



GENDER DIFFERENCES IN COMPLIMENT STRATEGIES IN SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTION

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Abstract

Compliment is a form of positive speech that is intended as a form to respect or appreciate something. In giving compliment a person has a certain options. This paper investigated the compliment strategies employed by male and female in social media interaction. This research is categorized as documentaries study since the object of this research was in form of documentation of compliment use in column comment of Facebook. This research uses qualitative and quantitative methods. Finding showed that in different gender, male give more explicit compliment (94.4%) than female (93.3%). For the second strategy of compliment (implicit compliment), female tend to use implicit compliment (6.7%) than male (3.7%). In the last strategy of compliment (non-compliment), male prefer to use that strategy 1 time (1.8%) but female choose not to use non-compliment. In the same gender, female give more explicit compliment (1.8%) than male (0%). However, female also use implicit compliment 1 time but male get zero. For non-compliment strategy, male and female choose not to use that strategy in giving compliment.

Key words: Compliment, Gender, FB

A. INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creature that has needed to communicate with others. In order to communicate, humans need language to convey a message from one to another person. In another word, language in communication becomes a tool for human being to express their feeling such as happiness, sadness, worry, etc. There are many ways that people use in order to communicate or to share the idea from one to another. For instance, several times ago, people who were in different place can communicate by using telephone or letter. However, the world is not constant, it always change from time to time, including technology. Nowadays, technology

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brings a big impact on people in ways of communication. These days, people not only can interact through telephone or letter, but also people can interact in the virtual world where they can see each other through computer screens by using certain features in social media.

Because of the development of technology, people have various options to communicate like directly speaking or through computer and mobile phone using internet via social media. One of popular social media is Facebook. The influence of Facebook as a means of communication is undeniable. Interestingly, it has not been used only for important people like a businessman, public figures, and entertainers, but also Facebook becomes social networks for teenagers and adults. So, Facebook can be used for all groups of people. By using Facebook, people can share their ideas about something. They can write quotes and sometimes they can upload and post their photos, and the other people can give comment to that. Sometimes, people give their compliment to show their respect each other.

Compliments are part of pragmatics which is defined as a subfield of linguistics study about an act that a speaker performs when making an utterance. Austin (1962) defines speech acts as the action performed by saying something. One of the most commonly addressed speech act is compliment and compliment responses. According to Holmes, a compliment is defined as “a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speakers, usually, the person addressed, for some good possession, characteristics, and skill, which is positively valued by the speaker” (Bulut and Ozkan, 2005:41). Moreover, Chen in Chung (2010) states that among speech acts, making compliments and responding compliments are the most frequently occurring acts in our daily activities like the phenomenon that happened when people upload or share something on their Facebook homepage and the other user give comment to that.

The way of expressing compliments are different from one and another person. It is because the norms for compliment behaviour are varying from one culture to another. Each society has different way of giving compliments. In addition, the social factors also affect the way people give compliments. Zhihui (2002:8) states that the studies of act behaviour are influenced by social and situational factors. The factors exert their influences on the use of the speech acts, including gender, age, level of education, social distance, social relationship, style, ethnicity, and so on.

It is widely known that males and females have their own characteristics in communication. Wu (2008) concludes that females tend to avoid direct statements and tend to convey hesitation or uncertainty. It is because they use more psychological state while male speak straight to the point and avoid the hesitation or uncertainty. Since there are differences between the language of male and female, the way they give compliments are also different. Two important studies which focus on the use of compliments between genders have been conducted by Holmes (1988) and Herbert (1990). According to Holmes (1988) female take and give more compliments than male. It means that the number of compliment use between female is more frequent and male tend to give compliments to female

than to other male. Then, based on Herbert (1990) between two forms of compliment that commonly use, (I (really) like/love NP) and (PRO is (really) ADJ NP), females tend to use the first one more often while male tend to use both of the forms equally.

The study of compliment strategies has been made by some experts like Holmes and Ye. In this research, the researcher uses the theory of Ye (1995) to show the case of compliment strategy, Ye divided them into three categories: (1) implicit compliment, (2) explicit compliment and (3) non-compliment.

The first category of compliment is **explicit compliment**. Explicit compliment is also called direct compliment, and it refers to the compliment giver who can express praise or admiration to someone without any context. (E.g. *You are very beautiful today!*). In addition, when people choose to give a compliment to others by using the explicit compliment, it means that they give full and clearly express something, leaving nothing implied, cause something is explicit when it is directly stated and leaves no room for uncertainty.

The next category is **implicit compliment**. Implicit compliment is the antonym of explicit compliment. Implicit compliment is also called an indirect compliment, and it refers to the compliment giver who cannot express praise or admiration to someone directly. Something called implicit when it is implied *but not* directly stated. (E.g. *I wish I could play the piano like you do.*) From the example above, it means that someone thinks that their friends playing the piano well and he/she praises that, but when he/she wants to show their praise, they choose to make implied meaning by saying *I wish I could play the piano like you do.*

The other example is (*That is an ugly cloth*). From these examples, it is clearly seen that sometimes people use an indirect compliment to others, although they know what they say is ugly is actually good. This case usually happens between two people who have a close relationship.

The last category of compliment based on Ye theory is **non-compliment**. Non-compliment can be said as coercion which the compliment giver gives verbal responses to the given situations, but the rejoinders they give can hardly be regarded as compliments. (E.g. *How much is the bicycle?*). From the example above, if we do not pay attention much, we will say that the utterances above do not a part of the compliment, but when we see from a pragmatic point of view, the utterances above is a part of compliment because sometimes people give the compliment by asking a price, and place first. Without awareness, it belongs to the compliment strategy.

The researcher will see the use of three types in compliment in social media interaction based on gender perspective. Furthermore, the reason why this topic is important to be studied because people should be aware that there are differences between male and female in giving compliment in social media interaction. Another reason is Facebook is the famous social media that allow the user to share their feelings and their activity and the other users can give the comment about someone's activity. So, it will be easier to collect a lot of data which involve in

the case of compliment. This research aims to analyze the gender differences in giving compliment in social media interaction based on the theory of Ye (1995) about compliment strategies.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is categorized as documentative study since the object the research was in form of documentation of compliment use in comment column of Facebook. This research was descriptive research. Nazir (2007:54) states that descriptive research is to describe picture or draw the factual and accurate facts in a systematic and have a relationship with inter phenomena that are being observed. He divides the descriptive method into several kinds, they are; survey method, continuity, case study, activity, analysis, action research and library research. It means that descriptive research produced the pure data which is relevant and trusted because there is no manipulation.

This research also belonged to qualitative research supporting quantitative research. Quantitative research methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable in a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships. The data of this study were compliment made by male and female in comment column of Facebook. Facebook can access on www.facebook.com. The sources of the data were taken from 200 comments; 100 comment of the male account and 100 comment of the female account which involves the compliment. To collect the data, the researcher needs several instrumentation such as smart phone to log in into Facebook account in order to get the compliment from the other user, the wifi to get the internet access and laptop and a pen to note other important things.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

The findings of compliment strategies, used by male and female in social media interaction are shown in the table below:

Table A Compliment Strategies in Different Gender

Compliment Strategy	Male-Female		Female-Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Explicit Compliment	51	94.4	56	93.3	107	93.9
Implicit Compliment	2	3.7	4	6.7	6	5.2
Non-Compliment	1	1.8	0	0	1	0.9
Total	54	100	60	100	114	100

Based on the result of data analysis, the researcher found there are three types of compliment strategy used by male and also female. From the total of each

category, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference was found in different gender when they are giving the compliment to others.

In different gender, male give more explicit compliment (94.4%) than female (93.3%). However, female get high percentage than male when they are using an implicit compliment. Female choose to use implicit compliment 4 times or (6.7%) but male only use implicit compliment 2 times or (3.7%). Finally, male also choose to use non-compliment strategy 1 time (1.8%) but female doesn't use that strategy or (0%).

Table B Compliment Strategies on the Same Gender Variable

Compliment Strategy	Male-Male		Female-Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Explicit Compliment	40	100	45	97.8	85	98.8
Implicit Compliment	0	0	1	2.1	1	1.2
Non-Compliment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	100	46	100	86	100

Table B shows the result of compliment strategy used by female and male in the same gender. Based on the table above, it is clearly seen that female and male do not have significant difference when they are using the compliment strategies among them. The explanation about number or percentage for each category will describe below.

In the same gender, male give the more explicit compliment than female. Based on the result of data analysis, male get (100%) of percentage, meanwhile female get (97.8%). On the other hand, for implicit compliment strategy, female give that strategy one time (2.1%), but male never use implicit compliment (0). At the last, female and male choose to not use non-compliment strategy or (0%).

a. Explicit Compliment

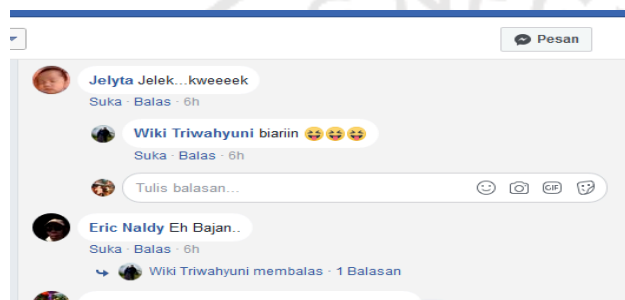


Compliment from *Yusniati Daswelman*

C: “Yo lah batambah rancak kini mah put”
 “*Put, you look more beautiful now*”

The first strategy of compliment is explicit compliment. The example of explicit compliment can be seen in an account from *Putri Nofri Yanti*. She posted her photo on February 20th at 21:15 p.m. This photo gets many comments from male and also female. Here, the researcher takes the comment from *Yusniati Daswelman* cause the researcher looking for the ways of a female when they are giving the compliment to someone who same gender (female). From the datum above, it is clearly seen that *Yusniati Daswelman* gives the direct compliment to *Putri Nofri Yanti* by giving a statement “**Put, you look more beautiful now**”. So, *Yusniati* gives the compliment to *Putri* without considering any context. The ways of *Yusniati* of giving compliments, it belongs to explicit compliment or direct compliment.

b. Implicit Compliment

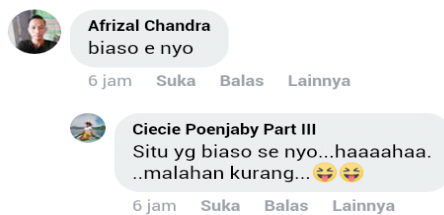


Compliment from *Jelyta*

C: “Jelek... kweeeek”
 “ugly.. kweeeekkk”

Implicit compliment is the second strategy of compliment. It can be seen from *Wiki Triwahyuni*'s account. Wiki uploaded 9 of her photos which has different style and cloth on March 5th, 2018. In her column comment, the researcher chooses the one of comment of female that is included in compliment strategy. The comment comes from *Jelyta*. She says that” **ugly.. kweeeekkk**”. From *Jelyta*'s utterance, if we look at it at a glance, it cannot say that her utterance includes in compliment, but in her utterance, she tries to make a joke. So, *Jelyta* uses the other strategy when she wants to give a compliment. From the example above, the ways of *Jelyta* when giving the compliment included in implicit compliment or indirect compliment.

c. Non-Compliment



Compliment from Afrizal Chandra

C: "Biaso e nyo"

"Nothing special"

The last strategy in compliment is non-compliment. The example of implicit compliment can be seen from *Ciecie Poenjaby Part III's* account. She uploaded her photo on Facebook and she gets many comments. In this case, the researcher takes the comment from *Afrizal Chandra* because he tends to use non-compliment by giving utterance ***"Nothing special"***. Non-compliment here refers to verbal responses from the compliment giver to the given situations, but the rejoinders they give can hardly be regarded as compliments. When *Afrizal Chandra* says that ***like as usual***, the people may not aware that utterance is a part of the compliment, in fact, that utterance is a kind of non-compliment strategy.

2. Discussion

In this research, the analysis of compliment strategies in Facebook comment is elaborated based on Ye theory, because it presented more cohesive and comprehensive theory of compliment strategies and that theory had explained it more details with specific ways and each examples.

The first focus of this research is compliment strategies used by male and female in different gender and the same gender. Based on the research finding, the researcher found that in the different gender variable (table A), male use all three types of compliment strategy, they are; explicit compliment, implicit compliment and non-compliment. On the other hand, female participants only use two types; explicit compliment and implicit compliment. But even so the percentage that they get is not far different or they do not have significance difference. Meanwhile, in the same gender (table B), male only use one types of compliment strategy that explicit compliment, but female use two kinds of them; explicit compliment and implicit compliment. However, they still stand in the same line or they do not have significance difference.

Based on the finding, it is clearly seen that there is no significant difference between male and female when using the strategy in giving compliment. The situation happens because a certain reason. The main reason is the influence of technology in a sophisticated era. The more advanced an era, the differences between men and women in using language are no longer visible. In several decades ago, there are many research about the differences of male and female when they are using a language in their daily life, but this research has shown that the differences between them are no longer obvious caused by the era of technology.

The statement above supporting by the research of Laelah Azizah Samad Suhaeb and Wahyu Kurniati Asri in their journal entitled *"Bias Jender dalam Perbedaan Penggunaan Bahasa oleh Pria dan Wanita"*. They state that women with a language style seemed shy, closed, flirtatious, and lack of confidence has begun to be abandoned. In contrast, women's time now has a smart, open, and independent speech style that is reflected in the moment they express their thoughts and ideas both orally and written. With the incessant movement *"gender mainstream"* between men and women and the increasing access to information,

so, now women have more confidence in language. This matter can be seen from various rubrics written by women in various magazines. Because of the reason above, the researcher did not find the significant differences on male and female when they are using strategies to give the compliment to someone else in social media interaction.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the present study, some conclusions can be drawn as regard to compliment in the Facebook comment. First, in the same gender, male participants offer more compliments than males but it is not far different among them. Besides, both females and males tend to offer compliment to the opposite gender and compliments between them are the fewest. This might be because nowadays the equality between male and female has been advocated and it influences people's opinions toward gender and behaviour in terms of the methods of speech acts.

The results of the study bring some suggestions for students, lecturers, future researchers and also personality trainers. For students of English, they may use this study as a reference to understand the study of pragmatics related to compliment behaviour based on gender differences and apply it in the daily life especially in giving compliment to someone else. In addition, they can observe the differences between male and female in compliment behaviour in order to give appropriate strategy in giving compliment.

Furthermore, for lecturers and teachers, they may use this study as a reference to teach their students and give the view on compliment behaviour based on gender differences. Besides, they will be able to broaden their students' minds as a regard to speech act across gender. Therefore, the students are able to know and understand the differences between men and women talks.

For the future researchers, this study, of course, still needs improvement since the primary materials of the research are from a social media. Besides, the corpus chosen for the study is based on Facebook comments which are very small and need to be expanded. With regard to a compliment strategy, many other questions may arise, such as the offer of compliments based on gender with different ages, different relationships, or different status. Those factors should be taken into account in further research since it cannot be assumed that all English speakers offer compliments in the same way.

In the last, for personality trainers, they may use this study as a reference to teach their trainees and give the view on compliment strategy based on gender differences since the way male and female perform language is not the same. Therefore, as a professional personality trainer they should know the way male and female perform language especially in terms of compliment which are considered as important speech acts in society.

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