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THE FORM OF REJECTION IN CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NATIVE SPEAKER AND GERMAN LEARNERS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The culture of the society whose language is learned is often taught in foreign language teaching, also in German teaching in Indonesia. The prior knowledge about the German society, in the aspect of communication, it can be said that they do not speak a lot, direct, and not flexible. Most people see if the German people think no, then they would immediately say no. From the observations done by the writers, it turns out that such an opinion is not always true. Many German native speakers use other expressions in communicating with people of Indonesia to express rejection or denial. There are several lexemes in German that can be used to express denial, and the simplest form is the negation words *nein, nicht* or *kein* . Instead of using those negation words, the German native speakers often use other expressions. In this paper will be described the use of rejection sentences, the factors why they do not use the negation words *nein, nicht* or *kein* and their use by German learners.

Keywords: forms of denial, German language, cross cultural communication, native speaker

In the field of linguistics and communication it is often led to new ideas as a result of the study of intercultural communication. The term "intercultural communication" in Indonesia is also known as cross cultural communication. According to Bolten (2001), intercultural communication skill is a person's ability to exchange information effectively and appropriately with people of different cultural backgrounds. Different cultural backgrounds mean that life scope is not always the same. The scope covers the way of life, religion, ethics, rule of law, technology, education system and culture (Bolten, 2001). The socialization process is strongly influenced by the scope of the person's life. Intercultural communication skills is one of the goals of foreign language teaching, but the teaching of a foreign language is more focused on verbal disclosure in accordance

with the communication patterns of foreign language learned, and not the interaction process .

In the field of linguistics, especially pragmatics, the elements of language is considered to have a universal concept and then to compare the verbal disclosure of these concepts, such as language forms that express politeness (sorry, denial, order forms, and so on). The results are usually associated with the speaker's background to see the link between language and culture.

Pragmatic research that has been done can be developed towards intercultural pragmatics, such as stated by Ehrhardt (2003) that the study of intercultural communication does not see the relationship between the verbal expression to the cultural background, but rather focuses on the interactions that occur, and how the perception of the hearer. It is then associated with communicating strategy.

In communication between the German native speakers and German learners in Indonesia is also often found in various forms of uniqueness speaking. In expressing rejection or denial, for example, there are often found the use of politeness maxims. German native speakers were very concerned about the propriety elements, though their stereotypes are generally different. Before the writer describe the rejection forms in the communication between the German learners and native speaker, first will be described the matters relating to intercultural communication, the stereotype of German society, as well as the words or phrases used in a German denial sentence.

1. Elements Affecting Intercultural Communication

According to Buhlmann, Fearns, and Gaspardo (2003), intercultural communication is influenced by the following elements, 1) religion, 2) history, 3) the hierarchy of power, 4) individualism - collectivism, 5) time – space, 6) masculine - feminine. Communication is a bidirectional language activity and it involves speakers and hearer. Beside the verbal elements (such as intonation, speaking rate, etc.) and non- verbal elements (gesture and expression), the message delivered and the relationship between the speakers are important factors

in analyzing intercultural communication, but due to space limitations, it will not be discussed in this occasion. The discussion in this paper focuses on the form of denial/rejection, German stereotypes and elements that affect the strategy of intercultural communication.

According to Hofstede (1993) cited by Buhlmann, Fearns, and Gaspardo (2003), the scope of the cultural differences and similarities can be measured by the criteria of place, time, religion and history, the hierarchy of power, the entanglement between the individual , the dominance of masculine or feminine in the society and legal certainty .

The intercultural elements above can affect the communication in a form of stereotypes. Stereotype is a generalization about a group of people. Stereotype can be either positive or negative. For example, the stereotypes about the German society in many countries is mentioned as disciplined, punctual, conscientious, efficient, rigid (not flexible), environmentally conscious, give priority to logic rather than feelings (Buhlman, Fearns, and Gaspardo 2003). Stereotype can be classified into two, namely hetero-stereotype (stereotype of others outside the group) and auto-stereotype (stereotypes about their own group). Auto-stereotype of Indonesian society among others are welcoming, polite, tolerant, flexible. Stereotypes about Indonesia in Germany is more negative, such as terrorists, fundamentalists, accompanied hetero-stereotype which has been attached to Indonesia, such as corruption, bureaucracy, not on time, polite, did not open, the position of men is higher than women .

The Stereotype about hearer/partner is an initial perception of the speakers about the hearer/partner, thus stereotype affect the communication strategy. In terms of cognitive linguistics, communication strategy goes with communications patterns that stored in the human brain in the form of a mental network and contains patterns of communication in a variety of situations that called schema (Schwarze and Chur 1993) .

2. Negation Words in German

Engel (2004:444) in www.studiger.tu-dortmund.de stated that the negation (*Negation*) is a phrase that contains a rejection (*Zurückweisen*), exception (*Ausnahme*), denial (*Absprechen*), and conflict (*Bestreiten*). Eisenberg (2005:920-921) explained that the use of negation in a sentence is a manifestation of the expression, such as the sentence "*Beate kommt nicht ins Kino*". The sentence means that Beate did not come to the cinema. This sentence has a negation word *nicht*. Furthermore Eisenberg (2005:921) explains that the negation (*Negation*) in a particular syntactic is denoted by the word, which is known as negation word (the apostate).

Negation words are classified based on the meaning and function. In Langescheidt dictionary (1994:90) was found that based on its meaning the use of negations word is divided into two parts, namely sentence negation (*Satznegation*) and part negation (*partielle Negation*). Sentence negation implies that negations word is used in a sentence which negate the whole text. On the other hand the part negation chooses the part to be negated from the whole sentence or statement. To distinguish *Partiellenegation* and *Satznegation* in a sentence, the position of negation words are very much concerned. The position of negation word in a sentence has an affects whether the whole sentence or only a part of it will be negated.

There are many negations words in German and the most commonly used are the following few words.

a. nein

Götz and Haensch (2002:703) reveals that the negation word has a function as a particle. *Nein* is a negation word used to reject a query expression .

• *"Willst du noch ein Stück Kuchen ?" – "Nein danke!"*

  "Do you want a piece of cake ? " - "No, thank you "

• *"Bist du Fertig?" – "Nein , noch nicht . "*

  "Apakah kamu sudah selesai?" – "No, not yet"

• *"Ich glaube, es regnet." –"Nein, da irrst du dich"*

  "I think it's raining". – "No, you're wrong."

b. nicht

Nicht is a particle that is used to negate expression. *Nicht* has a function to negate the whole sentences and part of a sentence). Wolfgang and Tomaszewski (2001:63) explain that the position of the particle *nicht* which negates the whole sentence is as follows.

1) The particle *nicht* that located at the final position in German sentences. For example: *Ich verstehe das nicht*.

2) The particle *nicht* that located not at the final position in a German sentence are as follows.

• *Nicht* that located in perfect and passive sentences that use *Partizip II*, as in the sentences: *Ich habe **nicht** verstanden . , Das wird **nicht** verändert*.

• *Nicht* that located in sentences that contain modal verbs, for example: "*Das kann man **nicht** verbessern*".

• *Nicht* that located in a sentence that contains verbs followed by certain prepositions. For example: ,*Ich interessiere mich **nicht** für Fußball* .

• *Nicht* that located in a sentence that contains separable verbs (*trennbare Verben*), for example, *Da Steige ich **nicht** ein*.

• *Nicht* that located in sub ordinate clause (*Nebensatz*), for example: "*Ich stelle eine Frage, weil ich das **nicht** verstehe* .

Wolfgang and Tomaszewski (2001:64) explain '*Satzteilnegation bedeutet nicht der ganze Satz, sondern wird nur ein Satzteil negiert. Das Negationswort ' nicht ' ... unmittelbar steht vor dem Satzteil , nigiert der wird , und zwar unbetont* . That is, negation sentence does not mean the whole sentence, but only a part of a sentence ere negated. The negation word *nicht* is placed directly in front of the part of the sentence that is negated, namely the part which is not emphasized.

c. nichts

According to Götz and Haensch (2002:708) *nichts* is an indefinite pronoun which is used to denote the absence of things (*etwas*), as in the following example.

• *Wir müssen Wasser trinken, sonst gibt es **nichts***.

'We must drink water. Otherwise there is nothing.

• *Er hat **nichts** zu tun*.

'He doesn't have anything to do'

d. niemals

Götz and Haensch (2002:710) stated that *niemals* is an adverb that aims to strengthen the negation *nie* (never). The use of negation *niemals* can be seen in the following examples.

• *Ich hatte noch **niemals** solche Angst wie gestern .*

'I havn't had such a scary feeling like yesterday.'

• *Das werde ich **niemals** tun.*

'I would never do that'.

e. niemand

Epert (1991:178) explains that *niemand* is an uncertain pronoun (*Indefinitpronomen*) whose number is uncertain. This negation word has no plural form. *Niemand* is an indefinite pronoun used to replace a personal pronoun. *Niemand* is a negation form of *jemand*. The use of this pronoun can be seen in the following examples.

• ***Niemand** kann zwei Herren dienen.*

• *Sie hat für **niemaden** Zeit.*

• *Ich glaube **niemandem**.*

f. kein

The word *kein* is a negation form of an article, namely to negate the zero article and it can negate all of genus of the article). Eppert (1993:142) explains that *kein* is negation words that accompany nouns. The use of *kein* can be seen in the following example.

• *Er hat keine Zeit, die Aufgaben zu erledigen.*

• *Wie man das macht, habe ich keine Ahnung*

In this paper will be discussed the form of denial/refusal in German communication. Some sentences do not contain the above mentioned negation words. Instead of using those words, some German native speakers use other forms of expression. It seems that the German native speakers would like to be

more polite in the communication with Indonesian speakers by avoiding the use of negation words above.

2. Intercultural Communication Indonesian - German

Based on the criteria used to classify the elements of culture that affect communication, the difference characteristic of the people of Indonesia and German can be concluded as follows. The individuals distance in Indonesian society is closer than the German. This goes with the collective nature of the Indonesian society, while the German society is more individualistic. The time concept that influenced the people of Indonesia is polychromic concept, while the German society is influenced by monochromic time concept.

Ethics and norms of Indonesian society are very much influenced by the Islam religion, while in Germany the influence of Christianity shaped more about the collective memory of its society, which is consciously or unconsciously became the foundation of their customs and way of life. The hierarchy of power in Indonesian society is still stricter than the German.

The legal certainty can be seen from many regulations and laws that guarantee human rights in one country, so that its people are used to convey their thoughts openly without fear and doubt. German society in the alertness of communicating is in a more favorable position than the Indonesian society, because the law guarantees better there.

Based on some fragments of conversations as a result of the observations in data collection, below will be presented some examples of intercultural communication between German native speakers and German learners in Indonesia.

Conversation 1

The situation of the following conversation is between a German student who was invited by a German teacher for a movie.

PI   : "Hi Christoph , willst du heute Abend mit mir ins Kino gehen ? "

        "Hi Cristoph , do you want to go to the movies with me tonight?"

NS   : *"Hhhm, können wir das nächste Woche machen? Ich habe heute Abend*
          schon einen Termin."

          "Hmm, can we do it next week? I've got an appointment tonight."

In the conversation above, the native speakers (NS) refused the invitation of the Indonesian (PI). But the rejection sentence of NS did not contain the negation word. It is clearly seen that NS did not want to disappoint PI and offered him the other day. It is quite possibly that NS could reply "***Nein, ich kann nicht***", (No, I can't), but he didn't do it because he respect the PI.

Conversation 2

This conversation's situation is an Indonesian student intends to visit a German student at her home.

PI   : *"Marina, morgen möchte ich zu dir kommen. Geht es ? "*

          "Marina, I plan to com to your place tomorrow, Is it OK?"

NS   : *"Das ist eigentlich völlig in Ordnung. Ich muss aber noch etwas erledigen.*
          Dann gebe ich dir Bescheid, wann ich wieder zu Hause bin, OK ? "

          "Actually, it's okay. But I have to take care of something. I'll tell you, when I am home again, ok?

Just like the conversation 1, NS refused to be visited by PI. In her sentence, again NS does not use the negation word, but it is clear that NS rejected the visit of PI politely. NS could have rejected it by saying *"Nein, das geht nicht."* , No, you can't."

Conversation 3

The situation of the following conversation is a German students is invited to the beach by a German teacher.

PI   : "*Sandra, wir wollen am Wochenende zum Strand fahren. Willst du*
          mitkommen?

          "Sandra, we're going to the beach this weekend, do you want to come with us?"

NS   : "*Eine gute Idee, aber soll ich meinen Termin mit Herrn X absagen*?"

          "Good idea, but shall I cancel my appointment with Mr. X?"

PI   : "*Nein, das brauchst du nicht. Wir haben noch Zeit* "

       "No need. We still have a plenty of time."

NS said no to PI because she can't cancel an appointment with someone. NS didn't make up the reason, because according to her the idea to the beach is very nice and actually she wanted to join PI. Once again, the rejection sentence of NS does not contain the negation word, *nein* or *nicht*. PI also understood the sentence as a denial.

In other situations, NS showed PI a great respect, especially to the teacher. In the following conversation NS actually promote the use of words such negation word *nicht, nein* or *kein* if the sentences are not the rejection. The Data of the following conversation show, how NS expressed her respect to other person.

Conversation 4

The following conversation shows that PI complained about himself that he could not do anything because he was too old .

PI   : *"Sehr schnell kann ich nicht mehr rennen . Vielleicht bin ich zu alt.*

       "I am no longer able to run fast. Maybe I'm too old."

NS   : "*Nein, so alt bist du nicht.*"

       "No. You're not that old."

It seems that NS wants to make PI happy by saying directly that PI is not that old. NS could have said "*Ja, vielleicht*", "Yes, probably (you are already that old) . But NS was aware that such a sentence would be painful for PI.

Conversation 5

The following conversation tells that the PI considered that NS is rich because he lives in an expensive town in Germany.

PI   : "*Du wohnst in Berlin? Alles ist ja teuer da , nicht wahr? Du hast aber viel Geld oder* ? "

       "You live in Berlin? Everything is expensive there, isn't it? But you have a lot of money, right?"

NS   : "**Nein***, so viel Geld habe ich auch nicht. Aber, wenn man arbeitet, dann kann man schon richtig leben.*".

"No, I don't have that much money. But if you have a Job you can live properly."

Spontaneously NS implies NOT, when PI praised him that he was rich. It seems that NS does not want to show other people that he has a lot of money and doesn't want to praise himself, because it sounds arrogant, that is why he contradicted it directly by using negation words.

There are many other examples of such conversations between German native speakers and German learners in Indonesia both lecturers and students. However, due to the limited space, the writer could only describe a few data of intercultural communication.

There are three things that can be concluded from this paper. Firstly, a German native speaker who has a stereotype such as firm and straight to the point also consider politeness in communication. The data above showed that the German people do not want to disappoint his speaking partners. In many rejection sentences they even do not use the negation words *nein, nicht* or *kein*, because rejection sentences that contain those words sound less polite. Instead of using sentence containing the negation words, they expressed their rejection by using other sentences which are more polite, but they still have the same meaning.

Secondly, they often use the negation words, not in expressing the rejection, but to make the other person happy and feel more respected as seen in conversations 4 and 5. Again they show the use of politeness maxims in the conversation, namely the maxim of humility, praise yourself as little as possible 'and the maxim of praise 'bless others as much as possible '.

Third, the firm and rigid stereotype of the German can't always be seen (at least from the way they choose their sentence) especially when they are in other countries and face other people whom they respect. So the relationship between the speakers plays also an important role in intercultural communication.

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