COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLIMENT RESPONSES

USED BY ENGLISH TEACHER ASSOCIATION

OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN PACITAN

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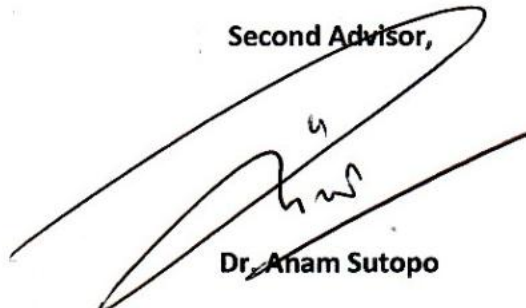**S200 120 080**

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COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLIMENT RESPONSES USED BY ENGLISH TEACHER ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN PACITAN

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with pragmatics, the study of pragmatics on giving and responding to the compliments. The research was conducted to find the way respondents employ compliment and its response strategies for topics of appearance, possession and skill or ability in difference status (equal, higher and lower). The focus here is analysis of strategies uttered by English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan, consisting of 16 male respondents and 9 female respondents by means of DCT (Discourse Completion Task). The corpus used in this analysis is 450, consists of 225 compliments and 225 responses. The study highlights on the use of head acts and supportive moves based on Trosborg's theory and Herbert's taxonomy of compliment responses. The respondents participating in this research, females used more variation in giving compliment strategies than males. Both males and females mostly apply appreciation token for their compliment response strategies. The findings presented here should not be generalized and comparisons with results based on different types of data, situation and respondents will lead to a better understanding.

Keywords: compliment, compliment response strategy, head acts and supportive moves, pragmatics.

1. BACKGROUND

It cannot be ignored that language plays important roles in people's daily life as a means of communication. They need language for interaction in their community to transfer their ideas and it is impossible for people to interact each others without language. By language, people can express their feeling, opinion, ambitions, willing or intention etc.

One of the language phenomena that occurs in social is compliments. Compliments are commonly and widely used in general human society to greet, encourage, thank and praise in a conversation. Holmes (2003: 177) stated, a compliment is a speech act within explicitly and implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed for some 'goods' (possession, , skill, characteristics etc) which is positively valued by the speaker and hearer. Furthermore, he affirmed that the

primary function of a compliment is affective and social rather than referential or informative (1987: 101).

Because compliment has some variations, it is very important for the people to know on what case people have to deliver compliment and how to respond it. That is why this research is aims to investigate compliment and compliment responses used by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan in the way teachers deliver compliment responses in the development of pragmatic study. The focus of this research is compliment and compliment responses used by the English MGMP since there are many unique interactions among the junior and senior teachers, between teachers and their leader to appreciate their appearance, skill and possesion. This research is considered different than past research since this research focuses on English Teacher Association of Senior High School because writer has observed that the members of MGMP mostly come to the meeting with their different fashions every month. It means that they want to show their appearance as good as and as neat as possible. It happens mostly to the female teachers. It is a natural human characteristic that human beings like to be praised, and the writer believes that there will be various compliment and compliment responses uttered by the respondents it is very interesting to investigate these phenomenon.

Many studies have analyzed compliment responses, for example; compliment responses across gender among British and Spanish exchanges students (Lorenzo-Dus, 1999), compliment responses accross gender in Persian (Yousef, 2010), Arabic and English compliment responses (Nelson, 2011), compliment responses in naturally occuring exchanges in Turkish (Ruhi, 2006), compliment responses comparasion between German and American among families and friends (Galato, 2001), the compliment responses used by Thai EFL learners (Phoocharoensil, 2012), and the differences and similarities in the realization of compliments (on skills) in Cameroon and Canadian French (Farenkia, 2012).

Despite this, research on Indonesian EFL learners particularly English teachers has never been conducted. This research was meant to fill in this gab.

The present researcher is interested in analyzing the compliment and compliment responses in MGMP, English teacher of Senior High School in Pacitan, as their meeting often induces some unique interactions between junior and senior teachers such as complimenting their appearance. The compliment phenomenon is interesting as the junior teachers show their cares and attentions to their senior when they get achievement, or when they look elegant wearing their new fashion dress, and when they have lovely stuff. The researcher was interested to analyze the compliment strategies and their responses uttered by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan, in three

compliment phenomena or situations they are; achievement (intelectual), appearance (physical) and possession.

Based on the reasons above, the problem of the research are: (1) what are the compliment strategies uttered by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan?, (2) what are the compliment response strategies uttered by English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan to respond to the compliment?, (3) are there any differences between male and female in giving and responding to compliment?. Consistent with the problem statements above, the objectives of the research are: (1) to reveal compliment strategies uttered by English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan, (2) to reveal compliment responses applied by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan, (3) to explain the differences between male and female in giving and responding to compliment.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW
2.1 Pragmatics

According to Yule (1996: 3) that is; pragmatics is the study of the relationship between linguistics forms and the users of those forms. By studying via pragmatics, one can talk and understand about people's intended. The benefits of studying language via pragmatics are that one can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kind of actions that they are performing when they speak. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics into four, they are:
(1.) Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning.
(2.) Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning.
(3.) Pragmatics is the study of how the people become more communicative.
(4.) Pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance.

2.1.1 Sociopragmatics
According to Kasper & Rose (2001: 2) socio-pragmatics is the interface of sociology ang pragmatics and refers to "the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action". As Kasper and Roever (2005) state, socio-pragmatics encompasses the knowledge of the relationship between communicative action and power, social distance, imposition, and the social conditions and consequences of what you do, when and to whom.

2.1.2 Pragmalinguistics
According to Kasper and Rose (2001, p.2), pragmalinguistics is he linguistics resources available for conveying communicative acts and performing pragmatics functions. The

resources "include pragmatic strategy such as directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts".

2.2 Speech Acts

Speech acts is a part of pragmatics study. It focuses on how to do something by saying utterance. It means that the speaker uses a language to get the hearer to do something and expects that the hearer will understand his/ her communicative intention.

2.2.1 Definition of Speech Acts

The term speech act was thought up by Austin (1962) and followed up by Searle (1969), Austin defines speech acts as acts performed in saying something. He identifies three different leels of action beyond the utterance of act. He differentiates the act of saying something, what one does in saying it, and what one does by saying it, and calls these a locutionary, an illocutionary, and a perlocutionary act.

2.2.2 Speech Act Classification

Austin (1962: 101) classifies three different levels of action beyond the utterance of act, they are:

a). Locutionary Act

Locutionary act is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain utterance with certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense (Austin, 1962: 108). This act performs the acts of saying something. There are three patterns of locutionary act according to which English sentences are constructed. They are declarative if it tells something, imperative if it gives an order, and interrogative if it asks a question (Austin, 1962: 108)

b). Illocutionary Act

Illocutionary act covers to informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, etc. Austin (1962: 108) states it as an utterance which has a certain (conventional) force.

More importantly, Austin (1992: 150) distinguishes five more general classes of utterance according to the illocutionary force. The detail is as follows: (1) Commisives, (2) Verdictives, (3) Behabitives, (4) Expositives, and (5) Exercitives.

c). Perlocutionary Act

Perlocutionary act is the effect of an utterance. It is what people bring about or achieve by saying something such as to get h to know, get h to do something, get h to expect

something, show pleasant and pleasant feeling and praise (Austin, 1996: 108). For example, if someone shouts, "Fire!" and by that act causes people to exit a building which they beieve to be on fire, they have performed the perlocutionary act of getting h to exit the building.

2.3 Speech Act of Compliment

There are many are many linguists who explore about compliment expressions. Wolfson defines that compliment uses to reinforce desired behavior. Compliment is considered tobe (or at least to appear tobe) a spontaneous expression of admiration and or approval. Since spontaneity, it is usually thought of as somehow linked with originally expression (1983:85-87). According to Tsui, compliment is the second subclass of an assessment in which the speaker makes a positive evaluation of the addressee him/herself (1994:145).

a) Compliment Strategies

In general compliments are divided into two parts, namely; Head Act (HA) is the nucleus of the utterance which determines compliment, and Supportive Moves (SM), is an utterance which initiates and ends a compliment. A core of utterance (HA) is the minimal unit used to directly express compliment. In the corpus, the head act also appear either as a single head act, multiple head act and even triple head act. Supportive moves that initiate compliments usually consists of interjections such as (wow, wonderful, oh, etc), greeting (hi, hello, etc), address terms (sir, my dear, bro, etc), exclamatory/ surprise, questioning and so on. While supportive moves which ends compliment can be in the form of comment/ positive opinion, expression of surprise, etc.

According to Wolfson (1983:90), the topics of compliments are divided into two major categories. They are topics of appearance and ability. The explanations are as follow :
a. Topic of appearance
According to Wolfson, the compliment topic that deals with appearance is divided into two types, personal appearance and possessions. The explanations are as follows:
(1) Personal appearance
The topic of personal appearance usually deals with apparel.
(2) Possession
The topic of possession usually deals with material possessions.
b. Topic of ability
The second category of Compliments is topic of ability. The topic is divided into two broad types, general and specific-act ability. The explanations areas follows:

(1). General ability

The general ability includes categorical reference to skill, talent, personal qualities, and taste.

(2). Specific-act ability

Specific-act ability contains all compliments which are specific act

There are various function of complimenting. People do compliment to each other to maintain or re-establish a social relationship, to reinforcce a desire action (e.g. teacher-student interaction), or to soften a speaaker's discourse before uttering a face treatening act (FTA) (Holmes: 1986, Brown and Levinson: 1987). Compliment are usually intended to make other feel convinience. The main function of a compliment is clearly affective and social rather than referential or informative.

There are many compliments functions. Here, there are six functions of the compliment and its expertises as follow:

1. To express admiration or approval of someone's work/ appearance/ taste
(Manes, 1983; Herbert, 1990).

2. To establish/ confirm/ maintain solidarity
(Manes&Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1989).

3. To soften replace greetings/ gratitude/ apologies/ congratulations
(Wolfson, 1983, 1989).

4. To soften face threatening act such as apologies, requests and criticism
(Brown &Levinson, 1978; Wolfson, 1983).

5. To open and sustain conversation/ conversation strategy
(Wolfson,1983;Billmyer, 1990; Dunham, 1992).

6. To reinforce desired behavior (Manes, 1983).
Takenfrom*Http://www. Carla.umn.edu/speechacts/compliments/ American.html*

b) **Compliment Responses**

Herbert states that compliment has the structure of an adjacency pair operation or action chain event (1998:53); therefore compliment and its response can not be separated. Herbert distinguishes 12 types of compliment responses (1998:60). The basic strategies within these 12 types are paraphrased as follows:

(1.) AppreciationToken
This first type is a verbal or non verbal acceptance of the compliment. The acceptance is not being tied to the specific semantics of the stimulus.

(2.) Comment Acceptance-single
Addressee accepts the complimentary force and offers a relevant comment on the appreciated topic.

(3.) Praise Upgrade

Addressee accepts the compliment and asserts that the compliment force is insufficient. Example:

(4.) Comment History

Addressee offers a comment (or series of comments) on the object complimented. These comments differ from comment acceptance-single in that the latter are impersonal, that is, they shift the force of the compliment from the addressee.

(5.) Reassignment

Addressee agrees with the compliment assertion, but the complimentary force is transferred to some third person or to the object itself.

(6.) Return

This type is similar with return except that the praise is shifted (or returned) to the first speaker.

(7.) Scale Down

Addressee disagrees with the complimentary force, pointing to some flaw in the object or claiming that the praise is overstated.

(8.) Question

Addressee questions the sincerity or the appropriateness of the compliment.

(9.) Disagreement

Addressee asserts that the object complimented is not worthy of praise, the first speaker's assertionis in error.

(10.) Qualification

This type is weaker than disagreement in which the addressee merely qualifies the original assertion, usuallywith *though, but,well,* etc.

(11.) No Acknowledgment

Addressee gives no indication of having heard the compliment. The addressee either responds with an irrelevant comment (i.e. topic shift) or gives no response.

(12.) Request Interpretation

Addressee, consciously or not, interprets the compliments as a request rather than a simple compliment. Such responses are not compliment responses perseas the addressee does not perceive the previous speech act as a compliment.

3. METHODOLOGY

Based on the study and the focus of this research, researcher uses descriptive qualitative research, since this research aims to collect the data, to analyze the data and to draw the conclusion. Surakhmad (1994: 147) stated that a descriptive method is a kind of research method using technique of

searching, collecting, classifying, analyzing the data, interpreting them, and finally drawing the conclusion. Furthermore, qualitative research is a research procedure which produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words of the people and behaviors than can be observed (Moleong. 2006:4)

A. Setting of the Research

This research will be carried out to the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan, when they had meeting in SMA Negeri 1 Pacitan on December 2014. This school is located about a kilometer from the heart of Pacitan town to the south. Preciously, it is on Letjend Suprapto street No. 49 Pacitan.

B. The Subject of the Research

The subjects of the research were the English Teacher of Senior High School in Pacitan and they have taught for more than ten years . The participants of this research were 16 males and 9 females English teachers. They are the members of MGMP of English Teachers of Senior High School in Pacitan. The reason why they were chosen for this study is because they there will be more often happen compliments and its responses. It happens, concerning with their appearances and performances that always seem different in every time they attend to MGMP. Besides that, the competencies in understanding English is considered to be good so that there will be many variations in giving and responding to the compliments.

C. Data and Source of Data

(1) Data

The data in this study consists of Primary data and Secondary data. Primary data is the result of the DCT, which is obtained from the English Teacher of Senior High School in Pacitan. Secondary data is the information and documentation provided by the teacher and the department. In conducting this research the writer analyzes the utterances of compliment and its response uttered by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan. The data in this research are containing compliment strategies, compliment responses, and the differences of male and female in giving and responding to the compliment which are taken through DCT.

(2) Data Source

The data sources are 25 of the English Teachers of Senior High School in Pacitan. The data which comes from the the English Teacher as written English.

D. Technique of Data Collection

The respondents were given DCT to give compliment and its response. A data Completion task (DCT) consisting of three situations that was administered and created to the participants. There were nine scenarious in the DCT in different situations, namely; compliment and its responses of personal appearance, possession and skill or ability. Each situations consists of there categories (equal-equal, equal-higher and equal-lower). These scenarious were designed to meet the purpose of this study to gain data on compliment and its response strategies. Subject responded by writing what their oral compliment and its response would be to each situation poses. They were designed to be in pairs of male and female teachers. While there were more male respondents, the others would be males and males. After giving compliments the DCT had to be swapped with their pairs to get the compliment responses. They were encouraged to give compliment and respond quickly, and it was requested that they didn't carefully analyze what they thought their responses would be. The participants were going to be asked to write their compliment and its response to match as closely as what they might actually say. DCT were returned to the researcher personally. Most participants responded immediately, taking about 20 to 30 minutes to complete the DCT provided by the researcher. These are the nine scenarious that must be answered by the participants.

E. Technique of Data Analysis

The research employed descriptive analysis. By doing this method, the researcher collected, arranged, and presented the data. The data qualitative method is a kind of research without using any calculation or statistic procedures. The researchers used Hurberman's concept to analyze compliment stategies.

In analyzing the data, some steps are conducted as follows:
1. The data collected from the DCT are identified based on Ana Trosborg's Head Act and Supportive Moves terms in requesting, complaining and appologizing of sentence structure or pragmalinguistic.
2. The data collected from the participants are identified and classified based on Herbert's classification of compliment response strategy. Herbert (1998: 53), asserts that compliment response has the structure of an adjacency pair operation or action chain event. According to Herbert (1998: 60), there are 12 types of basic compliment strategy.
3. Analyzing the differences between males and females in complimenting and responding to the compliment by applying Herbert's taxonomy.

4. Discussion of the Findings
1. Compliment Strategy

This study aims to investigate the compliment response strategies used by the English Teacher Association of Senior High School (MGMP SMA) in Pacitan. The data of compliment strategies are analyzed based on the adoption of terms of Trosborg's (1995) theory about "head act" and "supportive moves" in requesting, complaining and apologizing. In her study, she stated that "HA" is as the core of an utterance, while "SM" is an utterance that initiates or ends the core of the utterance. Based on 225 data of the compliment strategies provided, the writer finds four strategies used by the respondents, they are; 1. Head Act, 2. Supportive Moves + Head Act, 3. Head Act + Supportive Moves and 4. Suportive Moves + Head Act + Supportive Moves. These compliment strategies were also found in Trosborg's study (1995). The head act is the main utterance of the compliment act and can stand on its own. The supportive moves are additional items that can mitigate or aggravate the complimentary force (head act) without changing its propositional utterance. The findings of four strategies ((1) HA, (2) SM+HA, (3) HA+SM and (4) SM+HA+SM) are also relevant with previous studies, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989), Sifianou (1999), Marquez Reiter (2000), Safont (2005) and Trosborg (1995) to describe the speech act of requesting have proposed an almost similar model for the discourse moves involved in Requesting Speech Acts (RSAs).

Based on the findings it can be said that head act strategy was mostly uttered by the respondents in all situations. It indicates that direct compliment (using head act) was used as the signs of closeness, affiliation or solidarity. This finding is relevant with the results of the studies that focussed on German and Polish Culture (Pavlidou, 2000; Wierzbicka, 2003).

Besides that, perhaps it was a main elements that directly refer to compliment itself. Respondent didn't intend to make small talk for their compliment strategies and tended to utter the compliment to the point, by ignoring SM whether to initiate or end their compliments, perhaps it was not obligatory.

Some findings also show that different status (higher status) influenced the respondents in this study. The respondents tended to employ supportive moves whether to initiate or to end the complimentary forces. The detailed analysis showed that address terms "sir" was often found in conventionally indirect compliments. It is generally agreed that indirect strategies are used for politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Clark, 1979; Clark & Schunk, 1980; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983; Searle, 1975). Searle (1975, p.64) suggested that "politeness is the chief motivation for indirectness". The use of supportive moves in this study as indirect compliment strategies to mitigate misunderstanding and also to smooth conversational interaction. This is consistent with Brown & Levinson (1987) claim that providing reason (indirect

strategy) makes the compliment more polite and can convey either positive or negative politeness.

The research also found that there was misunderstanding in doing compliment. It can be seen from the data (20), DCT number 8 said "Congratulation. I hope you will continue your hobby". The possibility of doing this maybe because the respondent misunderstood in comprehending the situation given. It might be also that the utterance of situation led respondent to make misinterpretation. The DCT reverses the situation and allows the researcher or tester to better understand how respondents interprete the utterance and the sociopragmatic aspects or forces it carries. Utterance interpretation or inference constitutes an important part of discussion in pragmatics (see, e.g., Wilson & Sperber, 2004). It is also part of the intercultural competence models. For example, Deardrorff (2006, p. 254) puts interpretation under necessary skills in her model. Correctly interpreting utterances and communicative intertions of speakers are important aspects of succesfull communication.

The findings also showed that different situation or scenarios led the respondents to make different compliment strategies. It might be that the respondent related the compliment based on the scenarios of situation. It can be seen in DCT 7 and 8, when the scenarios of situation about someone who got the first place in the contest. The situation led to the most of respondents used expression of congratulation.

The research also found that the respondents used supportive move both to initiate and end the compliment strategy. The respondent began the compliment by uttering supportive moves (pre SM) then stated the compliment (HA) and ended the compliment by supportive moves (post SM). This is in line with the previous study of supportive discourse moves in Persian requests (Nodoushan, Iran Encyclopedia Compliling Foundation Hamid Allami, 2011).

2. Compliment Response Strategy

The research found nine types of twelve Herbert's Taxonomy in compliment responses. Most of respondents uttered Appreciation Token as the strategy of responding to compliments. The Association of English Teacher of Senior High School in Pacitan tends to accept the compliments instead of rejection or disagreement under eastern customs which still hold on politeness (norms of eastern's culture), and to respect or satisfy complimenters. This is in line with Leech's Politeness Principle, the Maxim of Compliance requires people to minimize disagreement with others while maximize agreement with others. the frequent responses are "Thank you" which shows the agreement or acceptance with the speaker's appreciation.

Furthermore, the results of the research show that status influences the way the respondents employed compliment response

strategies. Both males and females used "praise upgrade" (higher status) as their compliment strategies, perhaps it was done to show their power or superior to increase their self image and to maintain certain distance.

The findings also show that some respondents applied comment history. The respondents accepted the complimentary forces and giving proper statement based on the complimenter's expression. It might be done to minimize distance between them (higher to lower).

The research also found out that some respondents employed disagreement as their compliment response strategies. Perhaps, the respondents felt free (had no burden) in disagreeing with the lower complimenters making them incompetent as to their appropriate expression.

The findings for topic of possesion found that lower status respondents tended to use reassignment. As the example; "yes thanks. I have the best father". They directly accepted the compliment but then they transferred the complimentary force to the third person or object of compliment. It was done probably that they were not appropriate to have compliment.

3. Male and Female Differences in Giving and Responding to Compliment

The findings show that, female respondents used whether head acts and supportive moves as their compliment strategies more variations than male respondents. Thier compliment strategies occured either to initiate (pre-compliments) or to end (post-compliments) the head acts. Females complimenters employed (1) exclamatory, (2) statement of like, (3) positive opinion, (4) positive opinion + statement of like, (5) positive opinion + upgrading, (6) expressing admiration and (7) expressing conratulation. While male comnplimenters only applied (1) exclamatory, (2) statement of like, (3) positive opinion and (4) expressing congratulation. It might be that females liked to talk more and males tended to talk to the point to something they wanted to say. It consistent with psychiatrist Louann Brizendine, NBC's "Today" reports that the average woman speaks about 20,000 words a day, while the average man utters about 7,000.

The results also show a difference in denial (nonagreement) responses between males and females. Male respondents showed a tendency to use disagreement more often, on the other hand female respondents showed a preference for using question. In this case perhaps, males applied disagreement as they felt free to ignore or reject complimenter's compliments. However, females probably employed question as their compliment response strategies for conversational maintenance, express doubt or surprise about the complimentee's praiseworthiness and to make sure the sincerity of the complimenters that it was felt to be less aggresive than disagreement to avoid self-prise. It is consistant with previous study, women's speech is more polite than men's (Lakoff, 1973).

5. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is drawn based on the findings of the data analysis as the answers to the problem statements.

The result of the data analysis show how the complimenters of English Teacher Association of Senior High School in Pacitan employ differently "head act" and "supportive moves". Most of respondents whether males or females utter "head act only as direct way to give compliments as the signs of closeness and to maintain solidarity.

Social status (higher status) influences the complimenters to express the compliment strategies. The lower complimenters utter to the higher complimenters use address terms "sir" to respect and show politeness. It might happen as the influences of eastern culture's norms to mitigate misunderstanding.

Both male and female complimentees employ nine types of twelve Herbert's taxonomy in responding to compliments. They are; appreciation token, comment single-acceptance, praise upgrade, comment history, reassignment, return, scale down, question and disagreement.

The results reveal that most of complimentees accept the compliments instead of rejection under norms of eastern's culture which still hold on politeness to respect others. To be more precise, appreciation token is the major response types most often found. In addition, comment history and disagreement are more frequently used by the respondents.

Higher status of complimentees also influence the way to respond the compliments. Both male and female complimentees apply "praise upgrade" to aggrandize theirselves. Perhaps, it happens as they feel more superior to raise their prestige.

Topic of compliment also influences the addressees in responding to compliments. Topic of possesion leads the addressees use "reassignment" as their strategies of responding. They accept the compliments then transfer the complimentary force to the third person or object of compliment.

Gender also influences the different strategy in giving and responding to the compliments. Female respondents use more various expression whether they use head act only or supportive moves. It probably happen as female complimenters are more polite and try to speak indirectly to the complimentees as their natural characters that they like to talk more than males.

Female and male respondents also apply different responses to reject the compliments uttered by the addressers. Male use disagreement directly to reject unappropriate compliments while females use question to state their rejection. It might due to the female is less aggresive to avoid self prise.

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