

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Interlanguage Pragmatics

This study falls under Interlanguage Pragmatic-the study of how second language (L2) learners use and understand pragmatics, which corresponds to context and meaning in the target language. Kasper (1989b) cited in Blum-Kulka & Kasper (1993, p.3), defined Interlanguage Pragmatic as the study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language (L2). Schauer (2019, p.2) from the book entitled *Teaching and Learning English in the Primary School; Interlanguage Pragmatics in the EFL Context* defined Interlanguage Pragmatic is the subdiscipline of pragmatics that focuses on L2 learners that is ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a second or foreign language (L2) and to comprehend the L2 even if indirect or conventional expressions are used. Blum-Kulka (1993, p.4) further states that ILP has focused on the illocutionary and politeness dimensions of speech act performance. It means that, ILP focuses on examining how second language learners express their intentions in speech acts, including compliment responses, in ways that are polite or appropriate to the social context or cultural norms in the target language (L2). Studies in ILP mainly attempt to improve learners' pragmatic competence (Cedar & Setiadi, 2016). In this context, researchers focus on

compliment responses which are highly dependent on social and cultural norms.

As target language learners who have not fully mastered the pragmatic norms of L2, learners often experience difficulties in choosing and expressing strategies in the context of pragmatic speech acts, compliment responses. This is in accordance with what is stated by Bermillo & Generoso (2023), *“a question that can be posed is how such a phenomenon may play out when the receiver of a compliment is a learner of the language that is spoken. Take for example, when English is learned as a second language or foreign language (ESL & EFL)”*. This highlights that, compliment responses by L2 learners will be able to vary depending on their cultural background and exposure to the target language. Therefore, Interlanguage Pragmatics not only studies the use of strategies in speech acts by L2 learners, but also emphasizes the importance of social context and variation in communication. In this study, ILP becomes the main framework to analyze how students from both countries, Indonesia and the Philippines, realize their compliment responses through macro and micro strategies according to Holmes (1988), and how status and social distance in situational settings affect their strategy choices.

2. Speech Act

The dominant area of investigation within interlanguage pragmatics has been the speech act (Bardovi Halig, 2010, p.219). Speech act plays an important role in communication (Solodka & Perea, 2020).

Speech Acts include real-life interactions and require not only knowledge of language but also the appropriate use of language in a particular culture (Shahsavari, et al., 2014). Austin divides speech acts into three, namely; locutionary acts, these are basic speech acts that produce a linguistic expression with meaning. Illocutionary, is referred to as the act of doing something. This type of speech act is used to interpret the meaning of a speaker's words, such as promising, stating, ordering, denying, predicting, asking, and so on. Last is perlocutionary acts, these are effects or reactions of words on listeners as a result of saying something, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

These components are crucial in analyzing how learners of a second language perform and understand communicative acts, especially when the pragmatic norms differ between their native language and the target language. In the context of this research, the focus lies on compliment responses as one specific form of speech act, which involves recognizing the speaker's intention (illocution), formulating an appropriate response, and considering the cultural and social implications tied to the utterance.

3. Compliment and Compliment Responses

Yu (2003) stated that compliments are one of the most frequently studied speech acts in pragmatics research. In line with the study of speech acts, Searle (1969) as cited in Bibi & Sartini (2023) revealed that compliments are included in the "expressive" category, which means that

this kind of speech act is purposively made to fulfill social goals and tries to express psychological conditions. There is no concrete definition that states what a compliment actually is, but Holmes (1988) defines a compliment as a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good' (possession, characteristic, skill etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer. Wolfson (1983) Cited in Kurita (2024, p.12) offering compliments acts as a "social lubricant," fostering rapport and connection. In this regard, compliments are used as part of interpersonal communications in some cultures (Sucuoglu et al., 2015). Melike Baş (2021), also stated that Compliments are an important social connector in everyday interactions. This means that giving compliments can be purposively aims to bind and strengthen the bond between the speaker and the listener in bridging the social gap that exists in interactions. Solid and harmonious communication that is to be formed must require mutuality.

As a sign of receiving recognition and appreciation from someone, usually a compliment response is present to complete the compliment. Cedar & Setiadi (2016) define Compliment responses as expressions or acts produced as a response to compliments given by the speaker. Holmes & Brown (1987) emphasized that compliment responses are a form of communication that occurs everywhere and plays an important role in shaping social interactions and also relationships. Shahsavari (2014) stated

that compliment responses are speech act behaviors that are widely used and are usually considered to have speaking rules and social norms.

In addition, Baş (2021) also emphasized that compliment responses (CR) play a role as an expression to maintain solidarity in interpersonal relationships. This emphasizes that investmenttriangulation of compliment responses is very important and cannot be ignored. Without responses, the intended goal of compliment can scarcely be achieved and instead, the offense may result (Bibi & Sartini, 2023). It can be seen that giving compliments in communication will give rise to various forms of responses that are present as interpretations of how each person will respond. Thus, speakers from different cultures may have different ways of responding to compliments, either by accepting, avoiding, or rejecting the compliment (Holmes, 1988).

4. Macro and Micro Strategies

Previous researchers have developed many compliment response strategies. This provides a broad view of how people interact in the context of responding to compliments. Pomerantz (1978), who was the one discuss compliment responses, putting forward two general conflicting conditions that govern the act of responding to compliments: agreeing with the speaker and avoiding self-compliment. This perspective shows more politeness by agreeing with the speaker but also maintains norms by avoiding the impression of being too proud of oneself.

Furthermore, Holmes (1988) then refined this framework by classifying 3 main types of responses to compliments, namely accepting, rejecting and avoiding, as well as 10 more specific subcategories or so-called micro strategies, such as appreciation tokens, return compliments, and Informative comments, and so on. More recently, research by Candan (2021) provided information on the theory of compliments by Yu (2003) which refined the theory of compliment responses by Holmes (1988) and Herbert (1989) by adding 3 additional types of strategies, namely No acknowledgement (no responses), Face related responses (e.g., "I'm embarrassed) and Combination strategies (use of two separate CRs at the same time). These strategies were continued and used by grouping 6 main categories which then became Yu's (2004) comprehensive analysis model used in recent studies, such as Bibi & Sartini (2023).

Although Yu's theory highlights updates and provides a more detailed view, researchers use Holmes' theory as the basis for analyzing macro and micro strategies in this study. This is based on Holmes' Theory (1988) which shows relevance in the study of compliment responses, as well as its simplicity and ability to be applied in various studies in cross-cultural contexts, such as studies conducted by Morales (2012), Razi (2012), Boonkongaen (2011), Mascunana et al (2018), Candan (2021), Bas (2021). This strategy will help highlight how Indonesian and Filipino students respond to compliments, as well as address the existing gap,

which is the absence of studies that analyze in depth macro and micro strategies in the socio-cultural context of power and distance.

Researchers describe Holmes' theory (1988) which classifies 3 main types of responses to compliments in macro strategies, such as;

1. Acceptance, means that respondents may explicitly or implicitly accept the credit attributed by a complimenter.
2. Rejection, means that the addressee does not agree with the complimenter.
3. Evasion, which means that addressee avoids accepting the attribution of credit in a variety of ways.

Furthermore, Holmes' 10 micro analysis (1988) adapted from Tang and Zhang (2009), was used to analyze more detailed compliment responses regarding individual strategies in responding to compliments which include;

1. Appreciation token, is the explicit way of expressing acceptance, such as thank you, thank you so much.
2. Agreeing utterances, the addressee accepts the credit for the positive good attributed by the complimenter.
3. Downgrading/Qualifying utterances, This response implicitly accept some of the credit attributed and hence are are classified as ways of accepting a compliment.
4. Return compliment, implicitly indicates that the recipient agrees with the content and accepts credit for the positive evaluation.

5. Disagreeing utterance, In this response, the recipient of the compliment expresses disagreement or rejection of the compliment given.
6. Question accuracy, Responses which genuinely query the validity of what is asserted in the compliment.
7. Challenge sincerity, responses which challenge or question the sincerity or intentions of the complimenter.
8. Shift Credit, shifting the credit elsewhere or evading acknowledgment of the positive affect expressed by the complimenter.
9. Informative comment, providing a semantically relevant informative response which simply ignores the positive affect expressed by the compliment.
10. Request for reassurance, The recipient requests the complimenter to repeat the compliment in some way.

(See table 2.1 for details on Holmes' categories).

Tabel 2.1. Holmes's CR's Categories

Macro Strategies CR's	Micro Strategies CR's	Examples
Acceptance	Appreciation Token	"Thanks", "Thank you", "Cheers", "Yes", "Good"
	Agreeing Utterances	"I know", "I'm glad you think so", "Yeah, I really like it"
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterances	"It's nothing", "It was no problem", "I enjoyed doing it", "I hope I was ok", "It's not bad", "I still only use it to call people"
	Return Compliment	"You're not too bad yourself", "Your child was an angel", "I'm sure you will be great", "Yours was good, too"
Rejection	Disagreeing Utterance	"Nah, I don't think so", "I thought I did badly", "Nah, it's nothing special", "It is not", "Don't say so"
	Question Accuracy	"Why?", "is beautiful the right word?"
	Challenge Sincerity	"Stop lying", "Don't lie", "Don't joke about it", "You must be kidding", "Don't, come on"
Evasion	Shift Credit	"That's what friends are for", "You're polite", "No worries", "My pleasure"
	Informative Comment	"It wasn't really hard", "You can get it from (store name)", "It's really cheap"
	Request Reassurance	"Really?", "do you really think so?"

5. Role of Social Factors in CR

In pragmatic studies, responses to compliments are strongly influenced by social factors. These factors include social status (power), social distance or level of familiarity (distance), as well as the cultural setting and situational context between the compliment giver and receiver. Schauer (2009) explains that status is a technical term in pragmatics. Usually, three levels of relationship between interlocutors are distinguished: equal status (both interlocutors have the same status, such as friends or colleagues), higher status (one interlocutor is higher status, such as head of school), and one is lower status (such as trainee teacher).

In his research related to compliment responses in New Zealand, Holmes (1986) explains that the status relationship between speakers and recipients in social interactions greatly influences the way compliments are given and received. Holmes further states that through compliments, it can be a device for reducing social distance and reinforcing solidarity between speaker and hearer. This highlights that not only social status, but the social distance that is present in the recipient and giver of compliments becomes an important thing to establish relationships in socializing.

It is significant that social factors become increasingly important in the context of foreign language (L2) learners as they have to adjust their responses not only based on the social norms of their mother tongue, but also the social norms in the target language culture. This is when pragmatic transfer is recognized, which is when learners transfer pragmatic rules or

habits from the first language (L1) into the second language (L2). This transfer can be positive (if it conforms to L2 norms) or negative (if it causes pragmatic inaccuracy).

Thus, the social factor is given by the researcher in the compliment situation, as it is crucial especially in the study of interlanguage pragmatics which examines how second language learners use language appropriately in diverse social situations according to the norms of the target language.

6. Topic on Compliment Responses

The topic of the compliment is also important to note and is the basis for the response to the compliment given by the speaker to the recipient of the compliment. The topic of compliments varies greatly depending on the context of the compliment to be given. In this context, Holmes (1986) discusses the various types of topics used in giving compliments such as appearance, skills, character, and possessions, which can affect how compliments are received and responded to. Compliments given about a person's physical appearance often affect the response because they are directly related to their self-image or the way they dress. While character includes personality qualities or attitudes that are considered positive by the speaker.

According to Holmes (1986) compliments related to character are often better received because they are considered more sincere and show concern for a person's personal dimensions. In addition, skills, which refer to certain abilities or talents, both in academics, sports, and professions.

This type of compliment often provides motivational encouragement, especially if the individual feels that the ability is recognized and appreciated by others. The last is possession, it can be material goods, social status, or certain achievements that often reflect social values and individual status.

In this regard, various studies that have been conducted show that the response to compliment is highly dependent on the topic of compliment and the cultural context in which the compliment is given. Compliment conducted by Chen & Boonkongsaen (2012), and Cedar & Setiadi (2016) for example, about abilities that tend to be more accepted in Indonesia and Thailand. Meanwhile, research by Chen (1993) showed that American English native speakers were more receptive to compliment related to appearance than Chinese who declined appearance and ability, and were more receptive to compliment on the topic of possession. This may indicate that in Western culture, compliment is more often accepted openly and is considered a form of appreciation for individuals compared to China which views compliment on the topic of appearance as impolite or insensitive. In addition, differences arise in the point that Asian countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, and China actually have differences in responding to compliment on certain topics given. In the context of this study, examining how Indonesian and Filipino English language students respond to compliments based on various topics such as appearance, skills,

character, and possessions, provides insight into the cultural discourse that shapes their pragmatic behavior in intercultural communication.

B. Previous Studies of Compliment responses

1. Studies of Compliment Responses on Macro Strategies

Research on the analysis of macro strategies in response to compliments has been the focus of pragmatic research across a wide range of cultures. Holmes (1988) has grouped macro strategies into 3 main categories, namely acceptance, evade, and reject. Several research results using macro strategies from Holmes (1988) will be described to provide relevance and reinforcement to this study.

A cross-gender study in the Philippines conducted by Morales (2012) showed that both men and women tend to accept compliments. This "Accept" macro strategy is due to the habit of participants receiving compliments on competence. For example, when students excel who often receive awards from family, friends, and people around them. Mascunana et al (2019) in their gender-based research also showed the same results, namely that acceptance of macro strategies for responding to compliments related to ability, character, appearance, and ownership is often suppressed in order to maintain politeness and shame in Filipino culture.

Research by Boonkongsaen (2011) on the two groups of non-native speakers, namely Filipinos and Thais. The analysis uses Holmes' theory (1988) but there is a combination strategy proposed by Yu (2004) as an additional strategy that can be used in Boonkongsaen's research results.

The results shown that Filipino speakers tend to Accept in responding to compliments in all topics of compliment than Thais. While Thais show a combination strategy in responding to compliment.

Furthermore, a cross-gender study in Turkey conducted by Candan (2021) showed that the Accept strategy is used more often in responding to compliment, while reject is very rarely used. The same results by Bas (2021) showed that the "Accept" strategy is used more often by Turkish, both male and female because compliment from friends with equal relationships is considered positive.

Research between natives and non-natives conducted by Tang and Zhang (2009) showed that Australian native speakers tend to use the acceptance strategy in responding to compliment, while Mandarin Chinese speakers more often use the evade or rejection strategy as a form of reflecting humility. Then, Razi (2012) showed that Australians who are native speakers tend to accept compliment responses compared to Iranians who are non-native speakers tend to less in accepting compliments because they consider accepted the compliments are not considered as polite as Australians.

In addition, to support the research on macro strategies in responding to compliments, research using Yu's (2004) advanced theory is further studied. Research by Sa'd (2015) on Iranians showed that the macro strategy "acceptance" tends to be used more in responding to compliments,

followed by combination and amendment. While the least strategies used are Non- acceptance, No acknowledgment, and Face Relationship.

The use of Yu's (2004) theory by Suteerapongsit (2020), which analyzed compliment responses among Thai EFL learners, the results showed that there is no significant differences the use of compliment response strategies between male and female at the macro level. Both groups preferred the combination strategy, followed by Acceptance and Amandment. Furthermore, recent research by Al Shboul (2022) in Amman, Jordan, which also discussed gender and power, showed that the combination macro strategy tends to be used more often in responding to compliment, followed by acceptance. The gender factor here influences because men tend to choose the acceptance strategy more often than women.

Furthermore, Bibi & Sartini (2023) showed the results of their research among Indonesian and Pakistani students, that both tend to give acceptance when responding to compliment in the macro strategy. However, Indonesian students more often use Acceptance followed by combination, while Pakistani students dominate with Acceptance followed by amendment and no acceptance.

The previous research above shows that the macro strategy "*acceptance*" is the most dominant response to compliment used in various different cultures, although there is significant variation in the preference for other strategies such as combination or amendment which are

influenced by cultural context factors. In addition, although not the focus of this study, previous research provides a perspective on gender differences also influencing responding to compliment in the macro strategy.

Therefore, this study aims to broaden this insight by analyzing how Indonesian and Filipino students, as part of the Southeast Asian context which is rich in cultural values, utilize macro strategies in responding to compliment.

2. Studies of Compliment Responses on Micro Strategies

In addition to macro strategies, this study also analyzes micro strategies used in responding to compliments. Holmes (1988) has 10 subcategories for micro strategies which include: appreciation token, agreeing utterance, downgrade/qualifying utterance, return compliment, disagreeing utterance, question accuracy, challenge sincerity, shift credit, informative comment, and request reassurance, which strategies aim to find out more specifically and deeply about the realization in responding to compliments.

Research by Morales (2012) across gender in two universities in the Philippines shows the results of macro acceptance strategies. In line with that, micro strategies are shown by the results that both male and female use appreciation token and return compliment strategies in micro strategies. These micro results are because both genders use speech acts as

a form of appreciating compliments and returning the compliments to the complimenter.

A gender-based study in the Philippines by Mascunana et al (2019) which adapted the additional micro combination strategy from Yu (2004) showed that the combination strategy, related to character, ability, and ownership in the micro strategy, was more often used in responding to compliments, followed by appreciation tokens with simple responses such as "Thank you" which reflects politeness in complimenting appearance.

Different cultural research is shown by the results of Boonkongaen's (2011) study between Filipinos and Thais. The results showed that, at the micro level, Filipinos more often use Appreciation tokens (such as "Thank you") to respond to compliments on appearance, reflecting their self-confidence, while Thais more often combine Appreciation tokens + Evade as a form of politeness according to their cultural norms. In character compliments, both groups chose Request reassurance. For compliments on ability, Filipinos more often use Appreciation tokens directly, while Thais combine Appreciation tokens + Downgrading to avoid the impression of praising themselves. For compliments on ownership, Filipinos tend to use Appreciation tokens, while Thais choose a combination of strategies such as Appreciation tokens + Downgrading. This finding shows that Filipinos are more expressive in responding to compliments.

A study by Bas (2021) based on Turkish gender showed that both male and female, Turkish tend to give appreciation tokens in responding to compliments about appearance, ability, possession. The most frequently used response in Turkish data is an expression of gratitude. Then, the micro strategy that is often used in responding to compliments after appreciation tokens is Shift Credit, about character which aims to shift the focus of the compliment to the compliment giver.

Supporting Bas's (2021) results, the study by Candan (2021) has slight differences. The results at the micro level strategies are shown by the Appreciation token strategy followed by Returning compliment being the most common in compliments about appearance, ability, and possession. However, for compliments related to character, both tend to use Downgrading and Shift credit or a combination.

A study by Tang & Zhang (2009) which analyzed compliment responses between native and non-native speakers, Australian and Chinese. This study also added a combination strategy from Yu (2003) as an additional form of micro strategy in responding to compliments. The results showed that Australians preferred to use a combination strategy compared to Chinese. This is because Australians show more effort when responding to compliments, while Chinese show modesty and collectivity that are in line with Chinese culture.

Although Holmes (1988) remains a widely used framework for analyzing compliment responses, some studies have expanded this

framework by incorporating additional strategies, such as those introduced by Yu (2003, 2004). For example, a study by Sa'd (2015) analyzed compliment responses among Iranian EFL learners factored by gender and social power. The results showed that males was used strategy Acceptance (Appreciation token), followed by Amendment (Comment). While females tended to provide the strategy of Amendment (Question) followed by Acceptance (Appreciation token) and Amendment (Comment).

In relation to previous studies that discussed how strategies are used in responding to compliments among different cultures, this study aims to enlarge the insight by analyzing how Indonesian and Filipino students, as part of the Southeast Asian context rich in cultural values, utilize micro strategies that are specific substrate strategies and in-depth knowledge of how micro strategies are used in both subjects in responding to compliments. By using Holmes' (1988) theoretical framework for micro-strategy analysis, this study aims to investigate the realization of the compliment response strategies used by both groups.