Strategies in Expressing Gratitude Performed by English Department Students in 5th and 7th Semester of Different Gender: A Socio-Pragmatics Approach

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

In this study, the researcher focuses on the analysis of the strategies in expressing gratitude performed by English Department students in 5th and 7th semester of different genders. The objectives of this study are (1) identifying the contexts, types, and functions that influence gratitude expression uttered by the 5th and 7th semester of English Department students based on gender differences, (2) analyzing and discovering the language pattern in gratitude expression used by the 5th and 7th semesters of English Department students based on gender differences. The researcher uses a descriptive-qualitative method and employed Spradley's analysis method in collecting and analyzing the data which includes domain, taxonomic, componential and cultural theme analysis. The source of data is in the form of participants; the students of 5th and 7th semester in English Department whereas the data were taken from responses in the form of utterances in DCT answered by the participants. Throughout the taxonomic analysis, the data were classified using Cheng's taxonomy (2005) of gratitude strategies. The findings show that (1) each of the different situational contexts hooked the respondents to employ different gratitude expression whether it is male or female students, (2) both male students in the 5th and 7th semesters have a similar pattern to each other in expressing gratitude as well as female students in the 5th and 7th semester. The researcher also found similarities and dissimilarities in gratitude expression patterns used by male students and female students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication has an important role in determining whether or not a relationship is built successfully. In attaining a successful communication, one has to understand how to produce utterances appropriately in different situations. According to Pishgadam and Zarei (2011), successful communication requires one's understanding of pragmatic and grammatical competence. To express oneself, people produce not only utterances containing grammatical competence but also containing pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence means understanding speech act production in a given situation (Cheng, cited in Özdemir & Rezvani, 2010). A speech act is defined as words that are performed in saying something. Yoosefvand and Rasekh (2014) argued that a speech act took an essential feature of Pragmatics. Using the appropriate speech act on communication, people can build and strengthen the bonds of a relationship.Introduction includes background, theoretical basis, problems, problem solving plans and research objectives.

Expressing gratitude is one form of the speech act in which it becomes the societal functions to establish a good relationship with each other. Cui (2012) stated that expressing gratitude improperly could ruin the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Gratitude means appreciating other people for doing a favor. Pishgadam and Zarei (2011) stated that people can express gratitude through thanking, praising, and appreciating. In producing gratitude utterances, one's background influences the way gratitude expressions is produced. For instance, different gender can cause dissimilar utterances produced by people. According to Azima and Hesabi (2015), females are more concerned about the face needs of their addresses. Therefore, females try harder for expressing gratitude in order not to threaten the face of their addresses.

Gratitude is one form of the expressive speech act. Expressive speech act refers to a speech act that is used to express the speaker's feelings. The form of expressive speech act is an apology, refusal, greeting, thanking, etc. Yoosefvand & Rasekh (2014) stated that the expression of gratitude is a speech act that is frequently used between language users. Many studies about gratitude had been conducted in investigating on how the ESL and EFL learners in terms of strategy and length of speech express gratitude (Farnia & Suleiman, 2009; Wong, 2010; Özdemir & Rezvani, 2010; Dalilan, 2012; Cui, 2012; Yasami & Rastegar, 2014; Yoosefvand & Rasekh, 2015; Farnia & Sattar, 2015; Al Rousan, 2018). However, these researches had not investigated the correlation between expressing gratitude and its role in gender differences.

Other studies that examine gratitude (Pishghadam & Zarei, 2011; Khan & Singh, 2013; Azima & Hesabi, 2015; Yusefi et al., 2015; Yoosefvand & Rasekh, 2014) already investigated gender differences in gratitude. The findings show that females likely to express thanks than males. Yet Khan and Singh (2013) found that males had higher gratitude than females. However, the previous studies had not extensively examined the gratitude expression especially in terms of the language pattern in gratitude expression.

Based on the pervious reviews above, the researcher has an opportunity to conduct a research about expression of gratitude. The previous studies only investigate gratitude expression regardless of gender. However, other studies already conducted in investigating gender in gratitude had not extensively examined the gratitude expression specifically in terms of the language pattern produced by different genders. Therefore, the objectives of this research are (1) identifying the contexts, types, and functions that influence gratitude expression uttered by 5th and 7th semester of English Department students based on gender differences, (2) analyzing and discovering the language pattern in gratitude expression used by the 5th and 7th semesters of English Department students based on gender differences.

Throughout an interaction, people might utter different types of language forms when talking to a different person in order to express their impressions, feelings, or thoughts. It might be caused by the surrounding circumstance such as the social context, i.e. gender, class, education, etc. Therefore, in order to comprehend a language pattern, it is required an understanding of the surrounding circumstances. For that reason, the roles of Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics are paramount in order to analyze and discover the language pattern in this research.

Sociolinguistics is used to find the correlation between the social structure and the linguistic structure used by the participant. As stated by Wardhaugh (2006), Sociolinguistics is a study concerning the relationship of a language with society. Meanwhile, Pragmatics is used to observe the language form and its function. According to Richard & Schmidt in Hidayat (2016), Pragmatics in communication refers to language use and its relation to the sentence, surrounding context, and situations. However, Sociopragmatics is used in this study since it is an approach combined between the sociolinguistic approach and the pragmatic approach. It is required in order to explore and ascertain the language pattern of gratitude expression regarding gender.

Gratitude belongs to the expressive speech act. According to Najim (2017), a speech act is a language having a performative function in communication. Cheng (2005) classified expression of gratitude into some strategies such as thanking, appreciation, repayment, recognition of imposition, apology, positive feeling, alerters and other strategy.

2. METHOD

This research investigates the language pattern of gratitude expression used by the 5th and 7th semester of English Department students by using sociopragmatic approach. The researcher analyzed the data based on the prepared context in Discourse Completion Task and the participants' responses. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The data in the form of utterances are multiple and holistically constructed meaning that the utterances have a different meaning in a different context. Also, the utterances cannot be interpreted without seeing the whole interconnected aspect of the prepared context in the Discourse Completion Task. Therefore, this research is conducted as qualitative research. Furthermore, the methodology used in examining and analyzing the data is Spradley's analysis method. In addition, the gratitude utterances in the Discourse Completion Task were analyzed using Cheng's taxonomy of gratitude strategies (2005). The analysis was explained in a descriptive way in which it describes the language pattern of gratitude expression and its relation between the gender and the prepared context. Strauss and Cobin in Santosa (2017) stated that descriptive qualitative research aims to explain a conceptual pattern of a cultural phenomenon from observation, clarification and interpretation. Hence, this present study develops a conceptual pattern from observing, classifying and interpreting the linguistic phenomenon on gratitude expression.

The sources of data in this research are male and female students in the 5th and 7th semester. Meanwhile, the data were taken from male students and female students' responses in DCT using purposive sampling with some criteria: The respondent must be a student on the 5th or 7th semester of English Department student. (2) The respondent must be fluent in using English. (3) The data observed is gratitude expression utterances based on the responses on Discourse Completion Task.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher analyzed the data through domain and taxonomy analysis which are combined into the componential analysis table as shown in Table 1. The componential analysis is used to obtain the language pattern of gratitude expression by observing the correlation between the domain analysis and taxonomic analysis. The researcher analyzed the pattern of gratitude expression used by the 5th and 7th semester of English Department students based on gender differences. Afterwards, the research interpreted and explained the language pattern of gratitude expression used by different gender in the 5th and 7th semester of English Department by using cultural theme analysis.

Table 1. Componential Analysis of Gratitude Expression used by male and female students in 5th and 7th semester of English Department students

Student English Department	Gender	Situational Context	DCT (No.)	THX			APP		RPY			ROI			APY				PF		ALT			OTH				Σ
				ST	STS	STM	APR	APRS	OFF	FIN	FSI	ACK	STF	DTH	APL	APLS	EMB	BLM	PFP	PFA	AG	TT	NM	HS	SL	LT	JK	
5th	Male	(-P+D)	(1),(2)	8	4	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	24
		(-P-D)	(3),(4)	6	3	3	1	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	24
		(+P+D)	(5),(6)	8	3	3	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	7	-	14	-	-	2	-	-	43
		(+P-D)	(7),(8)	6	4	-	4	-	7	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	-	7	-	-	3	-	-	38
		Σ		28	14	7	10	-	9	3	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	9	9	-	30	-	-	5	-	1	129
	Female	(-P+D)	(1),(2)	5	8	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	3	-	4	5	-	-	2	3	-	38
		(-P-D)	(3),(4)	8	2	4	-	-	9	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	4	-	-	2	-	38
		(+P+D)	(5),(6)	5	3	6	1	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	6	-	14	4	-	2	3	-	50
		(+P-D)	(7),(8)	10	1	3	1	-	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	32
		Σ		28	14	14	4	-	18	3	3	1	-	-	1	5	1	1	4	13	4	19	10	-	4	11	-	158
7th	Male	(-P+D)	(1),(2)	10	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	1	-	-	22
		(-P-D)	(3),(4)	5	3	1	1	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	21
		(+P+D)	(5),(6)	5	4	4	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	3	-	14	1	-	2	-	-	40
		(+P-D)	(7),(8)	5	5	1	3	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	6	-	-	-	-	1	29
		Σ		25	15	6	6	-	7	2	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	9	4	-	28	1	-	4	-	1	112
	Female	(-P+D)	(1),(2)	12	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	2	5	-	-	3	1	-	31
		(-P-D)	(3),(4)	8	-	3	-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	3	-	-	4	-	-	36
		(+P+D)	(5),(6)	7	3	2	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	6	-	14	2	1	2	1	-	46
		(+P-D)	(7),(8)	7	3	2	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	1	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	28
		Σ		36	7	8	-	-	16	6	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	1	11	11	2	22	4	1	12	2	-	141

Notes:

THX=Thanking; APP=Appreciation ; RPY=Repayment; ROI=Recognition of imposition; APY=Apology; PF=Positive feeling; ALT=Alerters; OTH=Others; ST=Simple thanking; STS=Thanking by stating the favor; STM=Thanking by mentioning the imposition caused by the favor; APR=Using the word appreciate; APRS=Using the word appreciate and stating the favor; OFF=Offering or promising services, foods or goods; FIN=Feeling indebted; FSI=Promising future self-improvement; ACK=Acknowledging the imposition; STF=Stating the need for the favor; DTH=Diminishing the need for the favor; APL=Using the word apology; APLS=Using the word apology and stating the favor; EMB=Expressing embarrassment; BLM=Blaming oneself; PFP=Giving a positive reaction towards the person; PFA=Giving a positive reaction towards the action; AG=Using attention getter; TT=Using title; NM=Using name; HS=Here statement; SL=Small talk; LT=Leave taking; JK=Joking.

From Table 1, it can be concluded that female students in both the 5th and 7th semesters employ more gratitude strategy than male students in the 5th and 7th semesters. It is also deduced that male students in the 5th and 7th semester of English Department express similar gratitude expression between each other as well as the female students in the 5th and 7th semester of English Department. The difference of the language pattern in gratitude expression between male and female students in the 5th and 7th semester is explained below:

3.1. Male Language Pattern

As mentioned previously, it is stated that male students employ less gratitude expression than female students. Kashdan et al. (2009) stated that there is a possibility of why man utters less expression of gratitude such as it regards as a weak point and susceptibility. He added that it may threaten man's masculinity and social standing. Therefore, men might unconsciously limit their words during the interaction in order to maintain their social standing. As shown in Table 1, it is perceivable that DCT no. 1 and DCT no. 2 conducted previously having the situational context of (-P), which means that the interlocutor has a subordinate position rather than the speaker, gaining the least gratitude expression uttered by male students in 5th and 7th semester. Male students in the 5th and 7th semester employ the least gratitude expression when the interlocutors are in a subordinate position.

Additionally, in DCT no. 3 and DCT no. 4 which interlocutor also has a subordinate position (-P) it is indicated that the gratitude expression employed by male students is also in the lowest rate compared to DCT no. 5 to DCT no. 8 whose situational context is (+P). This case indicates that men dispose of concealing rather than expressing gratitude expression towards the interlocutors who are less superior. Additionally, DCT no. 3 and DCT no. 4, which have the situational context of (-P-D), show that male students also tend to employ fewer utterances rather than the situational context of (-P+D). This occurs due to the social power of the interlocutor who is in a subordinate position and a distant social relationship. Although the context of those questionnaires positions the speaker as a person burdening the interlocutor, such as borrowing the interlocutor's money, it is found that compared to female students, male students employ less repayment strategy rather than female students.

Furthermore, during the interaction in which interlocutor has a superior position (higher social power), male students tend to employ much more gratitude strategies. The gratitude strategy used is exclusively employed in the 'professor situation'. Thus, the professor situation refers to the situational context of (+P+D). This emerges because male students are aware that they have less social power and social distance. Due to the situational context of (+P) and (+D), male students employ much more utterances in order to minimize the imposition caused by the favor. As cited from Farenkia (2012), by expressing gratitude, however, it can be used in order to minimize the speaker's indebtedness.

As seen in Table 1, male students employ a higher rate in using alerters strategy such as title than female students. Chaika (1982) stated that addressing is used to show power or solidarity to other people. She added that address term might also be used to strengthen the intimacy. In line with Wardhaugh (2006), address term is used to show intimacy, respect or power. It is found that both male students in the 5th and male students of 7th semesters employ the highest rate of alerters strategy especially title in DCT no. 7 and DCT no. 8 in which situational context is (+P-D). Therefore, male students use those address terms to show intimacy and respect so that they can establish a bond between the interlocutors.

Additionally, the joking strategy is also only discovered in male students' utterances. Tosun et al. (2018) pointed out that males have an outstanding sense of humor as a result humor is predominantly used by males. In line with the phenomenon, males employ joking strategy even in expressing gratitude. Subon (2013) also explained that joking or humor is used to establish a relaxed situation and delightful atmosphere. Therefore, males might build an intimate relationship and diminish the imposition caused by the favor by using joking strategy.

3.2. *Female Language Pattern*

According to the componential analysis which is shown in Table 1, it is perceivable that throughout the interaction female students in both the 5th and 7th semesters produce more gratitude utterances rather than male students in the 5th and 7th semesters. Hence, this indicates that female students tend to be more talkative rather than male students. Climate as cited in Nemati and Bayer (2007) stated that females use language to develop and maintain a relationship in order to gain intimacy.

However, in expressing gratitude, female students employ the highest rate in using gratitude strategy namely thanking strategy. Widyowati (2014) argued that simple thank such as thanks and thank you is the most conventional gratitude expression meaning that it is the easiest strategy to be employed in any situation. However, the researcher also discovers that female students in the 5th and 7th semester also employ other gratitude strategies specifically in terms of the strategies which tend to be chattering such as positive feeling and small talk strategies.

Yuliasri (2016) stated that chattering has an aim to save the interlocutor's face. However, saving the interlocutor's face is also used to maintain a relationship during the interaction. The act in chattering helps to develop a social bond since it needs fair participation due to the turn-taking between the interlocutors throughout the conversation. James Holmes in Subon (2013) argued that females tend to talk more since they regard talking is important in order to keep in touch. As a consequence, females tend to use more gratitude strategies which tend to be chattering such as small talk or a positive reaction. In line with Prakasa (2015) who pointed out that females try harder in maintaining a relationship rather than males. Therefore, during the interaction, females ensure that the conversation runs smoothly.

Meanwhile, in DCT no. 3 and no. 4 in which situational contexts are (-P-D) shows that the female students in the 7th semester produce more gratitude utterances than in the interaction which situational context is (-P+D). The most frequently used gratitude strategy is thanking strategy followed by repayment strategy. It occurs due to the scenarios position the respondents as the one causing imposition towards the interlocutors. However, compared with male students' counterparts, female students employed repayment strategy much more rather than male students. According to Naito and Sakata (2010), females tend to express more gratitude rather than males in a circumstance where they are being helped. Repayment strategy is used to repay the helper. According to Watkins et al. (2006), repayment is a form of indebtedness which is used to restore the social balance in reciprocity. Hence, the repayment strategy used by female students is aimed at balancing the social relationship by doing reciprocity such as paying back the interlocutors' kindness by offering or promising service, food or good.

Moreover, the researcher discovers that female students' utterances are the longest in the interaction in which situational context is (+P+D). Female students in both the 5th and 7th semester employed the same strategy such as thanking, positive feeling and alerters strategy as the most frequently used in expressing gratitude. As stated previously that alerters is used to show respect and politeness towards the interlocutors (Wardhaugh, 2006). Hence, female students employ alerters strategy in order to show respect towards the professor.

Furthermore, DCT no. 7 and no. 8 have situational contexts of (+P- D). Female students as the respondents of the DCT uttered the least gratitude expression in this situational context rather than other situational contexts in the DCT. The scenarios in DCT no. 7 and DCT no. 8 position the respondents as a person causing indebtedness towards the interlocutors.

Female students in 5th and 7th semester express gratitude by employing thanking strategy followed by repayment and positive feeling strategy. As discussed earlier, repayment is a form of indebtedness which is used to restore the social balance in reciprocity. Hence, the repayment strategy used by female students is aimed at balancing the social relationship by doing reciprocity such as paying back the interlocutors' kindness by offering or promising service, food or good. Meanwhile, the positive feeling strategy is used to show appreciation towards the interlocutors. Therefore, female students use the positive feeling strategy in order to express appreciation by uttering compliments towards the interlocutors.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The researcher discovers that each of the different situational contexts hooked the respondents to employ different gratitude expression whether it is male or female students. For instance, the respondents employ more title strategy in expressing gratitude by using address term while the interaction has the situational context of superior social power (+P) in order to show respect, intimacy or familiarity. However, when the scenarios have the situational context of (-P), male students and female students employ different types in expressing gratitude; female students are more talkative compared to male student counterparts. Moreover, the interactions which have situational contexts of (+D) or (-D) also hooked the respondents to use different types in expressing gratitude. Therefore, it is perceivable that different situational contexts provoke the respondents to utter gratitude expression using different types and different functions of gratitude strategies.

As mentioned previously, male students in the 5th and 7th semesters have a similar pattern in expressing gratitude as well as female students in the 5th and 7th semester. However, the researcher found similarities and dissimilarities in gratitude expression patterns used by male students and female students.

Firstly, compared to female student counterparts, male students tend to express less gratitude expression towards the interlocutors particularly whose social power is in a subordinate position. On the other hand, female students are likely to talk more than male students although to the people whom they just met. Secondly, the researcher discovers a similar gratitude expression pattern used by male and female students in the scenarios where interactions have the situational context of (+P+D). It is found that male students and female students employ the most gratitude strategies in this situational context because both male and female students realize that the interlocutor has more social power (superior) and a distant social bond. Thirdly, the researcher reveals that male and female students express different gratitude expressions throughout the interaction which situational context is (+P-D). Male students utter a higher expression rather than female students. Lastly, the researcher obtains from the analysis that only male students employ joking strategy whereas recognition of imposition strategy is only used by female students.

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