

The Transcription of the -ic, -ical, and ics Suffixes in the Indonesian Language

Zaenal Arifin Toy*

WHEN the Dutch language was used nationwide in this country several decades ago, the Indonesian language had much been influenced by it. A lot of Dutch words were absorbed into the Indonesian language. One of the influences which still exists up to the present time is about the transcription of the Dutch words having the -isch suffixes transcribed into -is in the Indonesian language. Some other words have been transcribed in the same way such as: *logisch* into *logis*, *egoistisch* into *egoistis*, *democratisch* into *demokratis*, *praktisch* into *praktis*, *historisch* into *historis*, *medisch* into *medis*, etc.¹

Now the English language has replaced the Dutch language. English has been learned and spoken by most Indonesian people and has much influenced the Bahasa Indonesia. No one can deny it. A lot of words, especially technical terms, are borrowed because such words do not exist in Bahasa, and no equivalent words are found to represent such words in the Indonesian language. Moreover they are badly needed in daily uses and day-to-day communication.

Some of the words are borrowed in their original forms like "brush", "wire", "try", "go

*Penulis adalah staf pengajar Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

ahead", "central", which for most people of Medan, North Sumatra those words are recognized as / brus/= sikat, / wayer/= kawat, / tre/= coba, / goet/= kayuh sepeda, / sentral/= pusat, etc. Some other words like computer, research, producer, manager, collection, jazz, sign, keeper, goal, corner, bar, event and many others have become the Indonesian words.

There are, however, several borrowed words in which their phonetic patterns are violated or substituted. The speaker replaces the foreign sounds with the phonemes of his language (Bloomfield, 1964),² for example, the word "envelope" becomes / amplop/, "film" becomes / pilem/, "fair" becomes / per/, and so on. While for the speaker who has a good command of English, he or she may pronounce those words as they are pronounced in English.

Besides phonetic substitution, several borrowed words are used according to the Indonesian grammatical rules, for example, data becomes data-data, retool becomes meritul, upgrade becomes mengaggreid, follow up becomes mempolow-ap, service becomes menyerpis. But there are speakers who paraphrase the borrowed words like "gramophone" becomes mesin ngomong, "movie" becomes gambar hidup, "jackpot" becomes penjahat bertangan satu, "hostess" becomes pramuria, which has the real meaning in Bahasa "nyonya rumah".³

In addition to those have been mentioned above, there is still an-

other aspect that will be discussed concerning the influence of the English language to the Indonesian one, that is the transcription of the English suffixes, such as -ic, -ical, and -ics. The writer is interested in discussing those suffixes is because the transcription of the English words having the -ic, -ical, and -ics suffixes are still inconsistent. They are transcribed capriciously. Some people use the -is suffix in Bahasa Indonesia in transcribing English having -ic suffixes and some others use the -ik suffix. They transcribe, for example, the word "academic" into "akademis" and at some other time into "akademi".⁴ The word "philanthropic" is sometimes transcribed into "filantropis" and at some other time into "filantrofi". The words having the -ical suffix are treated in the same way as those of words having the -ic suffix. The words "psychological", "bibliographical", for instance, are sometimes transcribed into "psikologis", "bibliografis" and at some other time into "psikologi", "bibliografi". The words having the -ics suffix are sometimes transcribed into -ik and -ika in the Indonesian language, for instance, the words "cosmetics", "methaphysics", "mathematics", "sastistics" are sometimes transcribed into "kosmetik", metafisik", "matematik", "statistik", and at some other time into "kosmetika", "metafisika", "matematika", "statistika", etc.⁵

The inconsistency of the transcription of those suffixes illustrated above is due to: 1) the differ-

ence of etymology; 2) people who use the language have different educational background, different motives, and even different tastes of using the language; 3) their ignorance, impropriety and carelessness.⁶

The -ic, -ical, and ics Suffixes in English

One of the ways of forming and enlarging new words in English is by using affixes, both prefixes and suffixes as stated by Albert C. Baugh: "Another method of enlarging the vocabulary is by appending familiar prefixes and suffixes to existing words in the language."⁷ Stuart Robertson also states in his book as follows, "many prefixes and suffixes can be used freely in forming new words and the sense given to the new formation is precisely what the prefix or suffix has always had. Thus, -ly can be freely attached to nouns to manufacture new adjectives, like manly, womanly, and gentlemanly."⁸

The prefixes and suffixes existing in English are not original. They are borrowed from other languages. According to Nesfield there are three source languages from which prefixes and suffixes are borrowed, namely: 1) Teutonic (Anglo-Saxon, with a few Norse and Dutch). These are sometimes, but unsuitably, called "English"; 2) Romanic (Latin or French, with a few Spanish and Italian); 3) Greek (borrowed either directly from Greek itself or through French).⁹

Although there are many prefixes such as dis-, un-, im-, pre-, anti-, mono, il-, ir-, in-, etc. and

suffixes such as -ly, -able, -hood, -ship, -ize, -ization, -ic, -ical, -ics, etc. only the suffixes of -ic, -ical, and -ics together with their historical background and their functions to form new words will be discussed here.

Before talking about their historical background, the definition of suffix will be elaborated. According to the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, "Suffix is letter(s) or syllable(s) added to the end of a word to make another word or as an inflexion".¹⁰ Whereas *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* elaborates it in a very simple explanation, i.e. "an affix that follows the element to which it is added, as -ly in kindly."¹¹ While Nesfield does not call it letter (s) nor syllable (s) but uses the term "particle" for suffix, as he describes in his book, "Particles that are added to the end of a stem are called suffixes. Those added to the beginning are called prefixes."¹² To John Nist, however, "suffix is neither letter(s) nor syllable(s) but a bound morpheme attached to the end of base, stem or root, functioning as a derivative or an inflectional element, as in the -hood of manhood, etc.

Suffix as one of the word formations seems to be one of the most persistent problems and it seems rather difficult and confusing to learn for there is no rule that can be applied precisely. The suffix -ly, for instance, can be used to transform adjective to adverb in the words such as kind – kindly, glad

- gladly, selfish - selfishly, honest - honestly, sad - sadly, but it cannot be used to transform the words such as good to goodly, fast to fastly, hard to hardly. In transforming the adjectives clean, clear, close, dead, easy, etc. into adverbs, the suffix -ly is sometimes used and at some other time not. Elaborating a little about the word formation that seems to be confusing, Albert H. Marckwardt states: "Since word formation is a very active force in the operation of the English language, we study it first. In addition to the multitude of such simple root words as cat, dog and house, we have in our language a large number of prefixes and suffixes which are usually not used as words by themselves but which may be placed before or after independent words to alter or modify the meaning of those words and also to change their grammatical function."¹³

The suffix by which the root idea is modified or altered into new words sometimes alter the meaning of the words and generally show to what part of speech the words belong to. In other words, a change of suffix usually produces a change in the part of speech. As it is stated by Baudoin et al : "Generally, prefixes change the meaning of a word and suffixes change its part of speech."¹⁴ Here is an example:

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Stem : | pay (verb) | honest (adjective) |
| Prefix : | repay (verb) | dishonest (adjective) |
| Suffix : | repayment (noun) | dishonestly (adverb) |
| b. Stem : | economy (noun) | psychology (noun) |
| Prefix : | economic (adjective) | psychologic (adjective) |
| Suffix : | economic (adjective) | psychological (adjective) |
| | economically (adverb) | psychologically (adverb) |

Then about the historical background of the suffixes -ic, -ical, -ics will be explained as follows. The -ic suffix is derived from the -icus suffix in the Latin language and it can be found in the words, like classicus, publicus, domesticus, etc. and it often came through the French -ique suffix, but it usually came through (from) the Greek -icos suffix, as in grammatikos, peotikos, kritikos, apostolikos, etc. The English words having -ic suffix, like carbonic, chloric, Byronic are directly borrowed from Greek. They are sometimes on Greek elements or on words from Latin especially for scientific terms, as carbonic, Byronic, ferric, chloric, etc.¹⁵

The modifications of the root idea after having been added by the -ic suffix transform new words to new meaning. According to the Webster's Third New International Dictionary, the meaning of -ic suffix is stated as follows: 1) having the character of form of: being, like: panoramic, rombic, Samoyedic; consisting of : being, like runic in a phrase runic inscription; 2) a. of or relating to, like aldermanic, daturic, Koranic; b. related to, derived from, or containing, like alcoholic - especially in names of acids and related compound, like the words boric, cinnamic, oleic, sulfuric; 3) in the man-

ner of; like that of ; characteristic of, like the words: Byronic, quixotic, Puritanic; 4) associated or dealing with, like the word: Vedic, Koranic, Romanic, etc.; utilizing, like the words electronic, atomic, sulfanic acid; 5) characterized by: exhibiting, like the word nostalgic; affected with, like in the words allergic and paraplegic; 6) caused by, like in the word amoebic; 7) tending to produce, like in the word analgesic; 8) having the highest valence of a (specified) element or a valence relatively higher than in compounds or ions named with and adjective ending in -ous, like in the words ferric iron, sulfuric acid, etc.¹⁶

Similarly the Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines briefly that -ic is a suffix forming adjectives from nouns or stems not used as words themselves (poetic, metallic, Homeric), found extensively in adjective nouns of a similar type (public, magic), and in nouns the adjectives of which end -ical (music, critic).¹⁷

Likewise the -ical suffix as adjectival suffix is derived from Late Latin -icals as in the words clericalis "clerical", grammaticalis "grammatical", radicalis "radical". The -ical suffix forms adjective from adjective, as in the words conical, psychological, historical. A lot of adjectives have both the -ic and -ical suffixes and often with a distinction in meaning, as in the words economic and economical.¹⁸ The -ikos suffix in Greek words is used to indicate nouns in three ways: 1) as masculine singular, such as the word "kritikos" meaning

"man able to discern, critic"; 2) as feminine singular as "mousikos" meaning "art of the muses, music"; and 3) as neutral plural, like in the word "oikonomikos" meaning "things pertaining to management, economics". The -ikos suffix became -ics in Latin.¹⁹

And also the -ics suffix indicates noun form but it is singular or plural in construction, like in the words arithmetic, arithmetics; after Greek plural nouns ending in -ika, as mathematika, for mathematics. Words having -ics suffix that indicate study, knowledge, practice, are usually have construed in singular, like the words optics, linguistics, pediatrics, homiletics, physics, biodynamics, etc.; that indicates systematic formulation, treaties, are also construed in singular, like the words economics, politics; that indicates characteristic actions or activities usually have construction in plural, like the words heroics, hysterics, gymnastics; that indicate characteristic qualities, operations, or phenomena usually have plural form in construction, like acoustics, mechanics, phonetics.²⁰

However, English words, like arithmetic, music, magic, logic, rhetoric were singular in the 15th century; later the -ics suffix became usual form for names of sciences acoustics, conics, dynamics which are treated as singular, and for names of practical matters like athletics, politics, tactics which are treated as plural. Some adjectives in -ic suffix become nouns, like epic, rustic, emetic, cosmetic, mechanic, etc.²¹

The Transcription of -ic, -ical, and ics in the Indonesian Language

Recognizing the Indonesian words having the -is, -ik, and -ika like in the words akademis, akademik, akademika, ekonomis, psikologis, matematis, matematik, matematika, subtropis, subtropik, subtropika, teknis, teknik, elektronik, elektronis, elektronika, sistematik, sistematis, sistimatis, sistematika, romantis, romantika, politis, politik, etc., they should be examined at least from two viewpoints: firstly from the viewpoint of the foreign language that influences the Indonesian language and secondly from the viewpoint of etymology.

As stated above that the - is suffix found in the Indonesian words is derived from the - isch suffix in Dutch, when the Dutch occupied the country during approximately 350 years and the Dutch language was spoken by most educated people and it became the second language in this country. At the present time when English has been used as a foreign language, replaced Dutch, it has influenced the Indonesian language more. It can be understandable because people who speak English know that English has been accepted as an international language and it has dominated all aspects of life. They realize that they have to speak English when they communicate with foreign people who speak English too. Edward Sapir states in his book, "The necessities of intercourse bring the speak-

ers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those of neighboring or culturally dominant language."²² One of the results of the direct and indirect contact that can be encountered is on the transcription of the -ic, -ical, -ics suffixes into the Indonesian words. The transcription of those suffixes are sometimes and even usually done in the inconsistent way. The following examples are evidences to the fact, the inconsistency that happens in using the suffixes in the Indonesian language. "Tahun akademi" is used at one time, and at another time "tahun akademis" is applied. Another example shows the use of "sivitas akademi" instead of "sivitas akademika". Th. Sumartana, a columnist, wrote in the Daily Kompas "kategori ekonomi", "sosial dan politik" at one time, and at some other time, he wrote "kepentingan ekonomis", "sosial dan politis". Nugroho Notosusanto, a historian, wrote in the Intisari magazine the expression "secara geografis", "letak geografis", but at another article he wrote "suatu aspek geografi". As a matter of fact there are many other examples that cannot be described in detail here.

Since there is no standardization, consistency cannot be carried out orderly and properly. That is why standardization must be established. The attachment of the -is, -ik, and -ika as they are transcribed from the -ic, -ical, -ics English suffixes, attached to the stem of the Indonesian words should left out. There will be no

transcription of those suffixes. To get the meaning of the words having the suffixes, the meaning of the stem or the root must be identified. The standardization should be as follows: all words having suffixes

-ic, ical should be understood in the original stem of English and then transcribe into the word having the same meaning as the original stem. For example:

ENGLISH	INDONESIAN
Economic growth	pertumbuhan ekonomi
Academic year	tahun akademi NOT akademis
Philanthropic organization	organisasi filantropi
Mechanical problem	problem mesin
Philosophical way	cara filsafat NOT filosofis
Bibliographical list	daftar bibliografi
Biological needs	kebutuhan biologi NOT biologis
Historical notes	catatan sejarah NOT historis

(historical derives from the word history meaning "sejarah" in Bahasa. The word historis cannot be found in Bahasa. It is not an Indonesian word. It is borrowed from English).

Whereas the -ics suffix should be recognized from the meaning of its root or stem and should be understood as it is in the original language, then transcribed into -ik or -ika in Bahasa. For example:

ENGLISH	INDONESIAN
mathematics	matematik or matematika
physics	fisik or fisika
methaphysics	metafisik or metafisika
electronics	elektronik or elektronika
ceramics	keramik or keramika
ethics	etik or etika

The -ic suffix denoting noun-form is transcribed into -ik. For example:

ENGLISH	INDONESIAN
Critic	kritik
Clinic	klinik
Classic	klasik
Comic	komik
Music	musik

Summary and Suggestion

Based on the discussion above, the summary of the subject matter can be stated as follows: 1) the English language enlarges and enriches its vocabulary by using affixes, i.e. prefixes and suffixes, among others are : -ic, -ical, and -ics; 2) those suffixes are not found in Bahasa; 3) the suffixes are transcribed differently and inconsistently in Bahasa; 4) the standardization must be established in order that the consistency of transcribing the suffixes can be kept properly and orderly.

Endnote

¹M.A. Tair, H. van Der Tas, Kamus Belanda: Belanda - Indonesia, Indonesia-Belanda (Djakarta: Timun Mas, 1957).

²Leonard Bloomfield. Language (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964)

³B.S. Anwir, et. al., Kamus Istilah Tehnik. Bahasa Inggris - Bahasa Indonesia (Djakarta: Penerbit Buku Tehnik H. Stam, 1952)

⁴Istilah Perpustakaan dan Dokumentasi: Inggris - Indonesia (Djakarta: PDII-LIPI, 1970)

⁵B.S. Anwir, et. al. Kamus Istilah Tehnik.

⁶Albert C. Baugh, History of the English Language. Second Edition (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957)

⁷Baugh, History of the English Language, p.366.

⁸Stuart Robertson, The development of Modern English. Second Edition. Revised by Frederic G. Cassidy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. : Prentice Hall, 1960)

⁹J.C. Nesfield, Outline of English Grammar. Revised edition. (London: Macmillan, 1957), 179

¹⁰Nesfield, Outline of English Grammar, 180

¹¹A.S. Hornby, The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. Second edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1959)

¹²Laurence Urdang (ed.), The Random House Dictionary of the English Language. College edition (New York : Random House, 1968)

¹³Nesfield, Outline of English Grammar. p. 179.

¹⁴John Nist, A Structural History of English (New York: St. Martin Press, 1966)

¹⁵Albert H. Marckwardt, Introduction to the English Language (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 162

¹⁶E. Margaret Baudoin, et. al., Reader's Choice: a Reading Skills. Textbook for Students of English as a Second Language (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1977), p. 9

¹⁷Urdang, The Random House Dictionary of the English Language.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.:G. & C. Merriam, 1966)

²⁰Ibid.

²¹R.W. Zandvoort. A Handbook of English Grammar (London: Longmans, 1960)

²²Edward Sapir, Language: an Introduction to the Study of Speech (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1963), p.

Ibnuh Nabatah As-Sa'di berkata:

يَفُوتُ ضَيْجَ الرَّهَاتِ طَلَابُهُ
وَيَدْنُو إِلَى الْحَاجَاتِ مَنْ بَاتَ سَاعِيَا

Akan sirnalah barang yang dicari bagi orang yang malas dengan penuh harapan yang kosong, dan orang yang senantiasa berusaha akan dapat mendekati kebutuhannya.