

A Comparative Study on Chinese and Indonesian Greeting Culture in Multicultural Society

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Abstract— Greetings is one of the most important part in starting a communication. When meeting someone, we tend to do an interactive activity such as saying or doing something as an act to establish a good social relationship. If not, communication activities are difficult to begin or cannot be carried out smoothly. In Mandarin and Indonesian, there are several terms used in greeting. Both China and Indonesia have its own culture of greeting which includes some daily expressions, and it is appropriate for both those who already know each other and those who have just met. However, in Mandarin and Indonesian have different terms, language styles and habits used in greeting. By using comparative study method, this article is expected to be able to help learners of Mandarin, especially in Indonesia, understands these cultural differences so that they can apply it to everyday conversation with both Chinese and Indonesian.

Keywords— Chinese; Indonesian; greeting; multicultural

I. INTRODUCTION

China and Indonesia are countries that uphold ethics and manner. Greeting is a media in initiating a communication. Greeting is the most basic courtesy behavior in daily communication. Greetings basically begin with greeting each other then open the topic to communicate further, so that harmonious interpersonal relationships and social interaction with strangers will intertwined. However despite the greetings, there is a big difference between the cultures of China and Indonesia which are reflected in the greetings of China and Indonesia. Chinese people have a habit of almost every time and condition asking "have not eaten?" Or "where to go?" To the person they met. While Indonesians say greetings or ask questions like "good morning", "good afternoon", "good evening", good night ", " hello "or" how are you "when meeting other people. In the process of learning Mandarin, cultural differences arise and habits in greeting. So foreign students need to go through the stage of adaptation and recognition of culture so that they can adjust in communicating with Chinese people.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chen Songcen (1988) consider that greeting is mainly used to express the speaker's identification of the relationship between the two parties, and can also be used as a starting point for a conversation.

Cheng Ruilan (2005) consider that Chinese greeting "have you eaten" reflects the cultural traditions of the Chinese nation. In the poor China in the past, because the problem of food and clothing has not been solved for a long time, the Chinese are paying attention to eating and also love to talk about eating.

Widada (1995) consider that in general, each language has two main functions, namely linguistic function and cultural function. Linguistic function is a function that places language as a means or means of communication for everyday people. Every member of society can convey their feelings, thoughts or ideas to other community members through language. While the cultural function is a function of language related to the cultural system and social system of everyday society.

Ridha Mashudi Wibowo (2015) says greetings are one of the tangible proofs of human communications. One greets someone else because of the need to communicate. In this communication, the relationship between the two people communicating influences the choice of greeting forms.

III. METHOD

This study uses a comparative analysis method based on comparative language theory, so as to produce descriptive data. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out with a systematic investigation of the sentence greetings in Mandarin. then the sentence greeting in Indonesian is systematically examined. Then compare and analyze the similarities and differences.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Differences Between Chinese and Indonesian Greeting

1. Differences in Greeting

In everyday greetings the Chinese often say "have not eaten?", "Where are you going?", "Are you busy?", "Are you going to work?", "Are you going home from work?", "Are you going for a walk?", and many others. The form of questions is very diverse but simple and adapted to the circumstances when meeting. This reflects the presence of closeness between one person and another. But for Indonesians, greetings like very rarely are spoken and uncomfortable. Especially for people who have just known. The question seems to want to know the circumstances or affairs of others. In general, Indonesians say "Hello" more often, "How are you?" or when meeting at a certain time will say "Good morning", "Good afternoon", "Good evening". Some of the most commonly used types of Indonesian greetings are saying "Hello". This greeting is very neutral and general. Good for people who have just known, people who have long known, accidentally crossed the road and can be spoken in all conditions and circumstances. "Hello" greetings can open the way for further chatter and can only stop until both parties say "hello". This greeting is very common and does not involve privacy. The second is asking the news "How are you?" This greeting is usually said when it has not been met for a long time. And for both parties who have a close relationship, the conversation will continue further. But if both parties do not have a very close relationship, the topic of discussion will stop when each has explained that their news is good. And it will not continue to deep discussion.

Chinese greetings were originally a form of concern for others. But as time goes by, people meet and say hello do not really want to get clear answers and know what is or will be done by that person, but to express friendly and polite. But friends from abroad often misunderstand. For example the words "have eaten yet?" are misinterpreted as inviting him to eat, "where are you going?" It is also misinterpreted as a question that wants to know someone's personal activities. This makes it uncomfortable for learners of Mandarin who have a culture of greeting that is different from culture in China. But actually, Chinese greetings are none other than the greetings "How are you?" . Actually greetings in Indonesian and Chinese have the same function, it's just different words and connotations. A greeting in one language is considered polite not necessarily polite in another language because it depends on the culture and norms.

There are many models of greetings both in Indonesian and Chinese. In addition to language, body movements and expressions also support greetings. Chinese people use their hands to shake hands, usually when they meet someone who is older or who is more respected. There is also a toskin or a gentle pat on the back while wiping, usually done by close friends or close friends. In addition there are also those who only give smiles, signs if they like to meet people they meet. Then there is also a movement to raise your head and nod your head. In addition to the above movements, Chinese people have a special movement called gōngshǒu, make an obeisance by cupping one hand in the other before the chest to express respect. The position of the right hand clenched, the left hand outside the right fist.

In Indonesia the tradition of greeting people when meeting people is by shaking hands with a smile. There are also those who shake hands with a cheek with the cheek that is usually done by women with women. Then there is the habit of a small child shaking the hands of an older person and then sticking to his forehead as a sign of respect. Usually done by children against parents, children to teachers or older people they meet.

Of the two comparisons of supporting movements greeting the Chinese and Indonesians, we can see that the body movements carried out can support the process of greeting can occur more politely and kindly. Movement that is considered polite by certain countries, is not necessarily considered polite for other countries.

2. Differences in Chinese and Indonesian Address Terms

The Indonesian and Chinese languages are not completely equivalent in the connotation of relatives. The relatives in Indonesian are not as specific and complex as Chinese, and their performance is more general and vague. The difference between the two should be reflected in the following aspects: First, the Chinese relatives title system is respect for seniority. The names in Chinese are commonly used to represent rankings, such as Big Brother, Second Brother, Third Sister, and Four Uncle. There is no such habit in Indonesian. The word "brother" can refer to 兄 and 弟; "sister" can refer to 姐 and 妹. Secondly, the Chinese relatives title is divided into blood, which is different inside (from father side) and outside (from mother side). It pays great attention to the identity and status of paternal relatives. There are "爷爷grandfather", "奶奶grandmother", "伯伯father's elder brother / uncle", "叔叔father's younger brother / uncle" and "姑姑aunt", and the corresponding maternal relatives are called 外公"grandfather", "外婆grandmother", "舅舅", "阿姨", etc. In Indonesian, "kakek" also refers to "爷爷" and "外公"; and "Om", in addition to "伯伯", "叔叔" and "舅舅". Finally, Chinese relatives title of gender differences are perfectly clear between men and women. In Indonesian, the word cousin can refer to men and women.

The root of the Chinese traditional culture is based on the individual agricultural economy, with the patriarchal family as the background and the Confucian ethics as the core social and cultural system, attaching great importance to ethical relations and their moral norms. It is influenced by the traditional patriarchal relationship between the ancestral lineage of seniority, gender, close and distinct, and its ethical and moral concepts. Indonesian society has many forms of greeting. However, there is no difference in the form of greetings to the family of the father or from the mother but still polite and in accordance with Indonesian culture, and the family structure is simple. Although in Indonesian dialect there are many different forms of greeting, the general form of greeting in Indonesian is acceptable to all levels of society. Therefore, there is no need to distinguish between direct, collateral, patriarchal, and maternal in the kinship of relatives, and it is not even necessary to distinguish between men and women. The kinship relationship between male, female, paternal and maternal in the kinship appellation is equidistant. In addition, there are a large number of generalized imaginations of relatives in Chinese, using relatives' appellations to refer to non-relative members. Whether it is neighbors, friends or acquaintances, people are called by uncles, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, etc by gender and age. It expresses intimacy and respect, that is, to introduce non-relative members into the kinship network to express closeness. This concept is mostly similar to Indonesian culture as well.

3. Differences in Farewell

In China's farewell etiquette, people often attribute the reason for saying goodbye to each other. For example, When Chinese people go to other people's homes, they will probably say "I have to go, you must be very tired." and other means to bid farewell to the owner. However, if an Indonesian goes to another Indonesian home to be a guest, they mostly say "Thank you, I'd better going now" or "Thank you for the meal, I think I'd better be leaving now. It's very nice to have a talk with you" then they shake each other hands. The farewell words of gratitude are expressed. The Indonesian people think that this is more apparent. However, such farewell words are generally not used in China. According to the Chinese people's habits, if a guest visits, when they leave, the owner will send the guest to the door. The guest will say to the owner: "Don't bother to come any further" and "Don't send it away". The host will say: "Walk slowly", "Mind your steps" and so on. These statements cannot be translated directly into English. If you say "Stay here", "Don't come any further with me, please." etc, this moment would be a little bit awkward. Because they simply don't mean to send you too far. Unless you invite, don't think they will send you far. And if you say "Go slowly" and "Walk slowly" to foreign guests, their reaction is likely to be: "Why should I walk slowly?" ("Why should I go slowly?"). Foreigners see "Go slowly" and "Walk slowly" as a requirement. In fact, it is just a very common expression used by Chinese people to say goodbye. In some condition, Chinese people also like to say "Keep in touch" but it doesn't mean they will make a daily routine contact. This sentence is just a farewell word, which is equivalent to "goodbye". The speaker has no intention, and has not made any promises. In addition, according to Indonesian culture, when you say goodbye you have to express your farewell intentions or euphemistically to the owner a few minutes in advance, and get consent before you can leave. If you suddenly say "time is not early", then stand up and bid farewell to the owner, which is considered rude in Indonesian culture.

V. CONCLUSION

As the saying goes "When in Rome do as the Romans do", it means that wherever you are, follow local customs. Learning a foreign language cannot be separated from learning the culture of the country. So to be able to learn Chinese well, we must know and learn about its culture. By knowing the local culture it will make us more easily understand the habits, customs and ways they use language style to communicate. In learning a foreign language, the main key to being able to communicate fluently using a foreign language is to practice it a lot. Like Chinese which has Chinese characters and four read tones, it is very difficult to learn if it is not practiced directly. From the differences between Chinese and Indonesian greeting, we find that Chinese and Indonesian greetings have similarities in terms of types, and the differences between them can reflect the cultural differences between China and Indonesia; the influence of social systems, history and their respective values. Only by fully understanding this cultural differences can we express our greetings politely in the process of communication.

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