

"Aisatsu" in Japanese Language Education

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Abstract: In Japanese society the aisatsu culture is very important. This is done with the aim of establishing a good relationship between humans. Through Aisatsu, communication will be fostered, so that social relations with others, both in a personal environment and in work relationships will be well established. In this paper, the author tries to see as an early study the use of aisatsu in communication in a formal environment. Formal aisatsu is commonly used in campus life from a learner to his teacher, or in subordinate-superior relationships in a work environment. Aisatsu in Japanese, not only serves as an ordinary greeting in everyday life, but in a higher context, such as communication in business, aisatsu can be used as a tool in running its business. By doing aisatsu, there are many meanings contained in it, both as an expression of praise, respect, encouragement, etc. In this paper, the author tries to describe the ways in which some aisatsu are used in Japanese and the discrepancies that often arise in Japanese learners. Such as the use of aisatsu, 「おはようございます」「こんにちは」「おめでとうございます」, etc. In the context of communication, the use of aisatsu is highly influenced by culture. Thus, the use of aisatsu in formal situations is not appropriate to use.

Key words: Aisatsu, culture.

1. Introduction

The rapid flow of globalization opens our paradigm in improving language learning. As we know, language is one of the media used in studying various sciences, culture and technology. Learning a language is not merely about learning and recognizing the structure of language, but more than that which is no less important is studying the externalities of language and culture. We can identify cultural values through language.

According to Mustakin, language basically cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context of the speaking community because besides being a social phenomenon, language is also a cultural phenomenon. As a social phenomenon, language is a form of social behavior that is used as a means of communication by involving at least two participants. Therefore, various social factors that apply in communication, such as the role relationship among communication participants, where the communication takes place, the purpose of communication, the communication situation, social status, education, age, and gender of the communication participants, also influence the use of language.

We can see the cultural application of a society and observe / feel it in everyday life. Examples in terms of cultural differences in greeting behavior for others. The culture of Indonesian society when greeting other people is accustomed to stretching out his hand to shake hands, while Japanese culture, for example, conducts greeting behavior by bowing the body (Ojigi). Besides that, aisatsu / greeting has certain expressions / expressions.

Regarding the use of language, of course language teachers in particular expect their students to be able to use language correctly, both in terms of structure and outside the structure of the language. So that when certain expressions / greetings are used, they do not conflict with or feel "strange" with the culture of the language-speaking community. Learning languages should link the socio-cultural aspects that underlie the use of the language so that learners do not get caught up in the use of language errors in communication.

In Japanese society, there are many greetings that are often used in interacting with other people. There has not been a real research done, but it is possible that we can classify Japanese into language groups that use a lot of greetings or aisatsu.

This type of greeting / aisatsu appears quite a lot in the dialogues in class handbooks, including the book "Minna no Nihongo". The greetings used in a dialogue just appear according to the setting of a communication. But when, to whom the greeting is used correctly / appropriately, formally or informally is less clear. In Japanese society and culture, aisatsu / greeting / greeting is very important. Aisatsu in Japanese, not only serves as an ordinary greeting in everyday life, but in a higher context, such as communication in business, aisatsu can be used as a tool in running its business.

In the process of daily communication, it is not uncommon for learners who use *aisatsu* to be heavily influenced by the mindset of Indonesian people or culture, or vice versa, the Indonesian language greeting is perceived as 'strange' by Japanese people to be used in certain contexts. On this basis, the author takes the theme "Aisatsu in Japanese Language Education".

In this paper, the author will describe the scope of the problem to clarify the discussion, which includes *aisatsu* which is limited to the scope of daily communication usage.

- a. How is "Aisatsu" used in formal communication.
- b. Some of the discrepancies that often arise from learners in the use of 'Aisatsu'

This paper aims to determine the types and uses of "Aisatsu" in daily communication related to Japanese language education.

2. Methodology

In this paper, it will be explained that "Aisatsu in Japanese language education" is related to a natural linguistic symptom. This means that the data collected comes from real environments and real communication situations in everyday life. While the method used in this research is descriptive method.

Descriptive method, which describes all data which is then analyzed and compared based on the ongoing reality and then tries to provide solutions to the problem.

This is because the data collected and analyzed is described descriptively.

The descriptive research method has several characteristics, among others;

- c. It does not matter whether the object under study is right or wrong,
- d. More emphasis on actual symptoms or on those occurring at the time of the research, and
- e. Usually not geared towards testing hypotheses.

3. Theoretical Review

a. Function of Language in Society

Humans as social creatures who always interact with each other in everyday life. This interaction between humans is known as communication. In carrying out this communication, a medium or tool is needed, namely what is called language.

Language is a tool for pengatar in communicating. Every region, region and country has very complex and complex differences. Language is also a component of communication that is difficult to understand universally. This means because language has unique and complex characteristics, and can only be understood and understood by users of that language in a certain area / region. The complexity and uniqueness of this language, of course, must be studied and understood in order for communication to be better and effective, so as to gain the value of empathy and sympathy from others, and it is hoped that misunderstandings will not occur in communication.

Language, which acts as a system, symbols, and sounds to identify oneself and communicate with others, has a very vital role. Through language, humans can adapt to the customs, behavior, manners of society, and at the same time easily assimilate themselves with all forms of society. The function of language in general is as a tool for expression, communication, and a tool for social integration and adaptation. Meanwhile, the function of language in particular is to establish relationships in everyday life, to create art (literature), to study ancient texts, and to exploit science and technology. The function of language in society:

- 1) Tools for communicating with fellow humans.
- 2) Tools for cooperation with fellow humans.
- 3) Self-identification tools.

Interaction in the first and most basic communication in everyday life is the frequent use of greetings or greetings. Indonesia is a country known for its Eastern culture. Greeting or greeting other human beings is an important thing. Someone can be judged good or bad by others, usually is the first impression we meet someone. While that is not entirely true, it does at least make a good first impression.

Likewise in Japanese society which is famous for its culture of greeting / 'greeting' or *Aisatsu* in everyday life, the function of language as a means of communication, a tool for collaborating with others, and as a tool for self-identification, has great influence and meaning. .

b. The types of "Aisatsu" that often appear in everyday life

In Nihogo Kyouiku Jiten (1997; 199), it is explained that aisatsu is an expression of question-and-answer reply with friendly, affectionate, or respectful expressions in everyday life. And usually / most of these expressions have a certain form, such as 「こんにちは」, 「さよなら」, and others.

In line with the increasing number of social relationships, the aisatsu is increasingly diverse, and of course the differences in aisatsu from several regions / regions will also appear. From the types above, they can be grouped into several major groups, such as:

a) Words related to time, or season. At that time, an aisatsu / greeting is used according to these conditions. For example, 「おはよう (ございます)」 「こんにちは」 「暑いですね」 and others. This group includes a formal form and no real meaning. This Aisatsu is often heard in a dialogue or conversation.

b) Words related to the circumstances when we first met.

c) The words aisatsu / greeting that are used to establish / maintain relationships with other people, depending on the conditions.

d) Words used when expressing gratitude

e) Aisatsu or greeting expressed through body movements, such as お辞儀

If we describe the types of aisatsu that often appear in detail, they are as follows:

- 1) Aisatsu or a greeting used when meeting people, such as 「おはようございます」、 「こんにちは」
- 2) Aisatsu or a farewell greeting, such as 「さようなら」 「また会いましょう」
- 3) Aisatsu or pre-sleep / sleep greeting, such as 「おやすみなさい」
- 4) Aisatsu or greeting used when we are about to eat or after eating, such as 「いただきます」 「ごちそうさま」
- 5) Aisatsu or greeting when entering the house, such as 「ただいま」 for someone to come home and enter the house.
- 6) Aisatsu or greeting when you meet someone or introduce someone else, such as 「はじめまして」
- 7) Aisatsu or greeting when visiting, such as 「おじゃまします」
- 8) Aisatsu or greeting when you want to ask someone something, such as 「ちょっといかがですが」
- 9) Aisatsu or greeting when asking / begging something 「すみませんが」
- 10) Aisatsu or greeting when someone wants to say thank you 「ありがとうございます」
- 11) Aisatsu or greeting to apologize, such as 「すみません」
- 12) Aisatsu or greeting to express salvation, such as 「おめでとうございます」
- 13) Aisatsu or greeting to express condolences, such as 「おだいじに」
- 14) Aisatsu or greeting when addressing, such as 「もしもし、ちょっと」

c. The 'Aisatsu' culture in Japanese society

Overall, aisatsu is a medium for maintaining good human relations. Through this Aisatsu communication will be fostered, so that social relations with others, both in personal and work relationships will be well established. Aisatsu has become very important in Japanese culture.

In a dictionary meaning, aisatsu are words or social language commonly used to express someone's respect or friendliness. In the village community, they will greet anyone, that's normal. However, unlike people in urban areas, they will not say hello to strangers.

Mizutani in Nihonjijo Handobaggu said that aisatsu is an expression used to establish relationships between humans, or to maintain good relationships among humans, or as an expression in language action, and not as an act of language which is essentially to convey emotions or information.

Aisatsu is often performed in various conditions, human relations, and place settings. As explained above, aisatsu is very influential in the educational and business environment. Some argue that aisatsu in a business context is not only a verbal greeting, but also a form of sowan activity.

Sayings of greetings or aisatsu such as 「おはようございます」

「おめでとうございます」 and others, not only raise the question of whether the phrase has a particular meaning, but it raises curiosity as to whether the greeting is polite or not.

In Japanese, there are many greeting expressions that are used in everyday life. By doing aisatsu, there are many meanings contained in it, both as an expression of praise, respect, encouragement, and so on. There are so many meanings contained in this aisatsu expression, so it cannot be denied that the habit of doing aisatsu / greeting has brought the Japanese nation to become a developed country.

4. Discussion and Result

a. Use of the Words "Aisatsu" in Formal Communication

For those interested in studying Japanese in Indonesia, as a whole, it can be said that it is quite progress / improvement. Of course, in the learning process various handbooks have been used. In Japanese handbooks, almost all books start with Greeting / Aisatsu materials or materials or greetings in Japanese.

Basically, every country also greets each other, the goal is mostly the same, namely to build good relations between people. As mentioned in the previous section, Japan is one of the countries that has a lot of greeting words (挨拶言葉). It is very interesting to see how aisatsu is used. From the descriptions of the types of aisatsu above, the author tries to see it as an early study of the use of aisatsu in formal communication.

The use of 'Aisatsu' or greeting in Japanese society is not just greetings as we often hear in everyday practice. In its use, Japanese people often use aisatsu in various ways, they even have a phrase, aisatsu itself is adjusted according to the month or season when the person concerned is greeting.

Formal aisatsu is commonly used in campus life from a learner to his teacher, or in subordinate-superior relationships in a work environment. In 「わかるビジネス日本語」, quite a lot of aisatsu appears in short dialogues between subordinates and co-workers. On this occasion, the authors saw the use of aisatsu from the side of formal communication, as follows:

1) 「おはようございます」「こんにちは」「こんばんは」、is a greeting that is used to greet each other. Each greeting has a different meaning and usage. 「おはようございます」 is aisatsu which is pronounced in the morning. This word comes from the word 早い which means fast (early). Adding お in front of the word, and ございます at the back, and changing the form of はやい to はよう are the format of the word change in homage (尊敬語).

2) はじめまして、 is an aisatsu / greeting used when meeting someone for the first time. This expression is short for 「はじめましてお目にかかります」.

3) よろしくお願ひします、 a phrase that is often used when we introduce ourselves. This expression is very often used by Japanese people when asking someone to do something for us. The polite form of よろしくお願ひします is よろしくお願ひいたします

4) すみません、 this expression is used in 3 kinds of situations; The first one which is close to means "excuse me" in Indonesian or "excuse me", the subtle form is 「恐れ入りますが」. The second in a certain context can mean "thank you", and the third is an apology. And for the third type, the expression has a more polite form, namely by saying 「申し訳ございません」. Meanwhile, the past form of 「すみません」 is 「すみませんでした」.

5) 結構です、 this expression can be interpreted by the words 「いいです」 or 「いりません」, but in other contexts it can also mean agreeing with other people's opinion, or "it is good"/ "It will be fine".

6) ありがとうございます／ありがとうございました、 the expression used when the speaker expresses gratitude.

7) 失礼します、 is a polite expression to end a situation. 「失礼します」 is also used to end a conversation on the phone. In a formal expression when saying 'goodbye' to a boss, senior, or someone from a company, the expression

「では、失礼します」 is used.

8) すみませんが、 is used when we are going to disturb someone. Another expression is 「悪いですが」

9) 頑張ります、 a word / expression from Japanese society that is often used. This expression has the meaning that the speaker will try hard to do something as well as possible, full of enthusiasm, and there is no negative connotation. If someone says 「頑張ってください」 then the response to the phrase is

「ありがとうございます」

10) お疲れ様です／お疲れ様でした, an expression used to appreciate someone's work. This expression is used by people who are more senior to their subordinates or fellow colleagues.

11) かしこまりました, an expression used when making sure that the speaker understands an instruction or order. This polite expression is usually used of seniors or clients.

12) 実は, this expression is used to explain a particular reason or situation, but the speaker finds it difficult or a little reluctant to say it.

13) お世話になっております, this expression is usually used when talking to clients on the phone. This phrase means that "Thank you always for all your help and kindness".

14) ありがとうございます, is used to express gratitude to someone.

15) おめでとうございます, is a word to express or congratulate all the successes and commemoration of meaningful days. For example, during the New Year, the greeting that is said is 「あけましておめでとうございます」 「お誕生日おめでとうございます」 and others.

16) おやすみなさい, used when greeting people going to rest / sleep. This word is often heard to end a call at night.

b. Learners' Frequent Discrepancies in the Use of 'Aisatsu'

In daily practice, some of the aisatsu above, are often heard by Japanese teachers or even observers of the mismatch of Japanese learners' usage. In this paper, the discrepancy referred to is seen from the side of Japanese culture or language itself, and from the Japanese point of view when Indonesians use the greeting word in a communication. Some of the things that the authors notice about the greetings that are often practiced by learners are as follows:

❖ Greetings 「おはよう」「こんにちは」 and 「こんばんは」 are not only seen in terms of time, but without realizing that the aisatsu is to forge a strong bond between the person who uses it and who gets the greeting. We need to note that 「おはようございます」 can be used to anyone when meeting, either to family or to people who are not very close. Meanwhile 「こんにちは」 cannot be used with people who have a very close relationship, such as family. However, the use of 「こんにちは」, on the other hand also wants to produce relationships from those that are not close to being close, and on the other hand also wants to erase relationships that have distance.

❖ **Non-conformity.** In a campus environment, it is not uncommon for us to hear aisatsu / greeting from students by saying 「おはようございます、先生」 or even 「おはよう」.

Another interesting thing about the 「おはようございいま」「こんにちは」 or 「こんばんは」 greeting is that it is not used for Japanese people when ending a conversation on the phone, just like the telephone culture in Indonesia. In formal situations, for Indonesians the greeting "good morning / good afternoon / good night" is used at the beginning or opening of a call, and ends / closes with the same greeting after the thank you note. These greetings are also often heard when learners repeatedly meet with their instructors on the same day, and say greetings according to the time they met repeatedly as well.

❖ **Non-conformity.** The phrase 「ありがとうございます」, is different from the culture in Indonesian society when saying 'thank you', there is the expression "Thank you in advance", in Japanese communication the word "before" is not usually translated as 「その前に」, so it is sufficient 「よろしくおねがいします」 or 「お世話になります」.

❖ **Non-conformity.** お疲れ様／お疲れ様でした。 This phrase sometimes appears from learner to teacher when the teacher has finished teaching. It is also not suitable if the expression is used of a superior. In this situation, it is enough for the student or subordinate to say 「ありがとうございました」.

❖ **Non-conformity.** The phrase 「おめでとう」, is not a very simple word. When the handbook appears 「あけましておめでとうございます」 as a greeting during the new year, the learners will remember the phrase. One thing we need to pay attention to is that when the expression exists, the learner usually concludes for himself the structure or form of the verb used in the expression. Under such circumstances, there is a mismatch in the use of the 「おめでとうございます」 greeting. For this expression, some learners concluded that the expression was combined with the verb form ～て, so the greeting 「合格しておめでとうございます」. At first glance the phrase looks like it is true, but for native speakers there is something odd when they hear the greeting. 「～おめでとうございます」 cannot be combined with the ～てform. But the phrase 「あけましておめでとうございます」 is an exceptional form, because it

actually means 『新しい年が明けて』. The form used when combining words with ～おめでとうございませす is usually a type of noun, for example, 「お誕生日おめでとうございませす」「ご結婚おめでとうございませす」 etc. This kind of limitation is because 「おめでと」 is a greeting word which usually has words in a certain form, has a specific meaning, so the partner / bond is fixed.

5. Conclusion

In general, aisatsu is a medium for maintaining good relationships between humans in socializing. In aisatsu, there are many expressions that we need to pay attention to in relation to their use. Unsuccessful / unsuccessful communication, perhaps originating from an improperly used aisatsu.

Formal aisatsu is usually used in a superior-subordinate relationship in an official environment such as a campus or an office. Failure to convey aisatsu can be considered a violation of manners (shitsurei). This can have fatal consequences, such as a break in business relations.

In relation to research, the authors hope to continue this research regarding matters related to the material, for example error analysis in using aisatsu.

The author realizes that this paper is far from perfect, therefore for further improvement it is hoped that various inputs from readers.

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