Interlanguage Pragmatics of Japanese Greetings by Indonesian Learners (Case Study in Careworker Class in Mirai Mandiri Singaraja)

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Abstract - The teaching of second language must give attention to the language and expression with specific cultural context. This study aims to explain the interlanguage pragmatic in daily greetings used by Indonesian learners of Japanese. The respondents are 25 Indonesian students enrolling in a Japanese careworker program in Mirai Mandiri. The finding show that Indonesian learners choose to use less greetings when they greet the Japanese teachers. The types of greetings expression they use are mostly greetings from what they have learned in the classroom. Other casual greetings applied are learn from anime, and social media. Some of the Japanese greetings used are actually a direct translation from Indonesia language.

Keywords: *Japanese greetings, Indonesian learners, interlanguage pragmatic*

1. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics is the rules that govern all language system that give contextual meaning of language in use. It is also applied in second language teaching and learning contexts. One reason for this is because language needs to be experienced by learners within its context (Stadler, 2018; Jiao et al., 2020) so that it is used competently (Kecskes et al., 2018). As language always has a cultural dimension to it (Stadler, 2018), the teaching of second language needs to pay extra attention to language form and expression within a specific cultural context (Ali et al., 2015). Traditionally, exposure to language use in context for second language learners was limited. Nonetheless, with globalization and the advancement of communication technology, students can expose themselves to language in context via the media. For instance, the study of Japanese language by Indonesian students can include watching anime, dramas, films, documentaries and even TV programs from Japan that are easily accessible via cable channels and even for free on the Internet. Despite this exposure, second language must also be formally taught to students as learning and acquiring new language is known to be different. And this becomes more essential in the case of students learning it for academic purpose. One important language component in pragmatics that is taught in the teaching and learning of a second language is greetings. Greetings are used in daily interactions to keep social harmony and to communicate (Ebsworth, Brodman & Carpenter, 1996). Despite their deceptive simplicity, greetings are complex speech acts. Greetings are a significant aspect of politeness strategy, and governed by culturally specific social constraints (Nilsson et. al., 2020). Hence, even in the same situation setting, greetings used by people from different communities or countries are predictably diverse as speakers choose not only correct expressions but also socially and culturally acceptable expressions. Although there are many definitions of pragmatics as offered by scholars for the purpose of this study, we believe Crystal's definition is most relevant: "Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (1985, p.240). Nevertheless, L2 learners are not starting at a zero baseline when they learn new languages since there are pragmatics universals in their native language (Kasper & Rose, 2002), which are common among all languages.

The basis of pragmatics states that humans in society use language in different ways to achieve the same result (Todd, 2010). Pragmatic competence enables people to use their language skills in order to achieve various general goals, such as communicating, thinking and remembering in different situations (Németh, 2004). Indeed, some scholars point that one of the fundamental factors in communication based on a cultural foundation is communicative behaviour, which has a dual structure, verbal and non-verbal (Grice, 1982; Sperber & Wilson, 2002). Looking at pragmatics in the context of L2, we also need to explore the field of Interlanguage Pragmatics as it relates to the Second Language Acquisition Research and a subset of Pragmatics (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). Interlanguage Pragmatics examines L2 learners' knowledge, use and development in performing sociocultural functions whereby L2 learners need linguistic forms and skills to perform in the target language (Taguchi, 2017).

Most studies on interlanguage pragmatics focused on the topics of requests (House & Kasper, 1987; Kasper, 1989; Koike, 1989), invitations (Mizushima, 2012), refusals (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987), complaints (Al Rashidi, 2017), apologies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1989), gratitude (Brodman & Eisenstein, 1988), greetings (Zeff, 2016; Inawati, 2016; Shleykina, 2019) and some other linguistic scenarios. In this study, we explain how interlanguage pragmatics take place on greeting which is the 'door' to most

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conversations. To do this, the present study aims at elucidating the pragmatics of Japanese daily greetings used by Indonesian learners. In this study, daily greetings used by Japanese language learners at LPK Mirai Mandiri will be studied.

GREETING AND INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS

Greetings are basically divided into verbal greetings and non-verbal greetings. For non-verbal greetings, Jenkins (2007) listed shaking hands, holding both hands, touching and waving as some of non-verbal greetings in various cultures. The Japanese people greet each other non-verbally by bowing and the degree of bowing is decided by the level of social distance between them. In this study, non-verbal characters were not analyzed due to the method of data collection that was unable to observe that. On the other hand, verbal greetings are short or long utterances to greet other people or as an introduction to start a conversation. Verbal greeting is seen as an important component of pragmatic competence of those who learn a second language. Greetings are keys for establishing and maintaining contacts and for language learners serve "as a door to the target culture" (Kakiuchi, 2005). Used as an act of courtesy towards others, greetings are linked to politeness. Brown & Levinson (1987) introduced greeting as a 'face-saving' action based on the demonstration of positive politeness. Usami (2002) states that pragmatic politeness is a function of language manipulation that works to maintain smooth human relationships. Among the studies of politeness in a variety of cultures, Brown & Levinson (1987) politeness theory has become very influential, suggesting five strategies to deal with Face Threatening Act (FTA) namely; 1) bold on record, 2) positive politeness, 3)negative politeness, 4) off record, 5) not doing the FTA. However, their theory has been challenged by other scholars in various aspects such as its cross-cultural applicability and conceptualized politeness. Nevertheless, Brown & Levinson did not discuss politeness in the context of greetings in detail. The often-used definition of greetings is provided by Goffman (1971) who defines a greeting as access rituals, which serves as a bond to initiate social meetings of people by making a clear distinction between 'passing greeting' and 'engaging greeting'. According to him, 'passing greeting' is a non-binding greeting that does not involve social contact, while 'engaging greeting' is accompanied by an appeal of deeper interaction. In other words, both functions are similar to a switch that opens or closes relations. This understanding has been expanded in recent work of Nilsson et al., (2020), indicating that greetings can be a way to index the degree of social distance between interlocutors and thereby reflecting recurring cultural patterns.

The understanding of greetings and their inherent relationship with politeness has instrumental as well as pedagogical implications in second and foreign language classroom settings. Scholars such as Blum-Kulka (1991), Ochs (1996) and Kasper & Rose (2002) have long argued that second language learners already possess pragmatic knowledge and ability, since there are pragmatic universals common in all languages. As Schleicher (1997:334) states, 'the more speakers understand the cultural context of greetings, the better the society appreciates them, and the more they are regarded as well behaved'. For second language learners, it is important to understand that the rules of communication are connected with both the culture, and the context, in order to ensure effective and efficient communication (Wei, 2009).

In choosing the model of analysis for this paper, two models were studied. The first one was by Ebsworth et al. (1996). The second one is by Shleykina (2019). Ebsworth, et al. (1996) and Shleykina (2019) demonstrate precisely on how to classify greetings data. While Ebsworth et al. (1996) classify eight types of greetings, Shleykina introduces five categories. Ebsworth, et al. (1996) classify eight types of greetings by English native speakers which are :1) **Greetings on the run;** 2) **Speedy greeting;** 3) **The chat**; 4) **The long greeting;** 5) **The intimate greeting;** 6) **All-business greeting**; 7) **The**

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introductory greeting; and 8) **The re-greeting.** Ebsworth, et al. (1996) model is precise but not quite suitable to classify the data of this study because it covers various specific situations whereas the study has specific groups of people and situations. Meanwhile, Shleykina (2019) divided English greetings in her study into: greetings proper, address terms, and elements of phatic communication and were coded as follows:

1. **Greetings proper.** This category was further divided into time-free/ time-bound and formal/ informal variants. For example, "Hello" is time-free, neutral greeting proper; "Hey" is time-free, informal greeting proper; "Good afternoon" is time-bound, formal greeting proper.

2. **Address terms**. This category was further divided into personal names, university titles (Doctor, Professor), honorifics (Mr./ Mrs., Sir/ Madam), and colloquial addresses (man, dude);

3. **Phatic questions.** This category was further divided into neutral (How are you?), formal (How do you do?), and informal (What's up?) questions;

4. **Phatic phrases.** (Nice to see you/ Nice to meet you);

5. **Situational greetings**. This category includes contextualized or individualized phrases or questions which serve as a greeting in specific circumstances of the constructed dialogue. For example, the greeting "Hi, John! Shleykina (2019) model is more general and applicable with the data of this study. Thus, this study applies Shleykina's model with some amendments to suit Bahasa Indonesia and Japanese greetings in the data. This is particularly important because Japanese language sentence and utterance including greetings are either in polite or plain styles (Kikuchi, 1997; Jamila & Musaev, 2011) so they have to be defined in the respective categories. Having appropriated Shleykina's model, all greetings in the data of this study are divided into 6 patterns :

1). **Pattern 1 (P1)**: **Formal Greetings**:
The type of formal greetings basically learned from the text books and language classrooms. Formal greetings are in complete form and style. For example: *Om Swastyastu /*Peace be upon You, *Ohayou Gozaimasu*/*Selamat Pagi /*Good Morning, *Konnichiwa/Selamat Siang/*Good Afternoon/Hello, *Yoroshiku Onegaishimasu /*Please, *Otsukaresama desu /*Good job, etc.

2). **Pattern 2 (P2)**: **Informal Greetings**:
These greetings are the informal and shorter version of Pattern 1. For example: *Hai /*Hi, *Helo /*Hello, *Pagi/Ohayou/Ohayo /*Morning, *Yoroshiku /*Please, *Otsukare /*Good job, etc.

3). **Pattern 3 (P3)**: **Casual Greetings**:
A slang form of *Hi!*. For example: *Oi, Wei, Yo, Hei, Uii / Yahhoo, Ossu, Ya.* [a form of greeting probably derived from popular culture such as anime or rap music].

4). **Pattern 4 (P4)**: **Address Greetings**:
Greet by calling the name of the interlocutor. For example: (*Nama teman*/*Tomodachi no namae/~san)*/ (Name of a friend). Note: Respondents just wrote something that means "name of a friend" but did not write any actual names. This is from the raw data.

5}. **Pattern 5 (P5)**: **Phatic Greetings**:
*Apa kabar? /*How are you?, *Genki/Sehat? /Are you well?, Sudah makan? /*Have you eaten?

6). **Pattern 6 (P6)**: **Situation Focused Greetings**:
Contextualized or individualized phrases or questions in specific settings or situations. Any type of words and sentences used to greet and no specific rules guided as in the language textbooks or classrooms. These types of greetings are influenced by socio-linguistics contexts. For example, *Sedang melakukan apa?/ Nani shiteru no? /*What are you doing?, *Apakah sedang makan? /*Are you eating?, etc.

The analysis of the result is based on a theoretical concept of interlanguage pragmatics that focuses on non-native speakers' comprehension and production of speech acts (Kasper & Dahl, 1991) within the area of pragmatic transfer. These are true in case the respondents translated Indonesian greetings into Japanese.

2. METHOD

This research use descriptive qualitative approach. Research method use in this study is questionnaire and in depth interview. The respondent of this study is 21 females and 4 males. The total of 25 students in careworker class program in Mirai Mandiri. The program consist of 6 months. The native language is Indoesian language. The age of respondent is 19th until 25th . Questionnaire data is obtained by distributing questionnaire fields through google form. The provision of the questionnaire is carried out in one day together to fill out the questionnaire by providing an overview of the context of the situation as follows:

Q1 : *In the morning, you met a Japanese Teacher in the classroom before the class starts.*
Please write greetings you will use to greet him/her.
Situation 1(A): Greet your Japanese teacher in Bahasa Indonesia.
Situation 1(B): Greet your Japanese teacher in Japanese.

Q2 : *During lunch time, you met a Japanese Teacher having lunch at the canteen.*
Please write greetings you will use to greet him/her.
Situation 2(A): Greet your Japanese Teacher in Bahasa Indonesia.

Situation 2(B): Greet your Japanese Teacher in Japanese.

In-depth interviews were conducted to confirm the questionnaire filling of each respondent.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data is analyzed based on the two situations/scenarios provided in the quesstionaire. Indonesian and Japanese greetings data was analyzed and coded into six greeting patterns according to the model explained earlier. Data analysis will be carried out by looking at each situation that has been described previously.
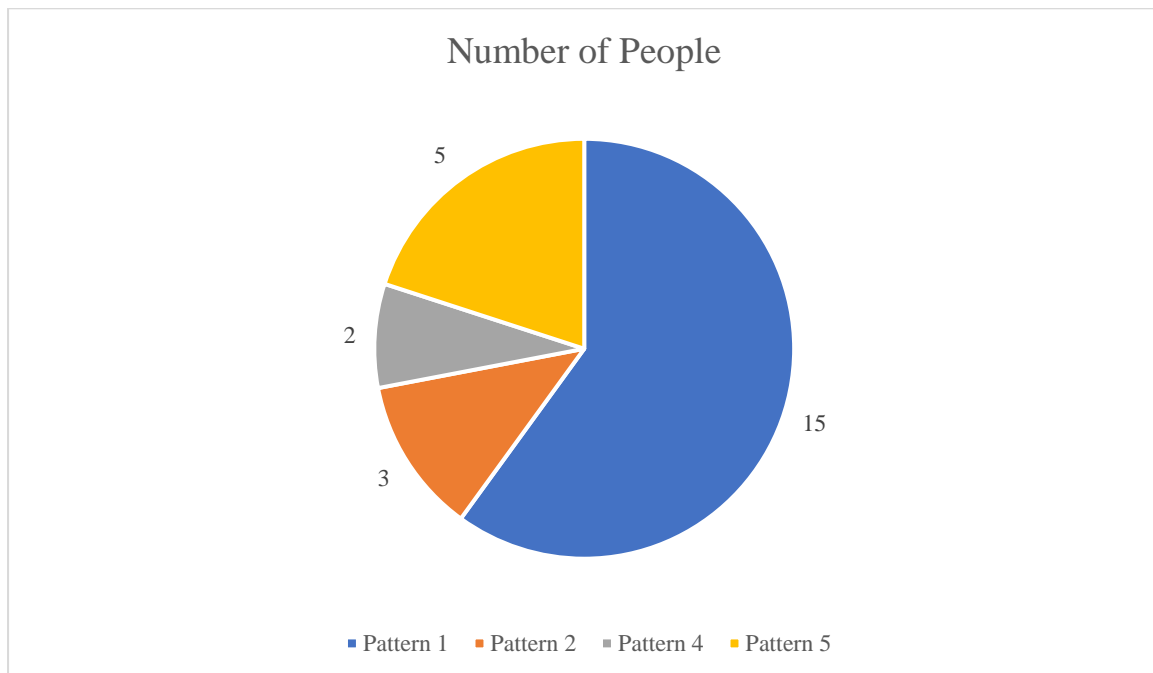
Q1 : *In the morning, you met a Japanese Teacher in the classroom before the class starts.*
Please write greetings you will use to greet him/her.
Situation 1(A): Greet your Japanese teacher in Bahasa Indonesia.
Situation 1(B): Greet your Japanese teacher in Japanese.

From the situation (Q1) respondents used different greetings when meeting Japanese teachers before the lesson started. There were 15 people who chose to use greetings by saying 'Good Morning' followed by Ohayou Gozaimasu using pattern 1. 3 respondents used the greeting 'Hi' using pattern 2. There are also 2 people who use the use of pattern 4, namely with names added with the greeting word san 'Akiko san'. 5 other respondents used pattern 5 'genki desuka'. The distribution of greeting options for this first situation can be seen in the following diagram.
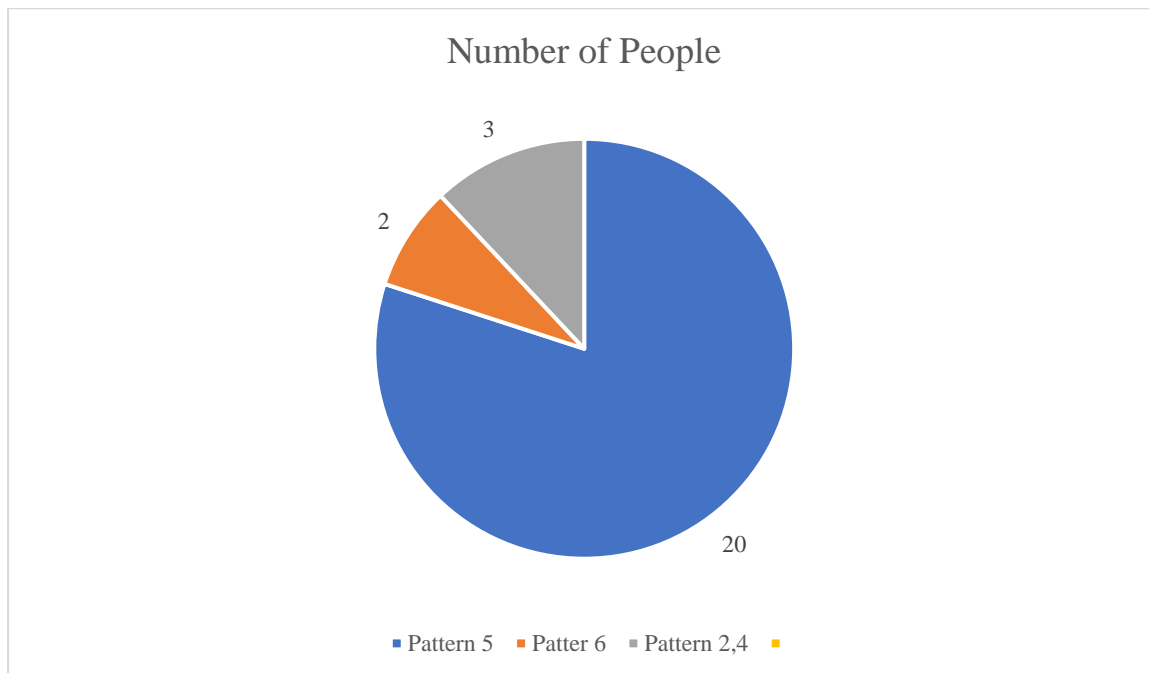
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Q2 : *During lunch time, you met a Japanese Teacher having lunch at the canteen.*
Please write greetings you will use to greet him/her.
Situation 2(A): Greet your Japanese Teacher in Bahasa Indonesia.
Situation 2(B): Greet your Japanese Teacher in Japanese.

From the situation (Q2) respondents used different greetings when meeting Japanese teachers in canteen. There were 20 people who chose the use of greetings by saying 'Already eaten' which is a choice of greeting pattern 5, 2 people who used pattern 6 'hiru Gohan wo tabete imasuka', and 3 people using the greeting 'konnichiwa' and followed by the name + san (using pattern 2 and pattern 4). The distribution of greeting options for this first situation can be seen in the following diagram.

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4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that choosing appropriate greetings in Japanese requires L2 learners to at least consider two things; one is using proper speech style and another is choosing a topic that is according to the Japanese cultural norms. This kind of interlanguage pragmatics competence could be achieved through exploration of variety of situations especially during classrooms context as well as exposure with guidance to extra materials of Japanese popular culture such as anime, dramas, comics,

TV programs, etc. Japanese L2 learners need to experience the language in various contexts of interaction in order to be competence in interlanguage pragmatics. This paper also suggests a data collection of Japanese greetings by Japanese native speakers to serve as basic reference other than textbooks and formal teaching materials used during the teaching of greetings. As the settings of both situations in this study are conversations among close friends, it is expected that informal greetings are used. The results show that most respondents use informal greetings, as well as using plain style in Japanese greetings which are appropriate. However, some of the greeting topics that they chose are not common in daily greetings in Japanese cultural norms. From the interviews, the respondents admitted that this usage mostly come from their decisions to translate the Indonesian expressions directly into Japanese.

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