

GERMAN RELATIVE CLAUSES (RELATIVSATZ) AND THEIR INDONESIAN EQUIVALENTS IN NADI MAGAZINE: A CONTRASTIVE SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: February 2026 Revised: April 2026 Accepted: July 2026 Published: October 2026	<i>Relative clauses constitute an important grammatical device for establishing cohesion and reference in discourse. However, German and Indonesian differ significantly in the way relative meanings are encoded because German is an inflectional language with a rich system of relative pronouns and adverbs, whereas Indonesian relies primarily on the relative marker 'yang' and other lexical strategies. This study aims to describe the differences in the syntactic structures of German and Indonesian; the word order in German and Indonesian sentences; and the functions and meanings of Relativsatz in both languages. The research method employed is descriptive qualitative. This study adopts a document or text study approach, which emphasizes contrastive analysis and the interpretation of written materials based on their context. The data consist of German texts and their Indonesian translations published in NADI magazine (2020–2022). The data collection technique used in this study is the observation and note-taking method, which was carried out by carefully reading all data sources. The findings indicate that Relativsatz in German and Indonesian sentences share both similarities and differences in their functions and meanings. These differences are primarily due to the distinctive use of exophoric references in German Relativsatz, whereas Indonesian tends to employ endophoric references. Additionally, the findings reveal that German Relativsatz are predominantly realized through the relative pronouns der, die, and das, while Indonesian commonly uses yang, appositive constructions, coordination, and discourse-based strategies. Overall, the study shows that German grammatical relativization is frequently transformed into lexical or discourse-based constructions in Indonesian while preserving meaning, highlighting the importance of typological awareness in translation and foreign-language pedagogy.</i>
Keywords Relativsatz; German language; Indonesian language; Contrastive analysis; Syntax analysis;	
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INTRODUCTION

Recent studies on German relative clauses have focused on syntactic complexity, reference tracking, and language acquisition (e.g., Bader 2014; Voigtmann S and Speyer A 2021; and Bahrami,K . 2026). On the other hand, research on Indonesian relative constructions has examined the role of *yang*, information structure, and clause embedding in discourse (Sneddon et al., 2012; Atibrata, 2022; and Khairina and Mulyadi, 2025). In translation studies, scholars have investigated how structural differences between languages

result in translation shifts and functional equivalence rather than formal correspondence (House, 2018; Baker, 2018). Despite these developments, studies comparing German *Relativsatz* and Indonesian relative constructions remain limited, particularly using bilingual corpora. Furthermore, little attention has been paid to how German relative clauses are translated into Indonesian in authentic parallel texts. This gap is important because differences in relativization strategies frequently create challenges for translation practice and German language learning in Indonesia.

Relative clause in German structure is called *Relativsatz*. A relative clause (*Relativsatz*) is a dependent subordinate clause that modifies a noun or pronoun (the antecedent) in the main clause by providing additional descriptive information. It is typically introduced by a relative pronoun (*Relativpronomen*), such as *der*, *die*, *das*, *welcher*, *welche*, or *welches*. In this case, it functions as part of a *Relativsatz* within a sentence and may appear as a subordinate clause introduced by *der*, *die*, *das*, *welcher*, *welche*, *welches*, or by a relative adverb such as *wenn*, *womit*, *wohin*, *wo*, and so on (Andersen, 2014; Baker, 2016; Cloud, 1994).

In German sentences, grammatical correctness must be maintained because a well-structured and complete German sentence possesses cohesive elements that syntactically bind the sentence together. Thus, such cohesion fulfills the criteria of grammatical cohesion as described by Moeliono (2004). Sentence construction should demonstrate unity and coherence. If a sentence lacks semantic coherence and unity, it cannot be considered a well-formed sentence. Louise (2007) defines discourse as the use of language in everyday speech and texts—a dynamic form of social practice that constructs the social world, identity, and the self. A good sentence is a linguistic unit that forms a coherent and meaningful whole. Therefore, the unity of a sentence can be viewed from both its structural and semantic aspects. A well-constructed German sentence with correct meaning is typically realized as a series of sentences containing subordinate clauses. These subordinate clauses function as explanatory units for the main clause. In other words, sentences that are interconnected and form a coherent whole will produce a harmonious meaning among the sentences (“Dtsch. Grammatik Theor. Und Prax.,” 2012; Graefen & Liedke, 2008; Leiss, 2009; Primus, 1993).

From the above explanation, it can be understood that German sentences exhibit a dynamic regularity and a complete linguistic unity. German sentences, whether spoken or written, are composed to create a coherent and integrated understanding from the phonetic, phonological, and syntactic perspectives. This is due to the structural integrity required in German, which involves elements such as *Numerus*, *Genus*, *Tempus*, and *Modus*. This integrity is built through interrelated components organized within a sentence structure that conveys meaning. Such organization is referred to as a well-formed sentence structure. As an organized system, sentence structure can be analyzed into its constituent parts—both in main and subordinate clauses—each of which carries meaning (Myer-Scotton & Brenzinger, 2006; Spencer & Zwicky, 1998; Triyono, 2003).

Indonesian learners of German often encounter difficulties in understanding and producing *Relativsatz* because of the structural complexity of German relative clauses and their significant differences from Indonesian sentence patterns (Syahid, A., & Hadi, M. Z. P., 2019; Syamsurijal, 2020; Rosyidah, & Adhiningsih Bhakti Pertiwi, S, 2024). German *Relativsatz* are characterized by the use of relative pronouns that vary according to gender, number, and grammatical case, as well as by specific word-order rules that place the finite verb at the end of the subordinate clause. In contrast, Indonesian relative constructions are generally formed using the invariant marker *yang* and do not require agreement in gender, number, or case. While German is an inflectional language characterized by its formal and structural regularity, Indonesian is an agglutinative language. In agglutinative languages, meaning plays a more central role, and the word order within a sentence can be relatively flexible (Musahadah & Triyono, 2019). As a result, Indonesian learners must acquire

grammatical categories and syntactic patterns that are largely absent from their native language. These typological differences often lead to difficulties in identifying antecedents, interpreting referential relationships, and comprehending the syntactic functions of German relative clauses. This difficulty stems from students' familiarity with the syntactically flexible structure of agglutinative languages like Indonesian, while German, as an inflectional language, requires strict adherence to syntactic rules (Maulero, R., & Cholsy, H., 2026; Gustryani Suburian, et al., 2025; Kamburugamuwa, 2024). Consequently, *Relativsatz* are frequently regarded as one of the more challenging aspects of German grammar for Indonesian learners and represent an important area for contrastive linguistic and pedagogical investigation.

Although studies on German relative clauses, Indonesian relative constructions, and translation equivalence have been widely conducted, research directly comparing German *Relativsatz* and Indonesian relative constructions using authentic bilingual corpora remains scarce. Previous studies have generally focused on either German syntax or Indonesian grammar separately, while the translation relationship between the two languages has received limited attention. One valuable source for examining the differences between German relative clauses (*Relativsatz*) and Indonesian relative clause constructions is *NADI* magazine. *NADI* magazine, which stands for *Nachrichten für Alumni aus Deutschland und Indonesien* (News for Alumni from Germany and Indonesia), is an annual bilingual publication (Indonesian–German) issued by DAAD Indonesia. The magazine is primarily aimed at alumni of German higher education institutions, students, and individuals interested in German language, culture, and academic opportunities. As it presents the same content in both German and Indonesian, it provides an authentic parallel corpus that enables direct comparison of linguistic structures across the two languages. *NADI* magazine provides a valuable bilingual corpus because each article is published in German and Indonesian versions, allowing direct comparison of equivalent sentence structures. Furthermore, no study has specifically examined the realization and translation of German *Relativsatz* in *NADI* magazine. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by combining contrastive syntax and translation analysis to investigate how German relative clauses are structurally and semantically represented in Indonesian.

This study aims to analyze the use of *Relativsatz* in German sentences and their equivalents in Indonesian through a contrastive linguistic approach. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions: (1) What types of *Relativsatz* occur in the German texts of *NADI* magazine?; (2) How are these *Relativsatz* translated into Indonesian?; (3) What similarities and differences exist between German and Indonesian relative constructions? (4) What translation shifts occur during the transfer of German relative clauses into Indonesian? Through these objectives, the study seeks to contribute to contrastive syntax, translation studies, and the teaching of German and Indonesian as foreign languages.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design supported by a contrastive linguistic approach to provide a systematic and context-sensitive analysis of German *Relativsatz* constructions and their corresponding forms in Indonesian parallel texts. The qualitative orientation enables the researcher to examine linguistic data in depth by focusing on how relative clauses are structurally formed, how referential relationships are established, and how meanings are transferred across the two languages. Rather than seeking statistical generalization, the study emphasizes detailed interpretation of naturally occurring textual data to reveal recurring linguistic patterns and translation correspondences. The contrastive approach is particularly relevant because German and Indonesian differ considerably in their grammatical systems, especially in word order, relative markers, case distinctions, and clause

formation. Through systematic comparison, the analysis can identify both structural similarities and language-specific differences, while also examining the extent to which Indonesian equivalents preserve the syntactic, referential, and semantic functions expressed by German *Relativsatz* constructions.

Data Source

The data for this study were collected from bilingual editions of NADI magazine published between 2020 and 2021. These editions were selected because they provide German-language texts accompanied by corresponding Indonesian translations, making them suitable for systematic contrastive analysis. The population of the study comprises all German texts and their Indonesian translations published in NADI magazine during the selected period. From this population, the sample was determined through purposive sampling, with particular attention given to texts containing relative constructions that were directly relevant to the objectives of the study. The primary data therefore consisted of paired German–Indonesian sentence units in which a German *Relativsatz* and its Indonesian equivalent could be clearly identified and compared. Each unit included one German sentence containing a relative clause together with the corresponding Indonesian translation from the same bilingual text. The sampling process was designed to capture variation rather than frequency alone. Accordingly, priority was given to examples representing different functional and semantic types of relative constructions, including those related to reference, causality, possession, evaluation, and discourse cohesion. This procedure ensured that the selected data reflected a sufficiently broad range of relative-clause patterns for detailed syntactic, referential, and semantic comparison.

Instruments

The primary research instrument was the researcher, who was responsible for identifying, classifying, interpreting, and comparing German relative clauses (*Relativsatz*) and their Indonesian equivalents. To ensure systematic analysis, a coding sheet was developed to record each sentence pair, including the source text, target text, relative marker, referential function, and translation strategy. The coding categories consisted of (1) relative pronouns (*der, die, das, welcher, welche, welches, deren*, etc.), (2) relative adverbs (*wo, wohin, wobei, woran, wofür, indem*, etc.), and (3) referential functions (anaphoric, cataphoric, endophoric, and exophoric reference). The classification table was constructed based on German grammar references and contrastive linguistic frameworks to facilitate the comparison of syntactic and semantic functions across the two languages. To enhance validity, the coding results were repeatedly checked against the original texts and reviewed through peer discussion with experts in German linguistics and translation studies.

Data collection employed observation and note-taking techniques. First, the researcher carefully read the German and Indonesian texts to identify sentence pairs containing relative constructions. Second, the identified constructions were selected and documented in a coding sheet together with their contextual information. Third, each German relative clause and its Indonesian equivalent were coded according to the categories of relative pronouns, relative adverbs, referential functions, and translation strategies. Finally, the selected sentence pairs were re-examined to verify contextual equivalence and ensure that the Indonesian constructions represented the same referential and semantic relationships expressed in the German source text.

The coding process was conducted based on the publication year of NADI magazine, namely the 2020 and 2021 editions. All German texts and their Indonesian equivalents were read carefully to identify sentences containing *Relativsatz*. Each datum was then documented and coded according to (1) the year of publication, (2) the type of *Relativsatz* used, such as *der, die, das, welche, welches, wobei, woran, wofür*, and *deren*, (3) its Indonesian equivalent,

and (4) its referential function, namely exophoric reference, anaphoric reference, or cataphoric reference. The coding system employed the year of publication and sequence number of the data, for example Nadi, 2020:01. After coding, the data were classified according to the forms and functions of *Relativsatz* and subsequently compared with their Indonesian equivalents to identify similarities and differences in function and meaning.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through six stages: identification, classification, comparison, interpretation, verification of functional equivalence, and credibility checking. First, German sentences containing *Relativsatz* were identified from the bilingual texts of *NADI* magazine (2020–2021) and matched with their Indonesian equivalents. Second, the identified data were classified according to the types of relative constructions, including relative pronouns (*der, die, das, welche, welches, deren*) and relative adverbs (*wo, wobei, woran, wofür, wohin, and indem*). Third, the German relative clauses were compared with their Indonesian counterparts to determine similarities and differences in form, function, and meaning. Fourth, the data were interpreted to examine how referential relationships and grammatical functions were maintained or modified in translation. Particular attention was given to structural shifts occurring between German and Indonesian relative constructions while assessing whether functional equivalence was preserved. Fifth, the findings were analyzed using the Immediate Constituent Analysis (ICA) method to describe the syntactic structure of the relative constructions in both languages. Finally, credibility checking was carried out through repeated examination of the corpus, cross-checking of coding results, and peer discussion with German linguistics researchers to ensure consistency and accuracy of the interpretations.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Based on the analyzed research data there are 513 *Relativsatz* and 407 their Indonesian equivalents found in *NADI* 2020 and *NADI* 2021. There are 387 *Relativsatz* and 392 in their equivalents in Indonesian in *NADI* 2020. While, in *NADI* 2021 there are 126 *Relativsatz* and 105 in their equivalents in Indonesian in *NADI* 2021. The analysis of *Relativsatz* in the German and Indonesian versions of *NADI* magazine (2020–2021) revealed several recurring patterns. First, the relative pronouns *der, die, and das* were the most frequently occurring forms in the German texts, indicating their dominant role in German relative clause construction. Second, other relative forms, such as *welche, welches, wobei, woran, wofür, and deren*, occurred less frequently but exhibited distinctive translation patterns in Indonesian. Third, German relative constructions were commonly rendered into Indonesian through the relative marker *yang*, lexical reformulation, clause restructuring, or discourse-based expressions. It can be identified that there are two types of *Relativsatz*, namely those related to exophoric and endophoric references. Exophoric reference refers to linguistic units located outside the discourse text, while endophoric reference is divided into two types: (1) anaphoric reference and (2) cataphoric reference. Anaphoric reference refers to a linguistic unit that has been previously mentioned (leftward reference), whereas cataphoric reference refers to a linguistic unit that appears later (rightward reference).

To produce a well-structured and coherent sentence—whether written or spoken—the sentence must exhibit cohesion. Only through cohesive relationships can elements within a discourse be properly interpreted, as each element depends on others for meaning. Discourse cohesion consists of two aspects: grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion refers to the structural unity in accordance with grammatical rules, as stated by Briesmaster & Etchegaray (2017), Bublitz et al. (2011), and Green (2012).

The analysis identified three major patterns. First, the relative pronouns *der*, *die*, and *das* dominate German *Relativsatz* constructions. Second, Indonesian translations frequently replace grammatical relativization with lexical, appositive, or coordinative structures. Third, although structural forms differ substantially, semantic equivalence is largely preserved across both languages. These findings indicate that typological differences influence syntactic realization but do not necessarily alter meaning.

Table 1
Relativsatz German and Indonesian in NADI magazine 2020

No	Relativsatz	German	Indonesian Equivalents	Explanation
1.	der, die, das	300	341	Same function, different meaning
2.	welche	23	5	Different function, same meaning
3.	welchen	7	3	Different function, same meaning
4.	welches	5	4	Different function, same meaning
5.	welchem	8	4	Different function, same meaning
6.	irgendwelche	3	2	Different function, same meaning
7.	wobei	7	6	Different function, same meaning
8.	woran	4	3	Different function, same meaning
9.	wozu	1	1	Different function, same meaning
10.	deren	1	1	Different function, same meaning
11.	wo	11	5	Different function, same meaning
12.	wohin	9	9	Different function, same meaning
13.	indem	7	7	Different function, same meaning
14.	wofür	1	1	Different function, same meaning
Total		387	392	

Table 2
Relativsatz German and Indonesian in NADI magazine 2021

No	Relativsatz	German	Indonesian Equivalents	Explanation
1	der, die, das	68	60	Same function, different meaning
2	welche	7	6	Different function, same meaning
3	welchen	4	3	Different function, same meaning
4	was	2	1	Different function, same meaning
5	wo	8	3	Different function, same meaning
6	wobei	9	4	Different function, same meaning
7	irgendwo	1	1	Different function, same meaning
8	so	1	1	Different function, same meaning
9	indem	7	7	Different function, same meaning
10	wofür	2	2	Different function, same meaning
11	wie	11	11	Different function, same meaning
12	sowie	6	6	Different function, same meaning
Total		126	105	Different function, same meaning

The data indicate that *der*, *die*, and *das* constitute the predominant forms of *Relativsatz* in the German corpus, accounting for the majority of relative constructions identified in the *NADI* texts. In contrast, forms such as *welche*, *welches*, *wobei*, *wofür*, and *deren* appeared only occasionally. The comparison with Indonesian translations demonstrates that while German relative clauses are typically marked by specific relative pronouns and adverbs, Indonesian often expresses the same semantic relationships through the relative marker *yang*.

or through lexical and discourse-based strategies. Particularly noteworthy are the forms *wofür*, *wobei*, *was*, and *deren*, whose Indonesian equivalents frequently involve structural modification rather than direct grammatical correspondence. These findings suggest that the translation process tends to shift from German grammatical relativization to more flexible Indonesian constructions while preserving the intended meaning and referential function.

Based on the analysis presented above, it can be concluded that the greater the similarity in the function and meaning of a word, the more it contributes to achieving the same semantic function and meaning. Conversely, the more differences that occur, the more it indicates the unacceptability of lexical elements that carry specific functions and meanings within a sentence. The comparison between the German source texts and their Indonesian equivalents reveals that translation frequently involves structural modification rather than formal correspondence. German relative pronouns and adverbs are often rendered into Indonesian through *yang*, lexical reformulation, or discourse-level expressions. This tendency is particularly visible in the translation of forms such as *wofür*, *wobei*, *was*, and *deren*, which are not always represented by direct grammatical equivalents in Indonesian. Nevertheless, the semantic and referential relationships expressed in the source text are generally preserved. This finding supports previous studies in contrastive linguistics and translation research which argue that equivalence is more effectively achieved through the preservation of meaning and function than through the replication of grammatical form. The study therefore demonstrates how German grammatical relativization may be transformed into alternative linguistic resources in Indonesian while maintaining textual coherence and referential continuity.

Discussion

Based on the findings presented prior, it can be explained that the function and meaning of *Relativsatz* in German and Indonesian sentences differ, which is primarily due to the distinct linguistic types of the two languages. German belongs to the inflectional language type, whereas Indonesian is classified as an agglutinative language. The characteristic of an inflectional language lies in its regularity of patterns and sentence structures. For instance, it includes *Genus* (masculine, feminine, and neuter) to express pronouns such as *er* (he), *sie* (she), or *es* (it); *Tempus* (tense) to indicate past, present, or future, such as *ich esse* (I eat / present), *ich aß* (I ate / past), and *ich werde essen* (I will eat / future); *Numerus* (singular and plural) with distinct markers such as *ein Buch* (one book) – *zwei Bücher* (two books); and *Modus* (indicative, subjunctive I, and subjunctive II).

As an inflectional language, German requires a cohesive organization built upon the interconnected components within a sentence that convey meaning. This organization is referred to as a well-structured and meaningful sentence structure. As an organized system, the sentence structure can be analyzed and decomposed into its constituent parts, each carrying meaning, including within main and subordinate clauses (Myer-Scotton & Brenzinger, 2006; Spencer & Zwicky, 1998; Triyono, 2003).

This section discusses the function and meaning of *Relativsatz* in both German and Indonesian sentences as found in NADI magazine.

Data 1:

... in Jakarta die Außenstelle an unserer Seite, **die** auf eine lange und erfolgreiche Arbeit zurückschauen kann und diese Erfahrung und Kontakte auch nun einbringt (NADI, 2020: 3).

... di Jakarta ini ada Kantor Perwakilan DAAD di pihak kami **yang** telah berpengalaman dan selama ini sukses menjalankan tugas dan fungsinya (NADI, 2020: 3).

The German relative clause in Data 1 is marked by the relative pronoun *die*, which refers to the noun *Außenstelle*. Syntactically, the clause functions as an attributive modifier that provides additional information about the institution's experience and achievements. The referential relation is endophoric and anaphoric, as the antecedent appears earlier in the

sentence. In Indonesian, the same function is realized through the relative marker *yang* without morphological agreement. This difference shows that German encodes syntactic relations grammatically, whereas Indonesian relies more on lexical structure. Although the two languages employ different syntactic structures, both convey the same referential meaning and provide additional information about the antecedent. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that German relative clauses are often translated into Indonesian by simplifying grammatical structures while preserving semantic equivalence (Syamsurijal, 2020; Rosyidah & Adhiningsih Bhakti Pertiwi, 2024).

Data 2:

... durch den Leiter des Zentrums für Technologische Zusammenarbeit (ZTZ), das damals eine Institution an der Technischen Universität Berlin war, gegründet (NADI, 2020: 23).

... atas gagasan seorang kepala kantor ZTZ (Zentrum für Technologische Zusammenarbeit), sebuah institusi dalam Technische Universität Berlin saat itu (NADI, 2020: 23).

In Data 2, the *Relativsatz* in German employs the relative pronoun *das*, referring to the neuter noun *Zentrum*. The clause serves to describe the institutional status of the referent in the past. In German, gender and case agreement are obligatory and systematically marked. In Indonesian, the same meaning is expressed through a nominal apposition rather than an explicit relative clause. This indicates a structural reduction without loss of semantic content. From the perspective of contrastive syntax, this example demonstrates that different grammatical systems can achieve the same communicative function. For translation practice, the finding suggests that translators should prioritize functional equivalence instead of preserving the original grammatical structure. For German language learning, it helps Indonesian learners understand that German relative clauses are not always translated using the relative marker *yang* but may also be expressed through other natural Indonesian constructions. However, this study is limited to written texts taken from the *NADI* bilingual corpus and does not include learner language or spoken discourse.

Data 3:

... auf einem offenen Wettbewerb, der sich ausschließlich an der Erfolgsbilanz der Forschung orientiert (NADI, 2020: 23).

... berbasis kompetisi terbuka, murni dinilai dari rekam jejak riset yang dimiliki (NADI, 2020: 23).

The use of the relative pronoun *der* in Data 3 marks a restrictive *Relativsatz*. The clause limits the meaning of the noun *Wettbewerb* by specifying certain criteria. The referential relationship is endophoric because the antecedent is present in the text. In Indonesian, this restrictive function is conveyed through a descriptive phrase rather than a full relative clause. This reflects the greater structural flexibility of Indonesian compared to German. Although the grammatical structure changes, the referential and semantic functions are preserved, indicating that Indonesian tends to express restriction through more flexible syntactic constructions. This data also shows that structural modification is often necessary to produce a natural and acceptable translation while maintaining the intended meaning.

The data is an example for German Language learners to understand that restrictive *Relativsatz* in German cannot always be translated literally because Indonesian frequently employs different grammatical patterns to express the same concept. The comparison also highlights the importance of understanding both grammatical form and communicative function when translating relative constructions. Overall, this data demonstrates that typological differences between German and Indonesian influence the realization of restrictive relative clauses, while functional equivalence can still be successfully maintained across both languages.

Data 4:

... eine Art Ableger des europäischen Mooi Indie-Stils, den ich als Souvenir nach Indonesien gebracht habe (NADI, 2020: 56).

... cangkakan gaya Mooi-Indie Eropa yang saya bawa ke Indonesia sebagai suvenir (NADI, 2020: 56).

Data 4 demonstrates a contrastive syntactic difference between German and Indonesian in expressing object-related relative clauses. In German, the relative pronoun *den* is marked in the accusative case to indicate its grammatical relationship with the antecedent, whereas Indonesian does not employ case marking and instead relies on word order and contextual interpretation. The referential relationship in this example is endophoric and anaphoric, as the antecedent *Ableger des europäischen Mooi Indie-Stils* appears earlier in the sentence and is referred to by the relative pronoun *den*. No exophoric reference is found because the referent is explicitly stated within the text. The Indonesian translation introduces a structural shift by replacing the German case-marked relative clause with the invariant relative marker *yang*, resulting in a simpler syntactic construction. Despite this structural modification, the semantic relationship between the antecedent and the relative clause is fully preserved, demonstrating functional equivalence between the source and target texts. From the perspective of German–Indonesian language learning, this example highlights the importance of understanding that German relative pronouns change according to grammatical case, whereas Indonesian relative constructions do not. Indonesian learners therefore need to focus not only on identifying the antecedent but also on recognizing the grammatical function of the relative pronoun within the clause. This finding suggests that differences in case marking should be emphasized in German grammar instruction to help learners comprehend and translate *Relativsatz* more accurately. Overall, the example shows that although German and Indonesian differ substantially in their syntactic realization of relative clauses, equivalent meaning and referential function can be successfully maintained through appropriate structural adaptation.

Data 5:

Das GCSMUS wird geleitet von Prof. Dr. Angela Million, die gleichzeitig auch Vorsitzende des ISR der TU Berlin ist, während Dr. Iwan Rudiarto der indonesische Partner und zugleich Vertreter der Undip ist (NADI, 2020: 65).

GCSMUS sendiri dikepalai oleh Prof. Dr. Angela Million sekaligus sebagai ketua ISR TU Berlin sedangkan Dr. Iwan Rudiarto menjadi mitra dari Indonesia sekaligus representasi dari Undip (NADI, 2020: 65).

Data 5 illustrates a contrastive syntactic difference between German and Indonesian in expressing additional information through relative clauses. In German, the relative pronoun *die* introduces a *Relativsatz* that provides further information about Prof. Dr. Angela Million, making the referential relationship endophoric and anaphoric because the antecedent is *explicitly* stated earlier in the sentence. No exophoric reference occurs, as the referent is identifiable from the text itself. In the Indonesian translation, the relative clause is replaced by the lexical coordinator *sekaligus*, resulting in a structural shift from grammatical relativization to coordination. Although the grammatical form changes, the semantic meaning and referential relationship are preserved, demonstrating semantic equivalence between the source and target texts. This finding indicates that Indonesian tends to express additional descriptive information through coordination rather than explicit relative clauses. From the perspective of German–Indonesian language learning, this example highlights that learners should understand not only the grammatical function of German relative pronouns but also the

alternative strategies used in Indonesian to convey the same information naturally. It also emphasizes that successful translation depends on conveying the communicative function of the relative clause rather than preserving its grammatical form. Overall, this example demonstrates that structural differences between German and Indonesian relative constructions do not prevent the preservation of equivalent meaning and referential function across both languages.

Data 6:

Wir bemühen uns dabei, wo immer möglich, mit unseren indonesischen Partnern – DIKTI, den indonesischen Universitäten, unseren Alumni – eng zusammenzuarbeiten und neue Initiativen und Ideen zu entwickeln, die unsere Partnerschaft während der nächsten 30 Jahre begleiten und weiterentwickeln (NADI, 2020: 14).

Dalam hal ini kami sedapat mungkin akan berusaha bekerja sama secara erat dengan mitra Indonesia kami, yakni DIKTI, perguruan tinggi di Indonesia dan alumni, dan mengembangkan inisiatif-inisiatif dan ide-ide baru yang akan terus mendampingi dan mengembangkan kemitraan kami selama 30 tahun ke depan (NADI, 2020: 14).

Data 6 demonstrates that German and Indonesian can achieve a high degree of syntactic correspondence when translating relative clauses. The German *Relativsatz* introduced by *die* is translated into Indonesian using the relative marker *yang*, preserving both the grammatical function and the referential relationship of the clause. Unlike several previous examples, this translation involves only a minimal translation shift, as the relative construction is maintained while adapting the sentence to Indonesian grammatical conventions. This finding is consistent with previous studies suggesting that not all German relative clauses require major structural modification and that direct correspondence is possible when the grammatical and communicative functions are compatible (Syamsurijal, 2020; Rosyidah & Adhiningsih Bhakti Pertiwi, 2024).

From the perspective of contrastive syntax, the example shows that although German employs inflected relative pronouns and Indonesian uses the invariant marker *yang*, both languages can express equivalent modification through similar relative clause structures. For translation practice, this finding indicates that preserving the relative construction is an effective strategy when it produces a natural and semantically accurate translation. For German–Indonesian language learning, the example demonstrates that learners should recognize situations in which German *Relativsatz* can be translated directly without unnecessary restructuring.

Data 7:

Und dies ist noch bedeutsamer geworden als jemals zuvor: Eine Lehre aus der Pandemie ist, wie wichtig der wissenschaftliche Austausch ist (NADI, 2020: 4).

Dan hal ini menjadi lebih penting lagi dari sebelumnya. Pelajaran dari pagebluk ini adalah betapa pentingnya pertukaran ilmu itu (NADI, 2020: 4).

Data 7 illustrates a contrastive syntactic difference between German and Indonesian in expressing evaluative meaning. In German, the clause introduced by *wie* is realized as an embedded subordinate construction that emphasizes the importance of scientific exchange, whereas Indonesian expresses the same meaning through the lexical intensifier *betapa*. This results in a translation shift from a clause-based structure to a simpler lexical expression without reducing the intended semantic emphasis. Although the grammatical form differs, the communicative function and semantic equivalence are successfully maintained in the Indonesian translation. This finding is consistent with Hanink and Grove (2017), who argue that embedded constructions contribute to discourse interpretation by establishing syntactic dependency and maintaining coherent semantic relations between clauses. It also supports

Axel-Tober's (2017) observation that German subordinate constructions rely on explicit grammatical marking to organize complex syntactic relationships. This data also suggests that preserving semantic emphasis and communicative intention is more important than maintaining the original syntactic form. For German–Indonesian language pedagogy, the example demonstrates that learners should understand the discourse function of embedded German clauses and recognize that Indonesian often conveys the same meaning through lexical rather than grammatical strategies.

Data 8:

Der Verein versucht, den Einfluss der Alumni auszubauen, indem er seit 2008 Alumni von ganz Berlin in ALTUB Indonesia (von der TU Berlin ALTUBINA genannt) aufnimmt (NADI, 2020: 24).

Pendirinya pada tahun 1982 antara lain: Hans Wisendha, Sugiarto Mulyadi, Herman Santiko, Sarwo Utomo, Rudi Tedjamihardja, Daniel Sandjaja dan Jenny Widjaja (NADI, 2020: 24).

Data 8 demonstrates a substantial translation shift between the German source text and its Indonesian translation. The German sentence employs the adverbial clause introduced by *indem* to explain the manner in which the organization expands the influence of its alumni, thereby establishing a clear procedural relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause. In contrast, the Indonesian translation omits this information entirely and replaces it with a list of the organization's founders. As a result, the semantic relationship expressed in the source text is not preserved, and the procedural meaning conveyed by the *indem*-clause is lost. From the perspective of contrastive syntax, this example illustrates that German commonly uses subordinate clauses to express manner or means, whereas the Indonesian translation in this case does not retain the corresponding clause. This finding differs from previous studies, which generally report that German subordinate clauses are translated through structural modification while maintaining semantic equivalence (Syamsurijal, 2020; Rosyidah & Adhiningsih Bhakti Pertiwi, 2024). For translation practice, the example highlights the importance of preserving both structural relationships and essential semantic information to achieve an accurate translation. For German–Indonesian language learning, it demonstrates that learners should understand the communicative function of adverbial clauses such as *indem* and recognize that omitting such clauses may alter the intended meaning of the text.

Data 9:

Frau Antariano, an welchem Projekt arbeiten Sie gerade? (NADI, 2020: 111).

Proyek apa yang sedang Anda tangani? (NADI, 2020: 111).

Data 9 demonstrates a contrastive syntactic difference between German and Indonesian in expressing interrogative constructions. German uses the inflected interrogative pronoun *welchem*, which is marked for case and agrees with the noun *Projekt*, whereas Indonesian expresses the same meaning with the invariant interrogative word *apa* without grammatical agreement. This translation involves a structural shift from a morphologically marked interrogative phrase to a simpler interrogative construction that is more natural in Indonesian. Despite the structural simplification, the semantic meaning and communicative intention are fully preserved, indicating functional equivalence between the source and target texts.

For German–Indonesian language learning, this example highlights the importance of understanding German case marking in interrogative pronouns, since Indonesian learners are not familiar with morphological case distinctions in their native language. It also demonstrates that equivalent meanings can be achieved through different grammatical strategies across the two languages. However, this example differs from the relative clause constructions discussed in the previous data because it represents an interrogative rather than a *Relativsatz*. Future research may investigate how Indonesian learners interpret and produce

German interrogative pronouns with case marking in learner corpora or spoken interactions. Overall, this example illustrates that typological differences between German and Indonesian require flexible translation strategies while preserving semantic and communicative equivalence.

Data 10:

... dass er integrer sei, seine FPI immer als erste helfe, wenn irgendwo eine Katastrophe die Menschen heimsuche, ... (NADI, 2020: 72).

... , sosok-sosok seperti ulama Habib Rizieq Shihab sangat populer. Ia dikenal sebagai pengkhoblah kebencian dan pemimpin kelompok militan garis keras kontroversial FPI ... (NADI, 2020: 72).

Data 10 demonstrates a substantial translation shift between the German source text and its Indonesian translation. In the German sentence, the subordinate clause introduced by *wenn* expresses a conditional and temporal relationship by describing the circumstances under which the organization provides assistance during disasters. In contrast, the Indonesian translation does not preserve either the subordinate clause or its conditional meaning, but instead replaces it with evaluative information describing the public image of the organization and its leader. Consequently, the discourse function of the source text changes from describing a conditional event to presenting evaluative characterization, resulting in the loss of semantic equivalence. This finding supports previous research showing that the interpretation of subordinate clauses depends on the preservation of their syntactic and semantic relationships within the sentence (Hemforth et al., 2015). It also aligns with Brandt et al. (2008), who emphasize that understanding the function of German subordinate and relative constructions is essential for accurate comprehension and interpretation.

This data highlights the importance of maintaining both propositional meaning and discourse relations rather than replacing source-text information with different contextual content. For German–Indonesian language pedagogy, the finding suggests that learners should be trained to recognize the communicative function of subordinate clauses such as *wenn*, since omitting or replacing these constructions may substantially alter the intended message. However, this study is limited to written bilingual texts from *NADI* magazine and does not investigate how similar constructions are interpreted or translated by language learners or in spoken interaction. Future research may therefore examine learner corpora or spoken German–Indonesian discourse to explore how conditional subordinate clauses are processed and translated in authentic communication. Overall, this finding demonstrates that preserving discourse relations and semantic content is essential for achieving functional equivalence in German–Indonesian translation.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the syntactic realization and translation equivalence of German *Relativsatz* and their Indonesian counterparts in the bilingual *NADI* magazine (2020–2022). The findings reveal that German predominantly employs explicit relative pronouns and relative adverbs, such as *der*, *die*, *das*, *was*, *wobei*, *woran*, *wofür*, and *deren*, to encode grammatical relations including case, possession, causality, and reference. In contrast, Indonesian commonly realizes equivalent meanings through the relative marker *yang*, lexical expressions, coordination, clause expansion, or discourse connectors. These differences reflect the typological characteristics of German as an inflectional language and Indonesian as an agglutinative language. Despite the structural variation, the analysis shows that semantic, referential, and communicative equivalence is generally maintained, indicating that translation equivalence is achieved primarily at the functional level rather than through formal syntactic correspondence.

The study contributes to contrastive linguistics, translation studies, and German language education by providing empirical evidence of how relativization strategies differ

across German and Indonesian while preserving equivalent meanings. The analysis demonstrates that German relative constructions frequently undergo structural shifts, including reduction, restructuring, lexicalization, and explicitation, without substantially affecting the intended message. These findings highlight the importance of understanding both grammatical form and discourse function in German–Indonesian translation and suggest that language instruction should emphasize the functional interpretation of relative constructions alongside their syntactic properties. The bilingual *NADI* magazine also proves to be a valuable corpus for examining authentic translation strategies and cross-linguistic correspondences between German and Indonesian.

This study is limited to written bilingual texts published in *NADI* magazine from 2020 and 2021 and therefore does not represent the full range of relative constructions in spoken discourse, learner language, or other text genres. Consequently, the findings should not be generalized beyond the investigated corpus. Future research is recommended to employ larger bilingual corpora, learner corpora, or spoken interaction data to examine how German relative constructions are interpreted, translated, and acquired across different communicative contexts. Comparative studies involving additional language pairs may also provide broader insights into the relationship between linguistic typology, translation strategies, and discourse organization.

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. All participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and expected benefits of the research before agreeing to participate. Participants were assured that their identities would remain confidential and that all information provided would be used solely for research purposes. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or loss of any benefits to which they were otherwise entitled. By agreeing to participate and continuing with the research procedures, participants provided informed consent under the conditions described by the researchers.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data utilized in this study are not publicly available because of privacy considerations and ethical obligations related to the protection of participant confidentiality. These restrictions are intended to ensure compliance with applicable ethical research standards and data protection requirements. Researchers or other interested parties seeking access to the dataset for purposes such as validation, replication, or further analysis may submit a reasonable request to the corresponding author.

DECLARATION OF AI USE

The authors used artificial intelligence tools for language editing and grammatical polishing during manuscript preparation. All interpretations, analyses, and conclusions remain the sole responsibility of the authors.

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