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Editors:
Drs. Bambang Suroso, M.Hum.
Listiani, M.Pd.

English Education Department
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
The University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto
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The Importance of English Loan Words for Communication in Indonesian People

Rita Sutjiati Johan
Ichwan Suyudi

There are two kinds of words in Indonesia, original Indonesian words and loan words from other countries. A loanword (or loan word) is a word borrowed from a donor language and incorporated into a recipient language (Wikipedia). Indonesia has adopted many loan words, e.g. from English, Chinese, Sanskrit, Dutch, etc. There are two kinds of English loan word in Indonesia. The first one is English loan words that have not been completely accepted in Indonesian. These loan words are totally similar with their original forms. These kinds of words cannot be found in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. An example of this kind of English loan word is the word “shuttle cock”. The second one is the English loan words that have been completely accepted in Indonesian. These kinds of loan words are adopted according to Indonesian pronunciation and rules of orthography, so Indonesian people could pronounce them in their own dialect, and of course, these kinds of words are included in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. An example of this kind of English loan word is “computer” which is adopted as “komputer” in Indonesian.

English loan words first originated in the era of colonialism in Indonesia when the English people came to buy some daily needs for their country. They did not only take the crops and introduce their culture and religion to Indonesia, but they also brought their language to Indonesia, so there are many loan words in Indonesia due to the colonialism. However, in current life, globalization makes other countries not only bring their cultures to Indonesia, but also introduce their languages in the form of loan words. Because of the subtleties and simplicities of loan words originating from other countries, they make Indonesian people always want to use them in the daily conversation.

In Indonesia there are a lot of English loan words, especially for the current lives in the globalization era. Loan words are very important for communication among Indonesian people. Lots of people use English loan words in the informal communication in Indonesia. In Indonesia Not only are English loan words often used in informal communication, but
also in formal communication. There are many causes which make Indonesian people use English loan words, which will be discussed in this occasion.

English is an international language which is taught in elementary schools in almost every country all over the world. As an international language, its use can be easily spread out. Setiono (2002) wrote the belief that English is a prestigious and internationally recognized language cannot be separated from the social values of the language community concerned. Everyone is forced to know English if they want to communicate with people from other countries. This makes people unable to avoid using English loan words on every single day, even only words as “ok”. Everyone knows that if they do not use English in their daily life, they cannot speak English fluently, so they prefer to change some Indonesian words to English words. For all of this case, English can be easily accepted and used in Indonesia because of the people who want to improve themselves in communicating around the world, they have to learn English as an international language. In conclusion, English is the language which can force people to use and learn it, and to make people fluent in speaking English, Indonesian people often use English loan words in daily communication when the main language used is Indonesian.

Chief among the reasons for the marked shift towards teaching in English, especially at postgraduate level, were improved graduate employment and mobility prospects and the need for graduates who can speak English for international trade. (Green et al, July 2012). For the lecturers in college, English loan words are very useful to transfer their knowledge to their students. The lecturers who have the ability to speak English fluently are easier to transfer a lot of materials which Indonesia assimilated than those who lack the English ability. Lecturers can use the original words from English to mean something which they want to describe. The effect of this case is that the student will be more familiar with the English words especially with the scientific words which are usually used in the lecturing materials. In conclusion, lecturers who have the English ability will find it easier to transfer the knowledge to the students than those who do not have it.

Without any English loan words, Indonesian people could not describe many things because there are about 1610 words English loan words used in Indonesia, and the words

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that are usually used in the daily conversation are not included. Without those words, Indonesian people would find it hard to communicate with others because they have to use longer words to describe an English word in Indonesian making the conversation not very effective and efficient. Due to the big improvement in technology and communication in other countries which Indonesia cannot follow, and almost out of date in every kind of globalization aspects, Indonesian people can only approve of the words which they just know from the globalization and make them as loan words for themselves. Of course, because of the slowness of the Indonesian literature to make the loan words acceptable in Indonesia, Indonesian people can only use the words in the original form and then they try to make their own pronunciation in an easier way. So, English loan words are very important to in every conversation, especially the words which have not been clearly translated into Indonesian. The unavailable stock of vocabulary in Bahasa Indonesia encourages Indonesian people to import words from the English language (Setiono, 2002).

Most of the English loan words are used in the technology and communication aspects. There are more than 60% of the words used in technology and communication aspects. Due to this case, we can conclude that Indonesian people cannot avoid using loan words when they want to join the globalization era. Without using loan words Indonesian people cannot improve their technology and communication aspects. As we know that the current globalization in every side of the world is everything about technology and communication, such as gadget, computer, internet, social website, etc. If Indonesian people did not use English loan words, of course, Indonesia would not be able to compete in the globalization era. In this situation Indonesia would be left behind by the other ASEAN countries because Indonesia cannot compete in the euphoria aspects booming in the current lifestyle, technology and communication. Therefore, we can conclude that English loan words are very important for Indonesia to follow the globalization in the world so that Indonesia would not be left behind.

Another cause of the importance of English loan words is that there are a lot of people who have been abroad for a long time, and when they come back to Indonesia, they bring the language from the country they visitedas the loan words in Indonesia. This happens because they forget the meaning of those words in Indonesian, or the words are
not very familiar in Indonesian; even Indonesian people seldom use the Indonesian to mean those words. This makes Indonesian people who have been abroad only use the original forms of the words. From this case, we can conclude that if there were more people going abroad, there would be more English loan words in Indonesia. In fact, it covers not only English loan words, but also another country's loan words.

Some of the words in English cannot be translated into Indonesian or it will be so hard to describe them in Indonesian. For the words which cannot be translated into Indonesian, Indonesian people sometimes use their original forms from the English language to describe what they want to talk about in communication. Loan word is thus an example of itself (Hughes, 2000). The word like “komputer” which is an English loan word from the word “computer” would be very hard to be described by Indonesian people if they did not use the original form. The word “lift” is the loan word from British English that cannot be translated and hard to be described in Indonesian. Not only is it hard to explain in Indonesian, but also there are a lot of words which do not have the equivalent in Indonesian. For example: words such as film, video, golf, safari, etc. do not have the translated words in Indonesian, so Indonesian people just use the original forms. Those words are often said in the conversation in daily life, so it is very important for Indonesian people to know the English loan words to communicate with other people in the globalization era like this. We can conclude that English loan words are very important to describe something that has not been translated into Indonesian even if we know what the meaning of the words is.

English loan words are very important to make the knowledge transfer easier. For example, if people want to transfer the knowledge about financial aspects, it will be very hard for Indonesian people to describe it in Indonesian, because not only do they have to use many words, but also the description is sometimes not very clear to Indonesian people. Indonesian people often use the original forms of the words of financial aspects to describe them, and almost everyone knows what finance is, and what the aspects is, so they really know the knowledge that the speaker wants to describe. A failure to transfer knowledge in a timely and accurate way can lead to a host of consequences for an agency or program. Social Knowledge Transfer Using Executable English Premium Content (Walker, 2013).
Some English loan words are more familiar to Indonesian people’s ears than the original words in Indonesia, so Indonesian people more often use the English words even they know the Indonesian words. That is to say, some loans have been naturalized or integrated to the point where they are no longer thought of as foreign words by most ordinary speakers of the recipient language, but rather as part of the recipient language (Lane, nd). The word such as “pengkokot” which means “stapler” in English is very rarely used in Indonesia. People always use “stapler” to mean “pengkokot” in Indonesia, even some people do not know what “pengkokot” is, and they are more familiar with “stapler”. The word “pelantang” which means “speaker” in English is rarely used in communication in Indonesia. The word “speaker” is more familiar than “pelantang”, even the original word in Indonesian is “pelantang”. The words “unduh” and “unggah” meaning download and upload are rarely used in the informal communication, Indonesian people only use the original words, “download” and “upload”, because they are more familiar, but in the formal communication Indonesian people still use “unduh” and “unggah”. The Center for Language Development (Badan Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Bahasa) has introduced and promoted the Indonesian equivalents to avoid excessive borrowings; however, people still seem to be more comfortable using the borrowed words (Tabiat & Yannuar, 2012).

There are a lot of words like this in Indonesian, especially the new words in English in the technology and communication. Those Indonesian words rarely come into Indonesian communication because from the beginning people always use the English words for the communication, so every their descendant will use the same words as their ancestors did. Even though there are many Indonesian people who love Indonesian very much, they prefer to use Indonesian in every conversation. They must be the persons who cannot join the friendship in the community life like school, college, or business because many people will not understand what they mean, even what they use is Indonesian. In this case English loan words are very important to substitute the unfamiliar words in Indonesian which are more familiar in English.

Loan word: is a word which is not translated. In languages, you can find many instances of them which derive mainly from English (Grassilli, 2013). Some of the words are translated too long into Indonesian; so many people prefer to use the original forms of
the words, for example: The words “missed call” which in Indonesian means “panggilan tak terjawab”, or “restaurant” which means “rumah makan” in Indonesian. As we can see, the words “missed call” only use two words, 11 characters including a space, and two syllables, but in Indonesian there are three words, 22 characters including a space, and seven syllables. Indonesian people feel very uneasy to say those words, so they prefer to say it “missed call”. It is the same as the word “restaurant” which contains only one word in English, but when we translate it in Indonesian it would be “rumah makan” which contains two words. There are more examples for this case. Due to this problem, Indonesian people are the people who do not want to be troubled only by the words, so they would prefer to use English words even though they pronounce them incorrectly. They feel that as long as people understand what they mean it is not a problem for them. So this means that English loan words are very important to make the conversation simpler and more efficient.

Indonesian people sometimes feel shy to say “maaf”, “tolong” and “terimakasih” which mean “sorry”, “please” and “thank you”. They prefer to use English words rather than use their own language. Some of Indonesian people think that to say “maaf”, “tolong”, and “terimakasih” is very embarrassing because it is the culture in Indonesia. To say those words they prefer to use the English language because not only do almost every people know the meaning of the words “sorry”, “please”, and “thank you”, but also the English culture says those words which make Indonesian people feel more comfortable to say that. This is caused by the assimilation of the English and American cultures in Indonesia. Indonesian people who seldom say the words “sorry”, “thanks”, and “thank you” in Indonesian try to be accustomed to saying those words to other people even they do not say it in Indonesian at all. We can conclude that English loan words are very important to soften the hard culture in Indonesia.

Some English loan words are used in the communication among teenagers and youths. Teenagers and youths sometimes think that using English words is greater than only using Indonesian words; moreover, after the Indonesian teenagers and youths use “Bahasa Gaul”. “Bahasa Gaul” is the slang language of Indonesian people which usually makes the words more familiar among the teenagers and youths who usually use the
English loan words to say them. For examples, teenagers and youths more often say “Ok” or “Yes” to prove something rather than use “iya” or “ya” which has the same meaning in Indonesian. To give the birthday utterance, teenagers and youths always use the words “happy birthday”, not “selamat ulang tahun” which has the same meaning. This has fossilized among the Indonesian teenagers’ and youths’ way of life. They feel that using Indonesian to give the birthday utterance for someone is not cool. Some of them feel that they will look more intellectual if they use English in conversation, even they seldom use it and bilingually mixed with Indonesian. This case is caused by the fact that Indonesian teenagers and youths now in the situation where they do not love their Indonesian culture because of the failure of the Indonesian government in keeping the country healthy. Consequently, they prefer to use another language in the daily conversation with their friends. So, for the Indonesian teenagers and youths, by using English words they feel that they look more intellectual and greater than by only using Indonesian. One reason why words are taken over from another language is for prestige, because the foreign term for some reason is highly esteemed (Campbell, 2004).

Teenagers and youths sometimes use an English abbreviation to say something, for example: otw (on the way), GBU (God bless you), Hbu (how about you), btw (by the way) and Ilu (I love you). Those words are very familiar in Indonesia among the teenagers and youths communication. In fact, those abbreviations are made by the Indonesian people too. They know that sometimes saying the words in English is very hard; moreover, to pronounce them correctly. They try to make abbreviations for the English words so that they can pronounce it in the Indonesian pronunciation. It means that Indonesian people make an abbreviation of English words to make it simple and easier to be pronounced.

Especially for the sentence I love you, teenagers and youths sometimes feel shy to say that sentence in Indonesian (Saya mencintai Anda) to express their feeling to their boy/girlfriends, so they use the sentence “I love you” to feel more comfortable with it. It is not only that sentence; to confess their feeling, Indonesian teenagers and youths often use the English words. They try to make someone to whom they confess to think and find out the meaning of the words which they use in the English language. Some of the girls think that it is more romantic to say it in English than to say it in Indonesian. Some of them think
that by using English they do not confess their feeling frontally, but implicitly. Their lovers have to find out first the meaning of the words which they have said, after that their lovers will know the meaning of those words. Though it may be very weird, it is the fact in Indonesia. In conclusion we can say that Indonesian teenagers and youths prefer to use another language such as English to confess their feelings to their lovers because of some reasons, like shyness or they want to make their lovers more curious.

In some condition, Indonesian people use English words in another pronunciation to make it easy to say in Indonesian dialect. The word “knee” for Indonesian laborers is pronounced /kənI/ which refers to the pipe connector which shapes like a bent knee. So when Indonesian people want to buy it in the construction shop, the shop keepers will not understand if they pronounce it /niː/ - the original pronunciation of “knee”. They will understand when people pronounce it /kənI/. In school, many students do not pronounce “paste” as /pɛst/ but as /pæst/, even they know how to pronounce it. It is more familiar to their friends’ ears. English loan words are very familiar, also in the low class people in Indonesia, eventhough they pronounce them by their own way for the sake of easy pronunciation.

From all of the statements above, we can conclude that there are a lot of causes that make English loan words very important in the communication among the Indonesian people. The causes are not only about the formal communication situation and for the older age, but also about the informal communication situation and for the teenagers and youths. For instance, English loan words are very useful in every communication among the Indonesian people. Everyone uses English loan words everyday. Eventhough they do not know how to pronounce them correctly, they pronounce them using their own way.

References


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