL	<i>Sekalian</i>	Penghulu	di Padang	beristri	dua, tiga, sampai empat orang
TT	All	the district heads	in Padang	have wives	two or three, even four
BT1	<i>Semua</i>	kepala desa	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, sampai empat.
BT2	<i>Semua</i>	kepala kecamatan	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga bahkan empat.
BT3	<i>Semua</i>	kepala daerah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga bahkan empat
BT4	<i>Semua</i>	kepala wilayah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, bahkan empat
BT5	<i>Semua</i>	kepala daerah	in Padang	memiliki istri	dua atau tiga, bahkan empat istri.

To identify lexical change, as long as there is no change of meaning, the method of back-translation is used to identify the change of the word choice in a particular slot. The second slot shows that *sekalian* in old Indonesian changes into *semua* in present-day Indonesian.

From a morphological point of view, the back-translation method also can help us understand changes in the use of words. When the word *insulted* as the equivalent of *menghinakan* is translated back into Indonesian, the word used as the equivalent is *menghina* instead of *menghinakan*.

TABLE 11
BACK-TRANSLATION METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE

SL	Nyonya Tuan Assisten Residen	sudah	<i>menghinakan</i>	aku	sampai ke tanah
TT	The Assistant District Commissioner's wife	even	insulted	me	in public
BT1	Istri komisaris distrik pembantu	bahkan	<i>menghina</i>	saya	di depan umum.
BT2	Istri asisten komisaris distrik	bahkan	<i>menghina</i>	saya	di depan publik.

The change of a word morphologically can be identified through back-translation by analysing words with the same base in the same slot. The fourth slots above show that *menghinakan* and *menghina* have the same base form – that is, *hina* – but morphologically the process of word formation is different. *Menghina* is formed through the prefixation process, by using the prefix *me-* with the base *hina*, while *menghinakan* is formed through prefixation using *me-* and by suffixation using *-kan*.

Syntactic change can also be traced by this method. The word *like* as the equivalent of *suka kepada* has the equivalent of *suka* (or synonymous with *menyukai*).

TABLE 12
BACK-TRANSLATION METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING SYNTACTIC CHANGE

SL	Bahtiar	amat	<i>suka</i>	<i>kepada</i>	kue
TT	Bahtiar	really		loves	cake
BT1	Bahtiar	sangat		menyukai	kue
BT2	Bahtiar	sangat		<i>suka</i>	kue
BT3	Bahtiar	sangat		menyukai	kue
BT4	Bahtiar	sangat		menyukai	kue

This word is not followed by the preposition *kepada* as found in the SL. Thus, there has been a change syntactically.

V. CONCLUSION

The use of different word choices in the resulting back-translations when compared with the original text does not imply that the translation does not show equivalence. Even so, when the SL and BT texts show the same meanings, the different word choices or forms which occur in the BT could indicate language change. This kind of language change occurs when the SL words or forms are not used anymore and replaced by other words or forms from present-day Indonesian.

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