

# **Translation Technique and Shift: Analysis of The Translation of Prepositional Phrase Found in Indonesian Version of John Green's *Looking for Alaska (Mencari Alaska)***

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## **Abstract**

Translation is a solution to overcome difficulties resulted from language barrier in the process of cross-cultural communication. It bridges cultural diversity and language difference among people around the world. In publishing world, translated version of literary work is provided to help readers understand the meaning of source text. Hence, by deploying Molina & Albir's theory on translation technique and theory of translation shift postulated by Catford, this qualitative descriptive study aims to analyse the translation of prepositional phrase found in Indonesian version of John Green's *Looking for Alaska (Mencari Alaska)*, which was translated by Barokah Ruziati and Sekar Wulandari. By analysing this, the problems in translating English prepositional phrase into Indonesian can be identified. Along the discussion, the study shows that there are 9 translation techniques found in the data; they are reduction, generalisation, establish equivalent, transposition, amplification, compensation, description, modulation and linguistic compression. Reduction is the most frequently used technique (31%) to avoid awkwardness and redundancy in translation. Three category shift: structure shift, unit shift and class shift, occur in the data. Class shift is the most common category shift to occur (60%) as it is difficult to maintain the lexical category of the source text.

**Keywords:** translation technique, translation shift, prepositional phrase, *Looking for Alaska*

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a global citizen in the globalisation era, information exchange is something we encounter on daily basis, and it sometimes covers wider scope across different language and culture; this process often leads to cross-cultural communication. However, language differences mostly become barrier in the process of communication, so the information cannot be delivered precisely. Translation is one of the solutions in overcoming the difficulties emerged. It bridges the cultural diversity and language difference among people around the world.

Unfortunately, converting the meaning in the process of translation from one language to another is not without any problem. For instance, certain words in the source language (SL) may be closely related to the culture of the region, which do not have the equivalent words in the target language (TL). If a translator cannot wisely translate certain word, inequivalent translation might be produced. Machali (2012) argues that the translator's internal factors commonly contribute to this non-equivalence problem. The lack of knowledge and competence that the translator has, in the field of either the source language or the text language or even both, is the main factor. Encountering this, he/she might make his/her own

very interpretation, which is risky to the quality of the translation, and make *'more than necessary contribution'* resulting to additional or loss of information in translation.

In the process of translation, several techniques are used. There are at least 18 techniques used in the translation at the level of word, phrase, clause, and sentence (Molina & Albir, 2002). The first one, **adaptation**, is a technique used to adjust the cultural element in SL into TL. **Amplification** is addition of detailed words or expression that is not exactly mentioned in SL but used to make the translation clearer. Then, **borrowing** is a technique to translate with appropriate words or expressions from TL as well as other languages. The technique of **compensation** is used for the difference between information and stylistic effects by adding replacement term. Additionally, describing the terms contained in SL since there are no equivalent words in TL is called **description**. **Discursive creation** is used in order to maintain the temporary equivalence that does not affect the whole context. **Establish equivalence** uses certain words in dictionary or more common expression used in daily conversation. **Generalisation** refers to translating which takes more general words. In addition to that, **linguistic amplification** is based on consecutive interpretation by adding linguistic elements. Following the amplification, **linguistic compression** is based on simultaneous interpretation by combining linguistic elements. When a translator translates word to word literally, the technique is called **literal translation**. Next, **modulation** changes point of view, focus and cognitive category that corresponds to TL in terms of lexical and structural element. **Particularisation** uses concrete and specific terms. The technique of **reduction** compresses or subtracts words or phrases that are considered less influential to the translation. Rarely used, **substitution** changes linguistics elements into paralinguistic (body language or gestures). In contrary to that, **variation** changes paralinguistic elements into linguistic elements. Finally, **transposition** is a technique of adjusting grammatical level, but the content will still remain.

Furhermore, every language has its own grammatical system, and this makes shift when translating cannot be avoided. Catford (1965) introduces two kinds of shifts in translation: level shifts and category shifts. He further explains that there are four categories in category shift, including structure shift, class shift, unit shift and intra-system shift.

**Structure shift** include not only changes in the order of elements of a sentence or phrase but also addition or subtraction of elements within a sentence or phrase. This shift is the most common category shifts in translation. **Class shift** occurs when the translation is equivalent, but the item in TL comes from different lexical category with the one in SL. **Unit shift** refers to changes of rank—that is, “changes from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL,” (Catford, 1965). For instance, a word in SL is translated in a phrase in TL, or phrase into clause, etc. The last one, **intra-system shift**, refers to any case where the shift occurs

internally within a system, that is to say that the source language share the same system as the target language. It is usually related to the system of number which employs singular and plural subject-verb agreement, but it is singular in SL while it is plural in TL.

These techniques and shifts can be used and occur simultaneously in translation, including in the translation of prepositional phrase. In prepositional phrase, a phrase takes position of the head, and one or more noun joined (Jackson, 2002). Downing and Locke (2006) breaks down prepositional phrase into two types: simple and complex prepositional phrase. **Simple prepositional phrase** consists of single prepositional particle, which is followed by modifiers or complements. There are several patterns depend on the kind of complements as the post-modifier. The complement can be a noun (N), a noun group (NG), a pronoun (Pro), an adverb (Adv), an adjective (Adj), a prepositional phrase (PP), a wh-clause (Wh-cl), and even a non-finite –ing clause. Whereas **complex prepositional phrase** is composed by two or three prepositions and followed by modifiers such as: noun, noun group, adverb, adjective, preposition, conjunction and simple prepositional phrase. The patterns of this kind of prepositional phrase can be divided into two types: (1) composed of three prepositions, including Prep+N+Prep and Prep+NG+Prep; and (2) composed of two prepositions, including Prep+Prep, Adv+Prep, Adj+Prep, and Conj+Prep.

Several studies have been previously conducted to analyse this issue. First, Hosseini-Maasoum & Shahbaiki (2013), in their attempt to analyse translation shifts in Persian translation of Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, found that unit shift dominates translation, and they concluded that shifts are unavoidable due to different natures of language and variations existing among them. Second, Supriyatno, Alimin, & Rohmana (2017), by deploying Catford's theory of structure shift to the analysis of translation of thesis abstract at Halu Oleo University, concluded that it is either mandatory or optional to apply structure shift and that producing accurate translation requires translator's sufficient knowledge on language system used in target text. Third, Tirtayasa & Setiajid (2018) analysed English translation of poem 33 of Goenawan Mohamad's poem collection entitled *On God and Other Unfinished Things*, and they concluded that translation shifts are beneficial in providing aesthetically acceptable translation for readers and that fluidity and naturalness in translation are the most important aspects. Lastly, by employing Newmark's theory of translation procedures, Ariyaningsih & Santika (2018) analysed Indonesian translation of English tourism text and found that naturalisation is the most procedure applied since there are many Indonesian words with same pronunciation as English words yet they differ in morphological form.

Hence, differing from previous related studies above, this paper aims to analyse the translation techniques used and the translation shift occurred in the Indonesian version of John

Green's *Looking for Alaska (Mencari Alaska)*. The analysis is focused on the prepositional phrase. By examining this, the problems in translating English prepositional phrase into Indonesian can be identified. The result of this study is expected to contribute in the literature of translation studies, particularly in the sphere of translation technique and translation shift. It also serves as reference for future researchers in conducting translation analysis and for translators in providing accurate translation.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study applies qualitative descriptive analytical method, as the data is analysed descriptively in aims to answer questions regarding the issue and explore the data (Loeb, et al., 2017). The data of the study are ten phrases taken from John Green's *Call Me by Your Name*, which is published in 2005 by Dutton Books in the United States of America along with their translated version *Mencari Alaska*, which was translated by Barokah Ruziati and Sekar Wulandari and published in 2014 by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama in Indonesia. The novel is chosen since it highlights the life of American teenagers at dormitory. It is interesting to see how the author converts the sociocultural context into Indonesian language. The data are collected by firstly determining the novel, and then highlighting the sentences that include prepositional phrase. The identified sentence, then, is chunked into phrase level. The data are analysed by classifying the type of prepositional phrase, and then analysing the classified phrases by using Molina & Albir's theory of translation technique and Catford's theory of category shift in translation. Then, the data analysis is interpreted, and several conclusions are drawn.

## DISCUSSION

Following sentences are some data where category shift occurs and several techniques used in the translation of prepositional phrase in Indonesian version of John Green's *Looking for Alaska (Mencari Alaska)* done by Barokah Ruziati and Sekar Wulandari. The problems are discussed in the order where they appear in the book.

1. ST: ... *the ragtag bunch of drama people and English geeks I sat with **by social necessity in the cavernous cafeteria of my public school**, I knew they wouldn't come.* (Green, 2005, p. 6)

TT: ... *sekumpulan anak penyuka drama dan kutu buku di kelas Bahasa Inggris yang biasanya duduk bersamaku **di kantin lantaran strata sosial kami**, aku tahu mereka tak akan datang.* (Green, 2014, p. 9)

In the source text, there are three simple prepositional phrases combined into one phrase. The phrase use Prep+NG pattern and followed by two other phrases with the same pattern. The prepositional particles are *by*, *in*, and *of*, while the complements are in form of noun group, including *social necessity*, *cavernous cafeteria*, and *my public school*.

In the translation above, the first techniques used by the translator is **reduction** with the omission of the word *cavernous*; *cafeteria* that is translated into *kantin* also marks **generalisation** as the translator translates it into more general world. **Establish equivalent** can be identified in the text with the translation of *social necessity* in ST into *strata sosial* in TT because it is more appropriate in daily conversation. There is another reduction to the text for the phrase *my public school* is not translated, instead, the translator changes the point of view into *kami* and not *saya* as the translation of *my*. This creates a loss of information in the target text, and the translation becomes inequivalent.

**Structure shift** occurs as the phrase *in the cavernous cafeteria* is moved to the initial part of the whole phrase, and *by social necessity* is moved backward. This is done to avoid awkwardness in the target language as the previous phrase is *duduk bersamaku*. In Indonesian, it would be weird if *lantaran strata sosial* is placed after that phrase because that will form incoherency. Applying this strategy, **transposition** is found since the grammatical level is adjusted in the text.

2. ST: *Still, my mother persevered, awash in the delusion that I had kept my popularity secret from her all these years.* (Green, 2005, p. 6)

TT: *Tapi tetap saja ibuku memaksa, dikuasai delusi bahwa aku menyembunyikan kepopuleranku.* (Green, 2014, p. 9)

The prepositional phrase contained in the text above uses Prep+Pro+AdvP pattern, so it is complex prepositional phrase composed of three preposition. The prepositional particle is *from*, followed by complement in form of pronoun *her*, and ended with an adverbial phrase *all these years*.

However, there is **reduction** in the prepositional phrase; it is not translated in the target text, at all. The translator might think that the word *mother* is previously mentioned in at the initial part of the sentence, so that it would be unnecessary to include the pronoun *her* as referent to *mother*. Still, it creates loss of information since it becomes unclear to whom the secret is kept. The phrase *all these years* is also omitted, making the translation inaccurate since it is unknown how long the secret has been kept. The translator has violated the rule that a translation should maintain accuracy. Thus, the translation in TT is of course non-equivalent to the ST. A good translation should meet the principle of NAC: naturalness, accuracy, clarity.

3. ST: *... the sun burned through my clothes and into my skin with a vicious ferocity that madame genuinely fear hellfire* (Green, 2005, p. 7)

TT: *... matahari membakar menembus baju dan memanggang kulitku dengan keganasan yang membuatku benar-benar takut menghadapi api neraka.* (Green, 2014, p. 12)

The prepositional phrase found in the text above is a combination of two simple prepositional phrase with Prep+NG pattern for each phrase. The prepositional particles are *into* and *with*; *my skin* and *a vicious ferocity* is the compliments following the head of the phrase.

The phrase *into my skin* is translated into *memanggang kulitku*. This has no direct relation to the terms in ST, but the author initiates to add words in detail in order to make the translation more sensible in Indonesian. This is done to adjust with Indonesian cultural context because it would be illogical if it is translated into *ke dalam kulitku*. Since it is a parallel clause, if it was translated that way, the clause would be *membakar ke dalam kulitku*. Pretty awkward to Indonesian reader. The strategy used by the author is called **amplification**, and this creates addition of information in the translation. **Reduction** also occurs with the omission of the word *vicious*. However, it is less influential, and the omission does not change or skew the meaning.

**Class shift** can be found in the text with the translation of *into my skin* in ST into *memanggang kulitku* in TT. The prepositional phrase in the original text is changed into verb phrase. The shift also marks **transposition** as a technique used by the author to overcome the problem, so she adjusts with the Indonesian grammar.

4. ST: ***Between Mom and Dad and me, it only took a few minutes to unload the car ...***

(Green, 2005, p. 7)

TT: ***Dengan bantuan Mom dan Dad, hanya butuh waktu beberapa menit untuk mengeluarkan semua barang dari mobil ...*** (Green, 2014, p. 12)

The text above contains simple prepositional phrase with the pattern Prep+NG. The pattern is the same both in ST and TT. The prepositional particle in ST is *between* while in TT, it is *dengan*. Actually, the meaning is different. *Between* should be ideally translated into *di antara*, but the translator decides to use the **compensation** technique by providing replacement term or the alternative.

There is an **amplification** with the addition of word *bantuan*. It is purely based on the interpretation of the author considering that the participant in the text is doing an action, so the translator feels it is necessary to put an additional word to support the illustration. This creates addition of information to the text, and the meaning is changed. The translation is rather non-equivalent.

The compliment to the phrase is the noun group *Mom and Dad and me* in ST, and *bantuan Mom dan Dad* in TT. However, the author is inconsistent in translating the word *mom*. Earlier, as mentioned in the data number two, the translator uses the word *ibu* as the equivalent translation, but here, she maintains the form *mom*. This would confuse the reader.

5. ST: ... *but my unair-conditioned dorm room, although blessedly **out of the sunshine**, was only modestly cooler.* (Green, 2005, p. 7)

TT: ... *tapi kamarku yang tidak ber-AC, meskipun syukurlah **tidak langsung tersorot matahari**, hanya terasa sedikit lebih sejuk.* (Green, 2014, p. 12)

In the source text, there are is a complex prepositional phrase combined of two phrases. The prepositional phrase uses the pattern PP+NG. The prepositional particle is *out of* and *the sunshine* is the noun group, or the compliment followed. However, there is no prepositional phrase found in the target text as the prepositional phrase is changed into adverbial phrase. This category shift is called **class shift**. The strategy is applied to avoid awkwardness.

Here, the translator uses **description** technique as the term *out of sunshine* is described by providing another term and adding another expression, especially with the word *tersorot*.

6. ST: *I stared out **over my new digs**: ...* (Green, 2005, p. 7)

TT: *Aku mengamati **lingkungan baruku**: ...* (Green, 2014, p. 14)

The prepositional phrase contained in the text above uses Prep+NG pattern, so it is simple prepositional phrase. The prepositional particle is *over*, followed by complement in form of noun group *my new digs*. Prepositional phrase cannot be found in the target text since it is translated into noun phrase. This makes **class shift** occurs. Such strategy is used because if the form of the phrase is maintained in the TT, it would be weird. Imagine if it was translated into *aku mengamati di atas lingkungan baruku*, that would be illogical, and the meaning would be distorted. Because the prepositional *over* is not translated, **reduction** is found in the text.

7. ST: *He heaved the duffel **into the room**, closed the door, and walked over to me.* (Green, 2005, p. 8).

TT: *Ia menghela tasnya **masuk**, menutup pintu, dan berjalan ke arahku.* (Green, 2014, p. 17)

Just like the data in the previous number, simple prepositional phrase with the pattern Prep+NG can be found in the text. The prepositional particle is *into*, and then it is followed by noun group *the room* as the compliment.

Prepositional phrase cannot be found in the target text since it is translated into a verb. By acquiring this translation shift, the author uses both **unit shift** and **class shift** since preposition is changed into verb, and phrase is changed into word. By changing *into the room* into the word *masuk*, the author uses **modulation**; the focus is changed from the setting to the action done by the participation of the text.

8. ST: *He told me this while ripping through his duffel bag, throwing clothes **into drawers with reckless abandon**.* (Green, 2005, p. 9)

TT: *Chip menjelaskan semua ini sambil membongkar tas, melemparkan pakaian ke dalam laci dengan asal-asalan.* (Green, 2014, p. 19)

The prepositional phrase found in the source text is a combination of two simple prepositional phrase having the pattern Prep+N+Prep+NG. The prepositional particles are *into* and *with*, and they are followed by noun *drawers* and noun group *reckless abandon* as the compliments to each head. The pattern of prepositional phrase in the TT is Prep+N+AdvP; it is a complex prepositional phrase with combination of three phrases. *Ke dalam* is the preposition, *laci* is noun, and the phrase is ended with the adjective phrase *dengan asal-asalan*.

The word *abandon* is not translated, marking the **reduction** in the translation. Also, *dengan asal-asalan* is the result of **establish equivalence** since the translation uses another term that is more familiar to the daily conversation. **Class shift** occurs as the prepositional phrase *with reckless abandon* is changed into adverbial phrase *dengan asal-asalan*. This is in order to adjust with Indonesian grammar.

9. ST: ... *I'm in the middle of a sentence about analogies or something and like a hawk he reaches down and he honks my boob.* (Green, 2005, p. 10)

TT: ... *aku sedang bercerita tentang analogi atau apalah, tiba-tiba ia menurunkan tangan seperti elang dan meremas payudaku.* (Green, 2014, p. 23)

In the source text, there are is a complex prepositional phrase combined of two phrase. The prepositional phrase uses the pattern PP+NG. The prepositional particle is *in the middle of* and *a sentence* is the noun group, or the compliment followed.

However, there is no prepositional phrase found in the target text as the prepositional phrase is changed into adverbial verb. Similar to the data in number 8, the author uses both **unit shift** and **class shift** since preposition is changed into verb, and phrase is changed into word. By changing *in the middle of a sentence* into the word *bercerita*, the author uses **linguistic compression** as the phrase is simplified in order to get better understanding.

10. ST: *Her library filled her bookshelves and then overflowed into waist-high stacks of books everywhere.* (Green, 2005, p. 10)

TT: *Koleksi bukunya berjejalan dalam rak-rak lalu tumpah menjadi timbunan buku setinggi pinggang dimana-mana.* (Green, 2014, p. 23)

The prepositional phrase contained in the text above uses Prep+NG+Adv pattern, so it is complex prepositional phrase composed of three preposition. The prepositional particle is *into*, followed by complement in form of noun group *waist-high stacks of books*, and ended with an adverb *everywhere*.



**The structure shift** occurs as there is a reversion in noun group *waist-high stacks of books* into the phrase *timbunan buku setinggi pinggang*. It can be seen that the word *stacks of books* is moved to the initial part of the phrase, followed by *waist high* in the final part. There is also class shift from prepositional phrase in the ST into verb phrase opened with verb *menjadi* in the TT. **Transposition** occurs as the translation wants to adjust the grammatical system by performing the translation shift.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the category shift and translation technique analysis of the data collected from the source of data, several conclusions can be drawn as follows.

1. Three out of four category shift: structure shift, unit shift and class shift, occur in the Indonesian version of John Green's *Looking for Alaska*. Class shift is the most common category shift to occur in the text, taking 60% of all (6/10), with the structure shift and unit shift having the same amount (20% each). There are two data that have unit shift and class shift occurring together in one sentence.
2. There are 16 translation techniques (9 out of 18 available types) used in the selected text; they are reduction, generalisation, establish equivalent, transposition, amplification, compensation, description, modulation and linguistic compression. Reduction is the most common technique applied in the translation (31%).
3. Transposition is always applied to the translation that has structure shift.
4. One of the problems in translating English noun phrase is maintaining the form of the text, especially the lexical category of the phrase. This is proven by the frequent appearance of class shift in the translation.
5. The translator often avoids awkwardness and redundancy by using reduction technique.
6. It is possible to have up to three combinations of simple prepositional phrase into one complex prepositional phrase.

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