

Love Across Borders: Understanding Intercultural Communication in Japanese-Balinese Marriages

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ABSTRACT

Bali Island is an island that has art, culture and natural beauty. The majority of the population inhabiting the island of Bali are Balinese people who adhere to the Hindu religion. A tourist destination in Bali that is well known to domestic tourists and tourists from various countries is Peliatan Village. An amalgamation marriage is a marriage that takes place between two people of different ethnicities. This meeting between local Balinese residents and foreign tourists is a factor in the occurrence of an amalgamation marriage. This Japanese citizen who married an ethnic Balinese man adapted between cultures to maintain their interactions and relationships with everything in their new environment. This research was conducted using qualitative methods and used descriptive research. The main data collection techniques are observation and interviews. The aim of this research is to determine intercultural communication patterns in the process of social interaction in amalgamation marriages. Based on the results of data analysis, that The process of intercultural communication patterns in husband and wife couples carrying out amalgamation marriages in Peliatan village found that there were several difficulties in carrying out social interactions experienced by Japanese citizens to get used to their new environment, and there were difficulties communicating at the beginning due to different languages.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia has so many diverse cultures, arts, customs and traditional ceremonial rituals. The island of Bali is an island that is rich in art, natural beauty and culture, such as the Kecak dance and the *ogoh – ogoh* festival. The majority of the population inhabiting the island of Bali are Balinese people who adhere to the Hindu religion. According to Liliweri (2002: 8) Culture is the view of life of a group of people in the form of behavior, beliefs, values and symbols that they receive unconsciously, all of which are passed on through the communication process from one generation to the next. The Hindu Balinese people have a culture of daily activities such as *mebanten*, *metanding* and *mejejaitan*.

A tourist destination in Bali that is well known to domestic and foreign tourists is Peliatan Village, which is a village in Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali. Peliatan Village is known to many foreign tourists as an area that has the charm of beautiful natural scenery because it is located between rice fields and forests. For a long time, local people have been interested in the culture and characteristics of foreign tourists, especially Japanese tourists. Bali is also very open to various ethnicities or foreign tourists who visit Bali for trade or tourist visits. This meeting between local Balinese residents and foreign tourists is one of the factors causing amalgamation marriages (mixed marriages).

Mixed marriages are marriages that occur between couples with different cultural backgrounds according to Prabowo (2010:7). Apart from that, amalgamation can be interpreted as a marriage that takes place between two people of different ethnicities. In Bali, especially in Peliatan Village, there are many people who carry out amalgamation marriages, where marriages are mostly carried out by ethnic Balinese who marry ethnic Japanese. The driving factor for amalgamation marriages is that Balinese people easily mix with newcomers, so they have a desire to get to know each other better and this situation will create the beginning of amalgamation marriages. However, it is not easy for a Japanese woman to carry out this amalgamation marriage system, because she cannot speak Indonesian or Balinese and does not understand how to carry out cultural activities and customs in Bali, especially Hindus, so the woman must adapt to a different environment. so that in the future we can build harmony in the household and the environment.

This is different from the culture in Japan, Japanese people do not do *mebanten* and *mesaiban* every day like Hindus in Bali, they carry out their daily lives by working, shopping and other things without anything special. Japanese people only use Japanese as a means of communication, all writing in Japan uses kanji, hiragana, or katakana.

Japanese couples are usually legally married when they sign *kosekior* family registration sheet without the need for a ceremony, while Hindus in Bali carry out their wedding ceremonies with many rituals such as the *ngidih* (proposal ceremony), *mepejati* and reception ceremonies.

Every individual must carry out an adaptation process in interacting and adapting to a new environment. Adaptation is the stage at which a person begins to adjust the values, norms and patterns of behavior between two or more cultures (Liliweri: 2005:140). Of course, adaptation is very necessary if carrying out a marriage with people of different ethnicities because marriage involves very important things such as unifying characters, adapting to culture, each other's customs, and family gatherings. Cross-cultural adaptation aims to maintain relationships and interactions between people affected by the change. This Japanese citizen who is married to an ethnic Balinese man adapts between cultures to maintain their interactions and relationships with all of their husband's surroundings. Different cultures have different value systems and can determine different life goals. The way each person communicates depends greatly on their culture, language, rules and norms. As a consequence, the differences between two people from different cultures will also be different, this can cause various kinds of difficulties. Basically, whether a marriage between different ethnicities is harmonious or not depends on how each partner responds to existing differences. Different cultural characteristics brought about when two partners interact with each other can cause conflict. Interaction between couples who have different cultural aspects requires openness to create knowledge and understanding of each other's culture (Mulyana and Rakhmat, 2003:58).

In a marriage relationship, cultural differences must be actively addressed not only by one party, but both parties. When two people from different cultures come together, it is definitely very difficult to do everything, especially in terms of language. Marriage does not only involve two parties, a woman and a man, but also involves both families. Marriage is usually said to be the union of two individuals, but in reality, it is the union of two families.

Based on the previous explanation, research into the amalgamation marriage system in Peliatan Village is very necessary, this is because marriages from different cultures are very difficult to follow. Researchers are interested in further researching communication patterns and social interaction processes regarding marriage in couples of different ethnicities, namely between Japanese cultural residents and Balinese cultural residents in Peliatan Village. Based on the things explained above, the problems that arise and will be discussed are regarding intercultural communication patterns in the process of social interaction in amalgamation marriages in Peliatan Village, Bali. The aim of this research is to determine intercultural communication patterns in the process of social interaction in amalgamation marriages in Peliatan Village, Bali.

2. Method

Research methods contain the type of research, research subject or object, collection techniques, data analysis, and data validity. This research uses descriptive qualitative research. The criteria for research informants are ethnic Japanese citizens who are married to ethnic Balinese citizens who are Hindu, ethnic Balinese citizens who are married to Japanese citizens, community leaders and

academics or cultural experts. The total number of informants in this study was seventeen people with varying quantities and backgrounds. (see Table 1).

Table 1. List of Informants

Informant	Quantity
1. A Japanese citizen who is married to an ethnic Balinese who adheres to the Hindu religion.	7
2. An ethnic Balinese citizen who married a Japanese citizen	7
3. Public figure	1
4. Academics/Cultural experts	2
Total	17

The main data collection tool in this research is interviews. Interviews were conducted directly with informants to obtain in-depth data. This interview was conducted with several informants regarding amalgamation marriages. Apart from interviews, researchers also collected additional data through observation and documentation. The data analysis carried out in this research is a thematic analysis which can help researchers capture the experiences of informants regarding amalgamated marriages of ethnic Japanese citizens with Balinese Hindus in Peliatan village.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of research conducted using in-depth interview techniques regarding intercultural communication patterns in the process of social interaction in amalgamation marriages in Peliatan village, Cultural Transformation Theory is the main theory in analyzing the process of social interaction among Japanese citizens who carry out amalgamation marriages with Balinese citizens when they enter the environment. new culture. Data collection was carried out by visiting the residence of research informants, namely amalgamated marriage couples in Peliatan village. The data collected was in the form of audio recordings of research informants recorded by the researcher. The informants for this research come from different cultures, namely Japanese culture and Balinese culture.

Bali is one of the islands frequently visited by citizens Japan, where the focus of this research informant is Japanese citizens who have settled and married Balinese Hindus. Almost all informants did not know the meaning of the word "amalgamation" where amalgamation marriage means marriage between different ethnicities, in Japanese they usually say "国際結婚" = Kokusai kekkon, which means international marriage. All married couples in amalgamated marriages in Peliatan Village who are informants here live separately from their husband's family, so they have their own homes.

The Cultural Transformation theory has 3 aspects, namely increasing functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. The relationship between amalgamation marriages that occurred in Peliatan village and the theory of cultural transformation, namely, Increased Functional Fitness, where all Japanese citizen informants who married Balinese citizens who adhered to Hinduism at the beginning of their marriage, Japanese citizens carried out repeated activities such as learning how to make Balinese traditional offerings, this achieves perceptual mutuality where synchronization is achieved between Japanese citizens and the requests of the husband's family who are in a new environment of Japanese citizens and Psychological Health, because almost all informants who carry out amalgamation marriages in the village Peliatan does not live with her Balinese husband's family, so their psychological health does not really depend on their new environment. They actually want to have their own house, because if they live together, they won't be able to have time for themselves and there will always be busy activities such as helping to make offerings. And most informants also have offices or run businesses at home. Also, Intercultural Identity, one of the informants who has begun to lose her uniqueness and rigidity as a Japanese citizen is Asai's mother who has begun to forget her Japanese because she uses Indonesian every day, apart from Asai's mother, other informants such as Yama's mother, Mrs. Mie, Mrs. Oomachi and Mrs. Youko have started to lose their rigidity where they participate and are used to activities in Peliatan village such as ngayah, PKK and making offerings at traditional Hindu ceremonies.

Communicating or exchanging messages conveyed are verbal messages which are reflected in words or expressions, and non-verbal messages such as signs, symbols. According to Mulyana (in Mulyana and Rahmat 2005: 19) intercultural communication emphasizes the main aspect, namely interpersonal relationships between communicators and communicants from different cultures. From the statement above, it can be said that intercultural communication is an interesting phenomenon to study because with intercultural communication, there will be social interaction between various groups with different backgrounds. The social interactions carried out will influence individuals in the process of adapting to their environment and can overcome problems or difficulties that occur in the adaptation process, so that individuals who live in areas with different cultural backgrounds will continue to interact in their environment.

As Japanese citizens who marry someone from a different culture, namely Balinese, Japanese citizens have to live in Bali, because they have to follow the customs of Balinese people who adhere to the Hindu religion, where if a Hindu man marries a woman, The woman must follow and live in the man's environment. Most couples who had amalgamated marriages in Peliatan village admitted that they had difficulty communicating at the beginning, such as Mr. Ketut and Mr. Wayan, where they both had difficulty communicating at the beginning because they did not understand Japanese. After a while, they were able to speak Japanese little by little with the help of their wives. they. However, this is different for Mr. Putra, Mr. Nengan and Mr. Gus Aji, where they can already speak Japanese, which makes communication easier.

Cultural Transformation Theory has 3 aspects, namely increasing functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. The relationship between the amalgamation marriage that occurred in Peliatan village and the theory of cultural transformation is that Japanese citizens who marry Balinese citizens carry out social interactions with their new environment to achieve a goal where they can enter and be able to blend into their new environment. Japanese citizens who marry Balinese citizens carry out activities in the form of *mebanten*, making offerings or *ngayah* repeatedly, so that they learn a new culture. This is closely related to one aspect of the theory of cultural transformation, namely increasing functional fitness where someone from a different background carries out repetitive activities and ultimately achieves perceptual mutuality, which means an understanding between two types of living creatures that is mutually beneficial, where Japanese citizens ultimately achieve synchronization between himself and the external demands of his new environment. Apart from that, this cultural transformation theory focuses on the speaker's effectiveness in achieving intentions to achieve certain results during interactions. Japanese citizens who marry Balinese citizens carry out social interactions in their new environment, namely the Balinese cultural environment which adheres to Hinduism, intending to achieve a goal as in appreciate and be able to fit into the new environment.

Regarding the effectiveness of communication and adaptation, an amalgamation marriage is not easy to carry out, there are many processes and difficulties involved in achieving a goal. To achieve this goal, Japanese and Balinese husband and wife couples who carry out amalgamation marriages must engage in social interaction. By having good social interactions they will be able to communicate effectively and adapt to their new environment.

4. Conclusion

The results of the research that the author presents regarding cultural communication patterns in the process of social interaction in amalgamation marriages in Peliatan village, Bali are based on the phenomenon of intercultural communication. This research focuses on Japanese citizens who marry ethnic Balinese who follow the Hindu religion, where the process of social interaction carried out by these Japanese citizens towards their new environment. The results obtained in the field can be concluded that the process of intercultural communication patterns in husband and wife couples carrying out amalgamation marriages in Peliatan village found that there were several difficulties in carrying out social interactions experienced by Japanese citizens to get used to their new environment, and also difficulties in communicating. at the beginning due to different languages. The author uses the Cultural Transformation Theory in this research, when Japanese citizens are accustomed to their new environment, they have reached the first aspect of the cultural transformation theory, namely the aspect of increasing functional fitness, where this aspect explains that by carrying out repetitive activities and learning a new culture, Japanese citizens finally achieve

synchronization between internal responses within themselves and the external demands that exist in their new environment.

The second aspect is Psychological Health where almost all married couples of Japanese and Balinese marriages in Peliatan village have separate homes from their husband's family, they are less emotionally dependent on their husband's environment, they get more happiness from having their own homes. The last one is the Inter-Cultural Identity Aspect where by carrying out the habits that exist in their new environment, namely Balinese culture, Japanese people are starting to lose their uniqueness and rigidity, where they are starting to get used to making offerings and following the *ngayah*. Apart from that, there are also Japanese people who have started to forget Japanese, because they communicate every day using Indonesian. From all these aspects the effectiveness of communication and adaptation is carried out, with the communication they do, they can carry out things they don't know by asking their new environment, they have also adapted to their new environment.

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