

# Pragmatics Transfer on Compliment and Compliment Responses to English Learners at The Faculty of Adab and Humanities Uin Alauddin Makassar

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe (1) the form of compliment strategies and compliment responses of English learners at the Adab and Humanities Faculty of UIN Alauddin Makassar, (2) the factors related to the pragmatics of the transfer of English learners at the Adab and Humanities Faculty of UIN Alauddin Makassar. The population in this study is all students of semester 6 of the Class of 2017 English Language and Literature Faculty of Adab and Humanities UIN Alauddin Makassar, with a total of 70 respondents as a representative selected research sample, is considered as the representation of the entire research population. The data collection methods are conducted using DCT, interviews, and direct observations. The data obtained is analyzed with quantitative and qualitative techniques. Specifically, the quantitative data is processed with statistics using R analytics software, while the qualitative data is analyzed using pragmatic transfer analysis. The results showed that (1) The form of compliment strategy used by English learners at the UIN Alauddin Makassar faculty consists of 18 forms of compliment strategies and 13 forms of compliment response strategies, the most commonly used forms are surprise and congratulations strategies while the form of compliment response that is most often done is the appreciation and appreciation strategy receive compliments. (2) There are 3 factors related to the pragmatic transfer of English learners that affect the negative transfer that occurs when performing compliments speech acts and compliment responses, including sociopragmatic, pragmalinguistic and psychopragmatic factors.

**Keywords:** pragmatic transfer, speech act, compliment and complement response

## I. INTRODUCTION

Each language in the world is governed by a set of linguistic and socio-cultural norms, each of which has a unique and varied system. Speakers of a language subconsciously develop communication competency skills that allow them to interpret and produce easy-to-understand and precise speech in the communicating process. It is likewise the students of Indonesia who are learning English as a foreign language. The target language learners need to know the cultural norms underlying the language to produce appropriate speech that can be understood by the speaker. It's not just a matter of mastering all the grammar rules but also gaining knowledge of how language is pragmatically used in the target culture (Leech, 1983). Thus, linguistic accuracy cannot be achieved unless the speaker considers the

pronunciation option that corresponds to the context of the speech applicable to the target language

Over the previous three decades, researchers whose research focuses on second language acquisition had switched to researching communicative competencies whose initial focus of their researches was linguistic competence. Some of them are Canale & Swain (1980) and Hymes (1972), which show that grammar and lexicon structures are not adequate tools to understand the meaning behind a speech; it is not enough to understand the message that the speaker wants to convey. Then comes the perspective that proposes that speakers who are fluent in a particular language need to master communicative competencies that fit the cultural context in which they are located. The ability to use correct grammar sentences in the right context involves two types of competencies, namely linguistics and pragmatic (Bachman, 1990). Related to the concept, speakers should be aware of the importance of language functions and pragmatics functions so that they can use appropriate linguistic norms in the situation or context in which the language is spoken.

Mutual understanding of speech between speakers and interlocutors is crucial in communicating because communication will occur as long as there is a similar meaning to what is being discussed. Therefore, a speaker should be able to choose and use the language or speech appropriately, so the meaning of the speech can be understood by the speech partner. In this case, the accuracy in choosing the variety of languages greatly affects the smoothness of communication. Good communication will certainly occur if participants who are involved in communication can understand each other the language used, but in some cases of acquiring a second language, a speech produced by a speaker, in this case, second language learners, cannot always be immediately understood by partners.

The above conditions fail in communication objectives, resulting in failure or bottleneck in the process of delivering messages. Failure of communication between speakers and speech partners to understand what is meant by what is said in pragmatic studies is known as a pragmatics failure. The term pragmatics failure was first introduced by Jenny Thomas (1983). Thomas said that the condition of pragmatics failure is when the informant cannot understand what message the speaker is intended to convey. This is not

about a right or wrong speech but conveyed or not the meaning of the speech. The process of pragmatics failure is due to the occurrence of negative pragmatic transfer which is more dominantly used by the target language speakers in communicating

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Pragmatic studies focus more on illocution and perlocution than on locution, because in the illocution there is a speech power (meaning and function of speech), perlocution means that action occurs as a result of the power of speech. Meanwhile, in the locution has not seen the function of speech, there is only the meaning of the word/sentence spoken.

Various speech act that occurs in the society, both representative, directives, expressive, commissive, and declarative speech acts, direct and indirect speech actions, as well as literal and non-literal acts of speech, or a combination of two /more speech acts, is a material as well as a very interesting phenomenon to be studied pragmatically.

In pragmatics, several things are important parts of pragmatic studies. Among them: pragmatics transfer. The phenomenon of transfer in the theory of foreign language learning is related to hypotheses about contrastive analysis voiced by behaviourists. This hypothesis believes that the first language has a huge role in the acquisition of the second language. They believe that the magnitude of the similarities or differences between the first language and the target language will determine the success of a language learner. However, at that time, the only known terms of negative and positive transfer from the first language to the target language were based on the degree of difference between the two languages. The pragmatic transfer was first mentioned in the 1980s when some researchers found that foreign language learners did not only transfer processes at the word level or grammar rules but also the pragmatics level.

As mentioned earlier in the transfer theory that first emerged, there were positive and negative types of transfer that can be seen from how big the difference between the first language and the target language. However, the form of negative pragmatic transfer gives more harm or negative influence to the communication process. Negative transfer is considered as one of the primary causes of misunderstanding in intercultural communication. This is because the intercultural communication, communication participants use patterns or communication norms based on different cultures even though they use the same language, for example, English as an international language.

Rizk (2003) defines pragmatic transfer as an influence of the learner's pragmatics knowledge on the language and culture itself, in this case, the Indonesian language, in understanding, applying, and receiving pragmatics information from the target language. Pragmatics transfer can be viewed both positively or negatively. Pragmatics transfer is viewed positively when it is considered

as evidence of pragmatics diversity and social culture between languages. On the other hand, pragmatics transfer is viewed negatively when it indicates a transfer that occurs based on sociolinguistic norms or provisions of the first language (Indonesian), which are not properly applied to the target language.

Negative pragmatic transfer as described by Rizk (2003), occurs when an utterance/phrase about an expression of various speech acts in the first language, is unable to be properly expressed through the utterance or phrase in the target language. The cause could be the effect of pragmatic transfer and the learner's wrong perception of what is called language-specific or universal topics.

A transfer is considered responsible for the occurrence of errors in cross-cultural and inter-language studies (Lado, 1957: 43). As a result, researchers began to investigate linguistic differences and variations that exist across languages to find out the causes of the negative transfer that occur in the first language. And it will be easily identified through the specific factors that are related and influence it.

Based on the phenomena that have been stated in the background above, several problems arise that can be explained through questions, namely (1) What are the forms of compliment and complement response strategies used by English learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities at UIN Alauddin Makassar, and (2) What factors are related to the pragmatic transfer that affects the speech acts of compliment and compliment responses used by English learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities at UIN Alauddin Makassar.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive-analytical study (Saleh et al., 2021; Hasyim et al., 2021). Pragmatic transfer data and information on compliment speech acts and compliment responses are presented based on 12 scenarios that have been made and tested previously in the initial data collection before the research was carried out. Data collection was carried out using survey techniques, observation, questioner/ DCT, and online interviews. This research is an analytical survey, which seeks to obtain information and explore how and why this phenomenon occurs (Mustar et al., 2021).

This research uses descriptive and inferential statistics (Patmawati et al., 2020; Hasyim et al., 2021). Descriptive statistics presented in tables and graphs to describe the form and pragmatic transfer strategies in compliment speech act and compliment responses to English learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Alauddin Makassar. The inferential statistics through the association rule show that the data on the form of compliment and complement response strategies are more dominant, and the chi-square test (dependency test) is used to measure the relationships and factors that affect the pragmatic transfer of compliment speech acts and compliment responses to English

learners in English. Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Alauddin Makassar.

This research was conducted at the Faculty of Adab and Humaniora, Alauddin State Islamic University (UIN) Makassar, located in Samata, Gowa. The researcher chose UIN Alauddin as the research location based on the fact that UIN Alauddin Makassar The data sources in this study were 70 English learners represented by 51 female students and 19 male students.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Compliment Strategies and Compliment Responses to English Learners

a. Forms of Compliment Strategies for English Learners



Figure 1. Compliment Strategies for English Learners

The graph above shows that in English learners the compliment strategy used was dominated by surprises as many as 66 respondents used it. Furthermore, 61 respondents used the compliment strategy which was delivered in the form of congratulations, 45 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of approval, 44 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of exclamation, 30 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of changes that were considered, 29 The responses from the respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of admiration, 22 respondents each used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of pride and questioning, 20 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of appreciation, 16 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of expectations, 11 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of exaggeration, 9 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of advice, 6 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of happiness or happiness, 5 respondents respectively each of them used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the

form of silence and encouragement, 4 respondents used the compliment strategy which was conveyed in the form of expectations, 2 respondents each used the compliment strategy in the form of comparison and metaphor. The respondents who did not use the complement strategy in the 6 compliments scenarios prepared were a strategy of gratitude to God and prayer.

b. Forms of Compliment Response Strategies for English Learners.



Figure 2. Compliment Response Strategies for English Learners

The graph above shows that in English learners the compliment response strategy used is dominated by appreciation/appreciation as many as 68 respondents. Furthermore, 34 responses from respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of returning praise, 22 responses from respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of disagree, 19 responses from respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of good expressions, 16 responses from respondents using a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of self-deprecation, 13 responses from respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of a promise, 10 responses from respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of distracting praise, Each of the 8 responses from the respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of questions and received praise, 6 responses from the respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of qualifications, 2 responses from the respondents used a compliment response strategy that was delivered in the form of a comment history and 1 response from respondents using a compliment response strategy in the form of gratitude to God and no recognition. The respondents did not use the compliment response strategy in the 6 compliment response scenarios that were prepared, namely the strategy of hope, fear, offer, prayer, and request for interpretation.

In line with the analyzed data, it can be concluded that English learners use the surprise strategy as the most dominant strategy. This proves that in English the function of complement is to encourage the interlocutor.

*Factors Affecting Pragmatic Transfer of Compliment and Compliment Response on English Learners*

Based on the research conducted by Leech (1983) on the scope of pragmatics, Kasper (1992) classifies pragmatic transfer into two aspects, namely sociopragmatic transfer, and pragmlinguistic transfer. A sociopragmatic transfer is the social perception of language users that underlies the interpretation and performance of linguistic actions on the target language which is influenced by their subjective assessment of the native language context. On the other hand, pragmlinguistic transfer refers to the process in which the power of speech acts or the value of politeness is used for certain linguistic material in the first language whether it affects students' perceptions in the production of mapping forms or functions in the second language, especially in aspects of linguistic structures such as morphosyntax in the communication process, (1992).

Based on the theory put forward by Kasper (1992) with the classification of pragmatic transfers, In this study, we found several related aspects that affect the pragmatic transfer of compliment speech acts and compliment responses to English learners.

In the sociopragmatic aspect, based on the chi-square test of English learners, the findings from the data studied did not find a link between social relations and pragmatic transfer. These data indicate that negative transfers occur in almost every social relationship whose frequency has no significance between student and teacher interactions, nieces and uncles, nieces and aunts, between male friends, and between female friends.

As illustrated in the data in scenario 1 on the topic of complimenting appearance with a picture of the social context of meeting in a public place complimenting the jacket with a famous brand worn. Respondents were asked to compliment male friends, female friends, uncles, aunts, and teachers.

As illustrated in the following data there is a negative transfer:

1. Interaction between male friends and male friends Where did you get it? I am looking for this suit jacket.(where did you get this? I'm also looking for a jacket like this)
  - Wow, where did you buy that jacket? That is quite expensive.  
(wow where did you buy this jacket? it's so expensive)
  - That is so cool. Can you also buy me one? (very good, want to buy me one)
2. The interaction between niece and aunt
  - It's cute, Aunty. You look younger. I hope I could also wear it soon.  
(This is beautiful aunt, you look younger I hope I can wear it soon too)

- Aunty, where you bought the jacket, I like it very much(aunt, where did you buy that jacket I like it)
3. Nephew interaction with Uncle / Uncle
    - Uncel, I like your jacket. Maybe, it will look better if I wear it.(Uncle, I like your jacket, maybe it would be great if I put it on.)
    - Uncle, is it the new one? It must be expensive right?  
(uncle, is this new, it must be expensive)
  4. Student and teacher interactions
    - Sir, Where you buy this jacket, this is good!  
(Sir, where did you buy this jacket, the jacket is very nice)
  5. Interaction between friends pr
    - Cool, you just bought it first. And you don't even tell me. How dare you :) You know exactly that I want it at the first place "  
(good, you bought it first, and didn't tell me, you're bad, even though you know very well. I wanted it from the first time).
    - Can i have it? (can it be for me?)
    - Can i have that one babe, pls (can for me one say? please)
    - reall it's that your jacket. How much money that you have to pay this jacket?(Is this really your jacket? How much money did you spend on this jacket?)

In the data above, the speech that appears tends to experience negative transfer on the sociopragmatic aspect in every interaction. All speeches that appear are influenced by the first language, which causes the production of the target language to not match the context in the culture of the target language, namely English. This is due to the tendency of English learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities at UIN Alauddin Makassar to transfer the method commonly used in Makassar culture and their first language, Indonesian into English, which is used as speech.

The negative transfer also occurs in English learners who are influenced by pragmlinguistic aspects such as the following data.

Negative transfer on pragmlinguistic aspects		
English respondent data	Data that should be spoken	Information
<p><i>Thank you, I am working really hard on this</i></p> <p>Thank you for working hard on this</p>	<p><i>Thank you, I worked really hard for this</i></p> <p>Thank you for working hard on this</p>	The tense used is not appropriate, the respondent should use the past tense because the incident has already taken place, but the respondent uses the continuous tense.
<p><i>thank you sir, will work more better</i></p> <p>Thank you sir, I will do better</p>	<p><i>thank you sir, i will work better</i></p> <p>Thank you sir, I will do better</p>	The word better already means better, so the respondent should no longer use the word More to indicate the word more.
<p><i>Thank you, same with you, you look gorgerous</i></p>	<p><i>Thank you, you look great</i></p>	The expression same with you experiences

Thank you for looking charming too	Thank you for looking charming too	a negative transfer from the expression commonly used in Indonesia, however it is not commonly used in English.
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Table 1. Negative transfer on pragmalinguistic aspects

The data above is a concrete example that English learners at the Adab and Humanities faculty at UIN Alauddin Makassar found negative transfers when performing compliment speech acts which led to pragmatic failure in the pragmalinguistic aspect.

The psychopragmatic aspects of English learners are illustrated in the table 2:

English respondent data	Data that should be spoken	Description
That is so cool. Can you also buy me one?  That jacket is so cool. Can you buy one for me?	That jacket is so cool  That jacket is so cool	Respondent data experienced negative transfer seen through constructivism approach, respondent speech is influenced psychologically through the way they express feelings when performing speech acts. A feeling to have something expressed through the target language using their habitual first language. This expression causes negative transfer to occur and has the potential to cause pragmatic failure.
I think ur jacket is more suitable for me  I think your jacket suits me better.	I love your jacket  I love your jacket	

Table 2. The psychopragmatic aspects of English learners

Based on the results of the analysis on the psychopragmatic aspect, the researcher found that English language learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities at UIN Alauddin Makassar tended to express their feelings and mentality in doing speech acts praising or responding to compliment strengthened by positive or negative feedback on the language behaviour shown by respondents at the interview.

In conclusion, the pragmatic transfer of compliment and compliment responses to English learners at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities at UIN Alauddin Makassar is influenced by three aspects, namely sociopragmatic, pragmalinguistic and psychopragmatic factors.

### V. CONCLUSION

There are 18 strategies used by English learners, namely the strategy of Admiration, Exclamation, Happiness, Expectation, Congratulations, Questioning, Exaggeration, Proud, Changes in Attention, Expectations, Approval, Metaphor, Advice, Appreciation, Comparison, Surprise, Encouragement, and Exaggeration. While the strategies used by English learners

have 13 forms, namely, the Appreciation/Appreciation strategy, Returning Praise, Disagree, Good Expressions, Humble oneself, Promises, Divert Praise, Questions, Receive Praise, Qualifications, History of Comments, Thank God, None Recognition.

The pragmatic transfer of compliment and compliment responses to English learners at UIN Alauddin Makassar is influenced by the sociopragmatic aspect with indicators of social relations. The results showed that there was no linkage of social relation among English learners because there was a negative and positive transfer found in almost every social relationship. In the pragmalinguistic aspect, it is studied through language form indicators. In English learners, it was found that there was no relationship between language forms and transfer pragmatics which caused each learner to have negative transfers in language forms as much as 74% of English learners. In these two aspects, it was found that another aspect that influences pragmatic transfer is the psychopragmatic aspect.

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