



Gratitude in Discourse: Sociolinguistic Analysis of PNHS-Main SHS Students

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Abstract

The study investigates the employment of compliment and compliment response strategies CRs of Senior High School students at Paranaque National High School-Main, Schools Division of Paranaque City. The pertinent study uses the linguistic framework of Holmes (1998;1993) as modified by Yu (2003). One hundred seventeen Senior High School students took part in this study. Forty-seven of whom were grade 11 students under Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) strand and General Academic Strand (GAS). Whereas, the remaining seventy students were grade 12 students. They were Accountancy Business Management (ABM) strand, Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand, TVL, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics strand. The students-respondents were asked to supply the printed Discourse Completion Test (DCT). This DCT was distributed by the assigned teacher-facilitator. From the data collected, it was revealed that both grades 11 and 12 students opted to follow the Accept, Combination, Evade, and Reject macro pattern. On the other hand, it was found that both groups of students preponderantly utilized Appreciation Token, Return Compliment, Question Accuracy, and Combination as micro pattern of CRs. There was no significant difference insofar as gender of senior high school students was concerned. Implications of this study were provided.

Keywords: Gratitude; Gratitude Discourse; Compliment; Compliment Strategies; Sociolinguistic Analysis

1. Introduction

The study on compliment and compliment responses (CRs) collectively called as gratitude study, has received a considerable attention among scholars and linguists alike. Primordially, Pomerantz (1978) pioneered the study on compliments as speech act. Corollary to this, Janet Holmes (1988) in her phenomenal study regarding compliments in the context of New Zealand English succinctly states that compliments are explicit and implicit “attributes credits to someone other than the speaker usually the person addressed for some ‘good’ (e.g. possession, characteristics, skills, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer.” (Holmes, 1988 p.446). From this definition, we can deduce the fact that insofar as the production of compliments and compliment responses as a social activity is concerned, there are two persons or interlocutors involved in the discourse namely; the complimenter and the complementee. In effect, this kind of social interactions between interactants or interlocutors provides not only “sociological implications but also psychological contributions” (Mojica, 2002) which create rapports thereby leading to more harmonious relations within and in, the speech community. This signification on compliments and CRs has been a subject of interests. Compliments and CRs strategies employed by interactants have been said to be fluid; that is, people utilize them in accordance to their cultural norms, customs, gender, ethnicity, among others (Sharifian, 2008; Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

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To better understand implications and aspects of compliments and CRs, it is thus peremptory to understand how language plays a critical role in the production of the same. It has been held that people communicate through language either through the utilization of words or verbal utterances forming complex ideas, concrete and abstract, or nonverbal cues such as facial expression and body movements (Ridge, 2011 citing Crystal, 2003; Annadurai, 2024). However, knowing how to speak or make use of the words is not enough. Accordingly, it is of vital significance to know the features of the speech community such as the customs, cultures, norms, and other pragmasociolinguistic elements present in the discursual contexts. For instance, in the United States of America people there e.g. native Americans employ language in an explicit manner. In contrast, in most Asian countries people utilize language not as directly as the Americans do but rather the message Asians employ can be construed by looking at the surrounding contexts. In effect, Americans belong to low-context culture while Asians e.g. Filipinos, belong to high-context culture (Mujtaba & Balboa, 2009; Levitt & Siliunas, 2023).

Put it differently, those countries who belong to low-context culture communicate messages in a direct manner as explicitly provided in the utterances or sentences whereas those countries that belong to high-context culture communicate messages that can be fully understood through contextual cues, non-verbal cues, and between the lines interpretations of what is actually said (Goman, 2011).

In every situation, it is beyond cavil the speaker must observe the conventions present in the speech community thus it will not suffice if the person only knows what to respond as far as compliment strategies are concerned. It is of critical essence that the interlocutors must be able to decode the [socio]pragmatical norms or rules present in a given situation. According to Meiramova and Kulzhanova, (2015) that "in order to produce appropriate language, a person should be aware of pragmatic competence as well as the grammatical one" (p. 16). For instance it has been identified that the employment of the words such as "thank you" and "thanks" does not always refer to the expression of gratitude but can also serve as compliments or a signal for ending the conversation (Dalilan, 2012).

Chang and Algoe (2019) provided an idea on how culture affects the way people express their gratitude. They compare how people in the United States of America and people in Taiwan respond to a given situation through the employment of gratitude strategies. The study concluded that individuals from the US exhibit direct, unobtrusive demonstrations of gratitude through verbal and non-verbal cues such as saying "thank you" and likewise by hugging, touching, and other physical gestures. On the other hand, their Taiwanese counterpart focus on self-improvement and self-mastery. They rarely exhibit physical gestures to express their gratitude. But the common denominator of the two cultures is that they resort to saying "thank you."

In juxtaposition, Kagitcibaci (2017;2012) provided how two dimensional scale to better understand how cultures are related to people's way of expressing gratitude. This two dimensional scale is known to individualism-collectivism cultures. For individualistic culture (those people who exercise autonomy in their dealings), it is emphasized that personal agency (autonomy) and independence are two aspects that affect how they communicate with people around them. Hence, egocentrism is observed. On the other hand, people belonging to collectivistic culture tend to produce 'connective gratitude' which amplify the significance of "we" than "I". For instance, Wang et. al. (2015) examined the expression of gratitudes of children in the US and China. It was found that children in both countries exhibit sophisticated expressions of gratitude as they age. Children in collectivistic culture exude connective gratitude and that egocentrism decreases as they age. The reverse is true with regard to children in the US. This finding has been corroborated by Poelker and Gibbons (2017) that children in Guatemala are more inclined to using connective gratitude as they age as compare to their counterpart. Another significant finding was provided by Hariri (2016) saying that Islamic people are sometimes not inclined to using verbal gratitude this was evident from the fact that they write gratitude expressions more explicitly in their written language such as in thesis and acknowledgement sections of their academic outputs.

Culture thus plays a crucial role for effectively utilizing whatever gratitude strategies a person may choose. Accordingly, gratitude i.e. CRs, not only expresses the speaker's feelings but also the receiver's statements or actions. Consequently, being abreast with the cultural aspect of a speech community one can effectively utilize gratitude strategies. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) said that if the person cannot express gratitude properly in line with the prevailing norms and cultural requisites of the interlocutors, negative conception will ensue thus social relations with other will be adversely affected. Saud & Abduh (2018) asserted that for effective utilization of compliments and CRs, interactants must have a intercultural understanding. This assertion is in line with what Morales (2012) claimed in his research saying that there is no universal model of CRs. This latter study emphasized the role of gender insofar as CRs are concerned albeit no significant difference between the two genders; male and female. Indeed, the ability to communicate effectively will lead to strong relations between and among interlocutors.

Another study that reflects cultural authenticity in CRs was conducted by Alrousan, Aval, and Salehuddin (2016). They found out that socio-cultural norms affect how complimenters and complimentees give and accept, respectively, the compliments. The study examined how Jordanian students in relation to their gender produce and receive compliments. Accordingly, both males and females used agreement strategies. However, it was found that females have a higher tendency to utilize agreement strategies as compare to male counterparts. Males, in contrast, consider compliments as face threatening acts. Likewise, it is found that Jordanian students were mostly inclined to accept compliments since in their culture rejecting compliments would indicate as being boastful or “ayeb” meaning, shameful act.

In the Philippines, the contrastive study in the employment of compliments and CRs between medical and nonmedical students was examined by Morales & Gomez (2025). They found that the college students opted to follow the Accept, Combination, Reject, and Evade pattern in CRs. This could be explained by the fact that college students are very much aware on how to respond to their interlocutors. Additionally, the Combination responses were exuded by both groups; thereby giving them much liberty to propound and expand their responses toward the complimenters. Hence, sociolinguistic and pragmalinguistic awareness was evident in the said study.

In the study conducted by Torres et. al (2020) they found that both Tagalog and Ilocano university students have peculiar ways on responding to the given compliments. On the individual level, stylistic features were evident while on a much wider level, societal canons were evident in the responses such as the norms in a given context, tradition, and ethnicity. Summarily, people of different backgrounds have different value systems as reflected on the utilization of compliments and production of compliment responses (Agoncillo, 1990 cited in Torres et. al. 2020).

With regard to college students and employees, it was found out that both groups have different sets of strategies for expressing their gratitude (Bagat & Asuncion, 2022). This can be explained by the fact that both groups have significant age gap or interval and that their value systems such as individual ways of communication differ from the other.

In this instance, it is of critical aspect to take a look at what Manipuspika & Sudarwati (2016) asserted in their study with regard to CRs. They found that mother tongue or L1 affects the production of compliments. Thus, the syntactical and grammatical aspects of compliments as produced through L2 are significantly linked to L1. Hence, understanding of intercultural elements of a given speech community is a must to avoid misunderstanding between interactants (Meiramova & Kulzhanova, 2015). Succintly put, Pragmatic transfer is evident in L1 and L2 insofar as compliments and CRs are concerned (Bou-Frach & Clavel-Arroitia, 2024).

Moreover, the advent of technology brought by globalization has an impact on the way compliments and CRs is utilized. Wahyuningsih (2017) analyzed what compliments and CRs are used in a movie. There, he found that the dominant compliments themes employed focused on the following; appearance; capability; and, possession. However, it is to be noted that in movie there are scripts followed by the characters; hence, it cannot be strictly said that the compliments and CRs employed are authentic and spontaneous.

With regard to gender difference, Bas (2021) found that CRs across gender in different discursal settings are employed by males and females differently. This result supports what Bibi and Sartini (2023) saying that there are intricate dynamics in the utilization of CRs in conjunction with gender, power structure, and cultural influences. However, this finding seems contrary to Shabani & Zeinali (2015) and Morales and Gomez (2025) studies pointing thereof that no significant difference has been seen between and among the subjects of different genders.

In line with these, Salayo (2021) made an attempt to analyze the compliments and CRs employed by husbands and wives. It was found that husbands tend to be more appreciative and active participants in CRs as compare to their wives. Meanwhile, both husbands and wives employ preponderant CRs in terms of appearance, personality, and traits. These results posit a contradistinction as to what Herbert (1986;1989) found that interlocutors opt to use compliments and CRs with people of their equal status such as friends, and acquaintances and not with the people with whom they have intimate relations such as family members. Thus, these things can be subsumed with the assertion that compliments and CRs are used as “manipulators” to gain compliance with the interlocutors (Grant & Fabrigar, 2010).

Albeit the comprehensive studies as cited above which pertained to contrastive studies on compliments and CRs strategies among and between university students and professionals and also the roles of gender and cultural variations between and among interactants in relation with the gratitude study, there has been a little attention that was given on the employment of compliments and CRs among Senior High School students. That being the case, this current academic, sociolinguistic investigation would mainly focus on the compliments and CRs used by Senior High School students in Paranaque City.

Particularly, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- What specific compliment responses (CRs) strategies at macro and micro levels are revealed from the responses to the given printed Discourse Completion Test by the respondents?
- How do the Senior High School students differ from employing CR strategies at macro and micro levels?
- Is there a universal pattern that can be gleaned from the use of CRS by different complimentees from different strands and grade levels under study?

2. Methodology

One hundred seventeen Senior High School students took part in this study. Particularly, forty-seven of whom were Grade 11 senior high students and the remaining seventy were Grade 12 students. The students were from different strands. On the one hand, the Grade 11 students were from General Academic Strand (GAS) and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood strand (TVL). 24 students belonged to the former while 23 students to the latter strand. On the other hand, the Grade 12 students were from three strands namely; Accountancy Business Management strand (ABM); Humanities and Social Sciences strand (HUMMS); and Science and Technology Engineering Mathematics strand (STEM). For ABM there were 25 students, HUMMS 25, STEM 15, and TVL five. All these student-respondents were enrolled at Paranaque National High School-Main (PNHS-Main), Schools Division of Paranaque City. They were asked to provide answers to hypothetical situations given by the researchers. Printed materials composed of 15 situations were provided to the Senior High School students. This means of data gathering were purposely chosen by the researchers since majority of the students had no Google account which would enable them to answer the computer-mediated Discourse Completion Test (DCT); hence, it was agreed that printed DCT would be most appropriate to the concerned student-respondents. The DCT was comprised of 15 items which were both in the form of English and Tagalog language thereby allowing the students to fully comprehend and supply the situations which they were most comfortable with. The 15-item scenarios were further divided into four categories. The first 4 items; that is, numbers 1 to 4 pertained to Appearance; item numbers 5 to 8 to Character; item numbers 9 to 12 to Ability; and items 13 to 15 to Possession. To ensure the honest and cordial responses of the student-respondents, this study employed Yu's (2003) additional micro-level. This allowed the student-respondents to make flexible answers to the given scenario. Likewise, this would provide a more liberal latitude for the student-respondents to candidly answer the printed DCT which in turn would make the data more realistic. Consequently, by compartmentalizing the answers based on the categories introduced by Holmes (1998; 1993) would make the responses skewed and bereft of substantial essence of the true communicative intent of complementees' responses. Thus, a macro-level Combination posits a compelling ground to be included in analyzing the data. Finally, student-respondents were at liberty either to respond to the English scenario or to its Filipino counterpart or otherwise respond using bilingual methods. Four doctorate students from reputable universities were requested to validate the responses of the student-respondents. Eighty-eight percent of inter-agreement was agreed upon by the validators. Subsequently, after having made deliberations on the subject, they reached 100% agreement with the responses in conjunction with Holmes' and Yu's compliment studies. For reference, Holmes and Yu's micro and macro levels of CRs thus;

Table 1 Holmes' (1998;1993) CRs Strategies with additional macrolevel by Yu (2003)

Macro Level	Micro Level	CRs Strategies
Accept	Appreciation Token	"Thanks"; "Thank you"; "cheers" "Yes"; "Good"
	Agreeing Utterance	"I know"; "I am glad you think so"; "I did realize I did that well"; "yeah, I really like it."
	Agreeing Qualifying Utterance	"It's nothing."; "It was no problem."; "I hope it was ok"; "I still only use it to call people."; "It's not bad."
	Return Compliment	"You are not too bad yourself."; "Your child was an angel."; "I'm sure you'll be great."
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	"Nah, I don't think so."; "I thought I did badly."; "Nah, it's nothing special."; "It's not."; "don't say so."
	Question Accuracy	"Why?"; "it's right."
	Challenging Sincerity	"Stop lying"; "Don't lie."; "Don't joke about it."; "You must be kidding."; "Don't, come on."

Evade/Deflect	Shift Credit	"That's what friends are for."; You are polite"; "No worries"; "My pleasure."
	Informative Comment	"It was not hard."; "You can get it from (name)"; "It's really cheap."
	Request Reassurance	"It was not hard"; "It's really cheap."
Combination		

3. Results and Discussion

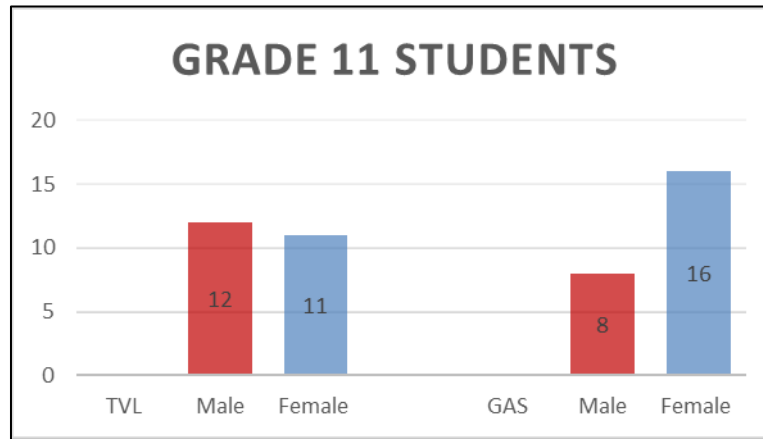


Figure 1 Distribution of Grade 11 Students based on gender

Figure 1 above represents the total number of students who participated in the pertinent study. For Grade 11 students enrolled under Technical-Vocational-Livelihood strands, there are 23 students while under General Academic Strand, there are 24 students. In total, there are 47 Grade 11 students.

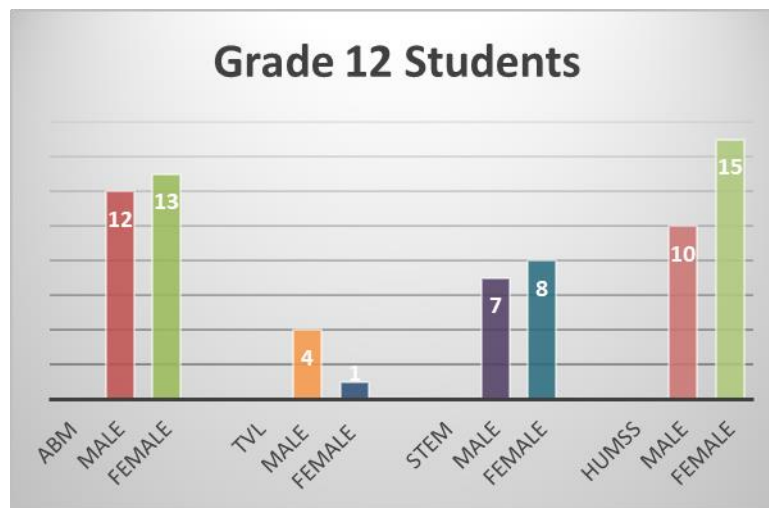


Figure 2 Distribution of the number of Grade 12 Students based on gender

Figure 2 above summarizes the number of students enrolled in the following strands viz: Accountancy, Business, Management strand, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood strand, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics strand, and Humanities and Social Sciences strand. For each strand, the students are categorized based on gender. Thus, in total there are 70 Grade 12 students who participated in the pertinent study.

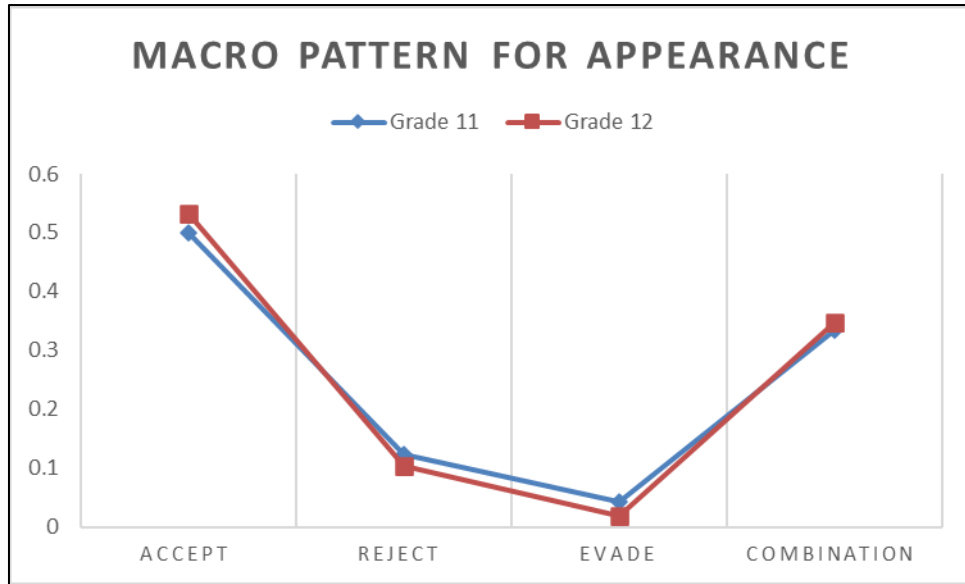


Figure 3 Summary of Macro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Appearance

As can be seen from the above figure, the students from grades 11 and 12 follow the pattern; Accept, Combination, Reject, and Evade. From 188 grade 11 respondents, 94 or 0.5% accepted the compliments they received from the complimenter/s. While for Combination, 63 or 0.34% answered using two or more compliment responses strategies. The lowest response gathered fall under Evade. Only 8 students of 0.04% fall under the said latter category. For grade 12 students-respondents, 149 or 0.53% fall under Accept macro pattern next to Combination which is 97 or 0.35%. These results concur with what Morales & Gomez (2025) propounded that students tend to accept the compliments they receive which seem a universal, acceptable conduct with regard to instances when someone gives praise or recognition to another. Likewise, these results support what Al-Shboul et. al. (2022) that adolescents are more inclined to use Accept and Combination patterns whenever they receive the same. These are applicable to both male and female respondents.

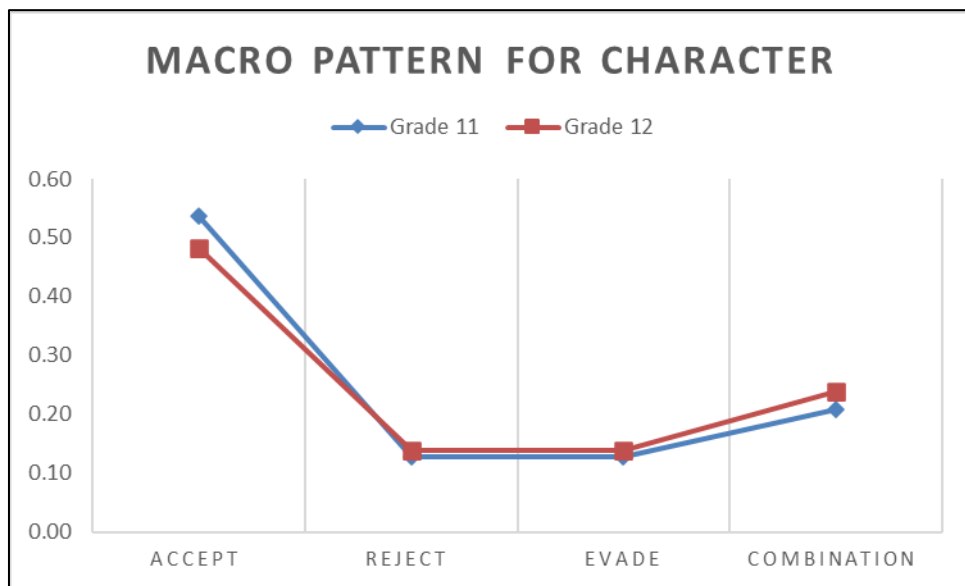


Figure 4 Summary of Macro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Character

Figure 4 encapsulates the macro pattern for Character. As can be seen above, grades 11 and 12 students opted to exhibit Accept compliment strategies. For grade 11, 101 students-respondents or 0.54% fall under Accept pattern. For grade 12, 135 out of 280 students respondents or 0.48% exhibited Accept pattern. This result corroborates Bas (2021) positing that students preponderantly accept compliments and reply to the same with universal reply such as "Thank

you [very much]”. Likewise, it has been found out that grade 12 students Combination utterances for replying to the compliments they receive. For instance, students tend to utilize the following utterances as follows; “Really? Don’t think about it. Thanks anyway!”; “*Nagbibiro ka na naman*. (You are kidding again) *Salamat ha! Ganon talaga*. Thanks!”; “Thank you! So are you!”. From these utterances or compliment responses, students preponderantly used Combination. The combination is composed mainly of Accept, Reject and Evade replies. These results may explain that in the Philippine contexts, downgrading once self is still prevalent so as to maintain modesty that is inculcated in the Filipinos and has been part of the day-to-day custom. The cultural backgrounds play in the production of CRs (Morales, 2012; Manarin, et.al., 2022).

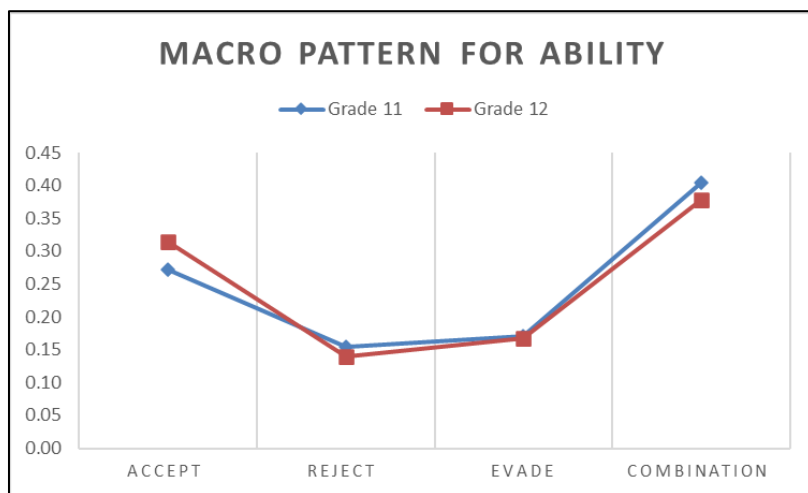


Figure 5 Summary of Macro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Ability

The figure above provides that Combination followed by Accept pattern has been overwhelmingly utilized by the students-respondents from both grade levels. This explains that Senior High School students may perceive themselves as competent but subsequently and consciously moderating their responses so that the interlocutors would not perceive them as someone who is “showing-off” which may be tantamount to being boastful. Likewise, this may explain that grades 11 and 12 students have not fully developed self-maturity with regard to their ability. Thus, their responses have the elements of Accept, Reject, and Evade patterns. Out of 188 grade 11 students 76 or 0.17% fall under Combination while for grade 12, 106 out of 280 or 0.38% fall under Combination category. This result is in contradistinction to what Alqarni (2020) asserted saying that with regard to complimenting one’s ability, Accept pattern or accept responses always dominates.

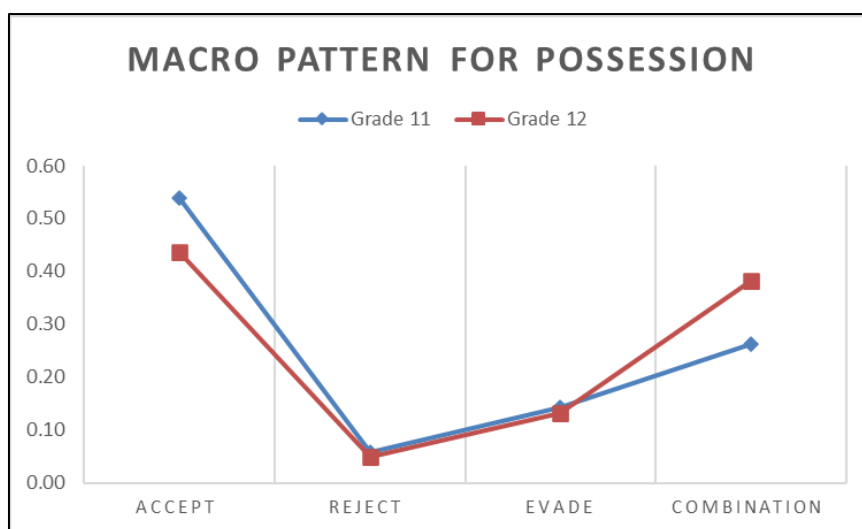


Figure 6 Summary of Macro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Possession

Figure 6 gives us the overview that Accept is still the top of the hierarchy with regard to compliment responses based on Possession of the complimentees. As can be gleaned above, both grades 11 and 12 students exhibited Accept pattern followed by Combination. However, for the latter, grade 12 student preponderantly utilized Combination. 96 out of 220 students or 44% fall under the said category. This may explain that students-respondents try to both minimize and maximize self-praise and [self] dispraise, in vice versa. These results may seem contrary to Zhang (2013) and Torres et. al. (2020) saying that students tend to employ Reject and Evade responses for them to appear modest and firm in their communication with interlocutors or complimenters. However, as can be seen Accept followed by Combination has been found out to be preponderantly used by the students-respondents. This may be construed to be a habit among interactants since the degree of relations between them are closed or otherwise proximate.

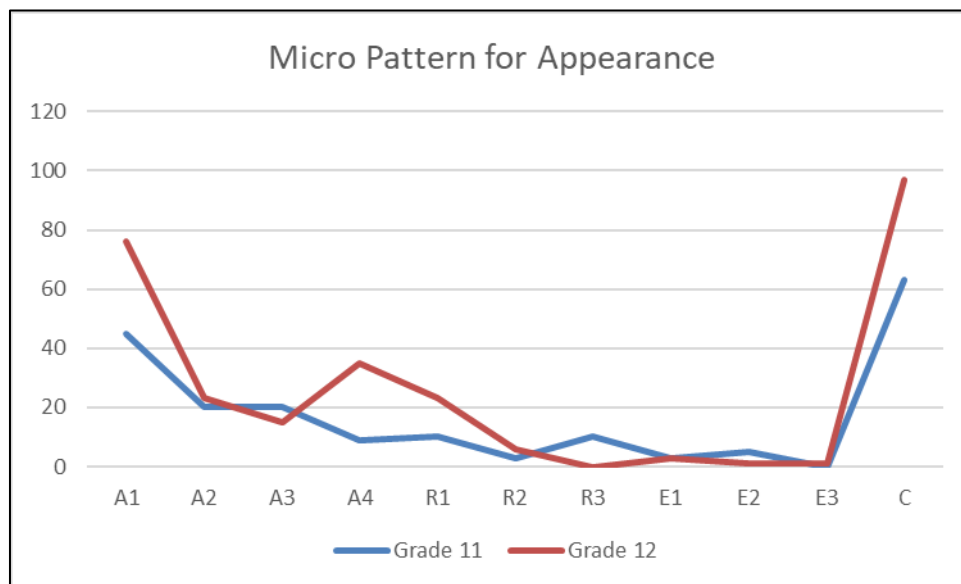


Figure 7 Summary of Micro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Appearance

The micro pattern as regards someone appearance is indicated above. Students-respondents from grades 11 and 12 propounded overwhelmingly Appreciation Token. Likewise, Question Accuracy has been exhibited by the students-respondents since the area of interest in the conversation is about appearance. This may indicate that the students may not feel that the complimenter is not sincere or otherwise trying to mock them; hence, they employ question accuracy as the compliment response strategy. Moreover, it can be seen that Combination has been utilized most often by the students-respondents. For example the responses were as follows: "Thank you ha! Maganda ka rin na man (you are also beautiful)" ; "totoo ba ? (Is it real?) baka binobola mo lang ako ah! (I think you are fooling me) siges thanks!" ; "Mana lang ako sayo! (I am like you!) But I am better than you sometimes haha! Thank you!" These results indicate the fluidity of the responses made by the students-respondents. This likewise indicate that the degree of relation is an important factor in the production of compliments and CRs. Furthermore, it has been found that students employed both formal and informal register of language which is significantly based on who they are conversing with. These results support the assertion of Holmes and Wilson(2017) that language i.e. compliments and CRs is influenced by social factors such as social class. Also, the results corroborated Salayo (2021) saying that combined strategies are employed by the respondents especially if they are uncertain or otherwise conscious with their co-interactants.

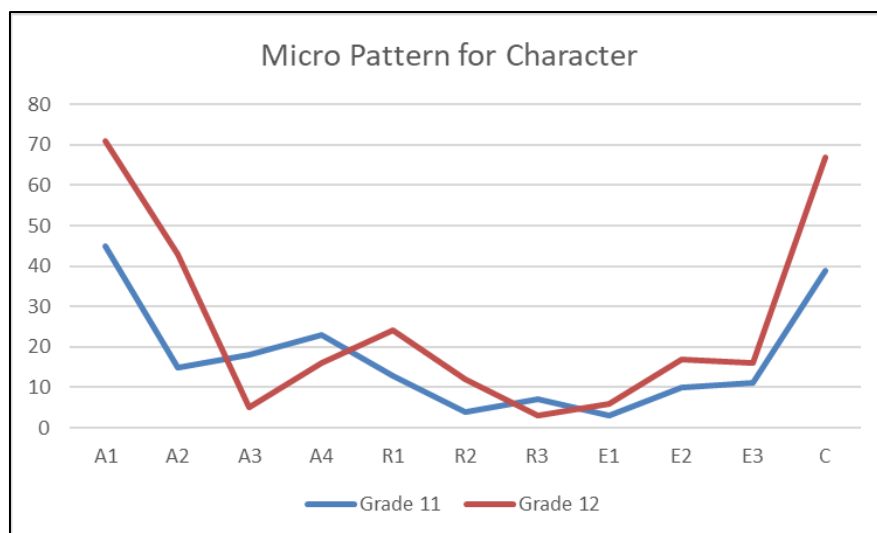


Figure 8 Summary of Micro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Character

The figure above summarizes the responses of the students-respondents based on the micro pattern in CRs. As can be gleaned above, students from grades 11 and 12 have somehow peculiar way of utilizing CRs if the area of topic is about Character. Albeit, the Appreciation Token is number 1 as compare to other Accept micro patterns such as Agreeing Utterance, Agreeing Qualifying Utterance, and Return Compliment, it has been found that grade 11 students-respondents utilized Return Compliment more often next to Appreciation Token. Whereas, grade 12 students-respondents utilized more Agreeing Utterance next to Appreciation token. This variance may indicate that students from different levels have ways to accept the compliments from the complimenter. Likewise, it may also be deduced that both grade levels have different ways to construe or interpret a given situation thereby allowing them to respond peculiarly. Additionally, it has been found that Request Reassurance and Informative Comment have been employed by the students indicating that they manage to downgrade themselves which would place them in a better position not to be interpreted or known as boastful or *mayabang*. Combination has been preponderantly employed which indicates that students from both levels express themselves freely but not without restraint on themselves. These are in line with Dirgeyasa (2015) saying that interactants are governed by the principles and norms of their individual preferences and social rules.

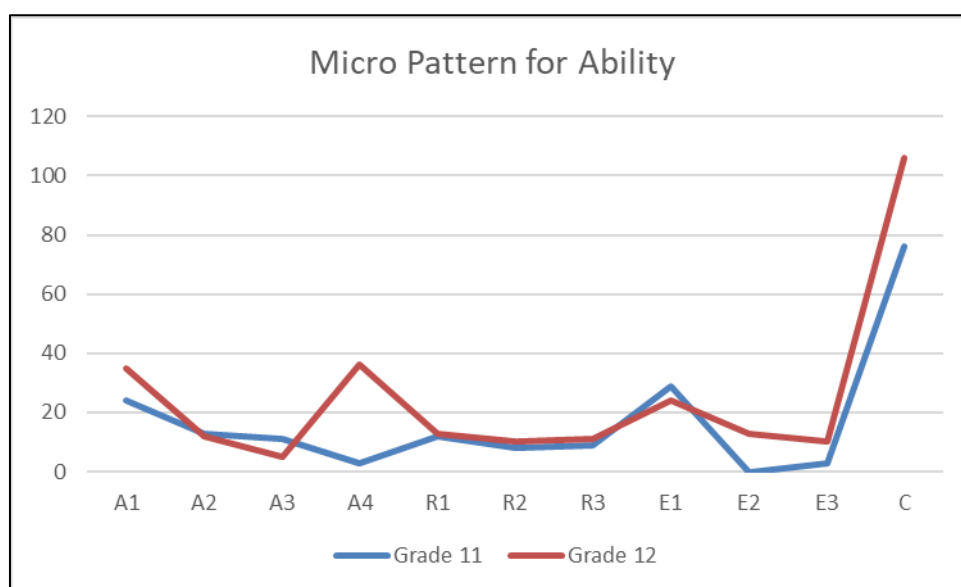


Figure 9 Summary of Micro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Ability

The figure above provides that grade 12 students-participants opted to utilize Return Compliment as their CRs. 35 out of 88 grade 12 students-respondents whose responses fall under Accept Macro pattern adhered to Compliment Return.

On the other hand, grade 11 students-respondents opted to employ Appreciation Token. 25 out of 51 students-respondents utilized Appreciation Token. These results indicate that although both groups accept compliments from complimenters, they have peculiar strategy on how to equalize the situation and provide gratitude to their interlocutors. Moreover, since it is a truism that different grade levels indicate different levels of competence, then this may explain the variation in their responses. Accordingly, Bagat & Asuncion (2022) support these by saying that people from different groups have different strategies in expressing their gratitude. Finally, Combination was both employed by grades 11 and 12 students-respondents. These may reflect that acknowledgement of the compliment is observed but there must be modesty and firmness in the interactions so that solidarity and harmonious relations will be realized in the social discourse (Herbert, 1990).

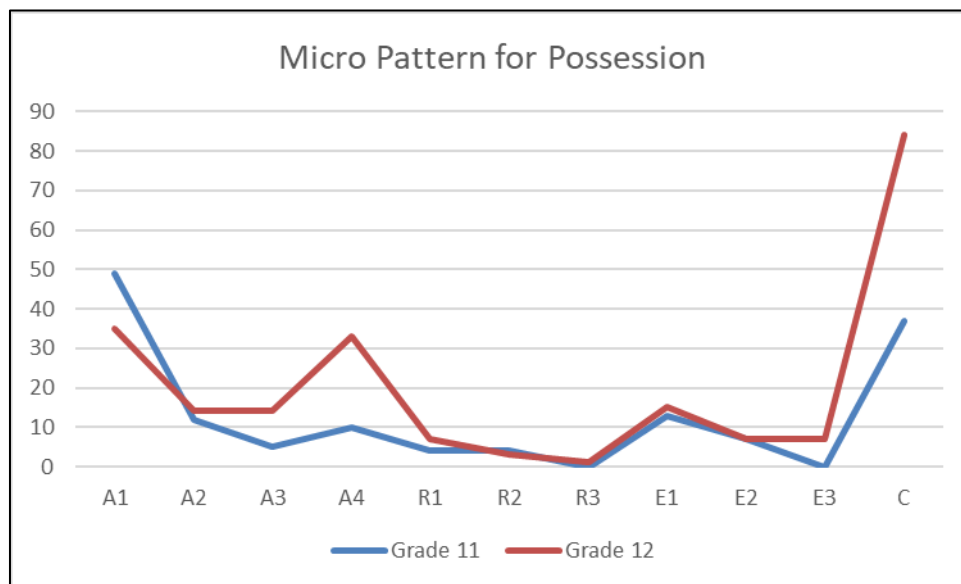


Figure 10 Summary of Micro pattern employed by Grades 11 and 12 students regarding Possession

Figure 10 provides the results regarding the micro pattern employed by grades 11 and 12 students-respondents. As can be seen above, grade 12 students-respondents opted to follow Return Compliment. 33 out of 96 students or 34% who fall under Accept macro structure utilized Return Compliment. Some of the usual replies are as follows: “magkakaran ka rin niyan sure ako dyan. Mayaman pamilya niyo eh! (You’ll have what I have soon. Your family is affluent!); “Ikaw din kaya!” (You too also!); “You also have [kaya]!. Another signification the figure can give us is the preponderance of Combination CRs employed by both groups of senior high school students. For grade 11, 49 out of 76 students under Accept pattern employed Appreciation Token. Likewise, 37 or 26% of grade 11 students-respondents employed combination while in grade 12, 84 or 38% replied in Combination. The responses under the latter CRs micro pattern are as follows: “Thanks! Maganda rin yang sayo! (Yours is also beautiful); “Uyy! Mura lang ito! Salamat (hey! This is cheap! Thanks anyway!); “Bigay lang ito sa akin! Salamat! Pahihiramin kita soon. (This has been given to me. Thanks! I will let you borrow my thing very soon.). These responses support Morales and Gomez (2025) asserting that students or interactants manage to exhibit flexibility in their utterances so that their message will not be construed as something disrespectful or boastful. This in effect reflects how societal norms affect how people converse with one another.

4. Conclusion

The present study revealed that students from grades 11 and 12 of Paranaque National High School-Main exhibited Acceptance in their utterances whenever they receive compliments from their interlocutors complimenters. The general macro pattern adduced is as follows: Accept, Combination, Evade, and Reject. This pattern has been present in all the utterances provided in each particular situation in the printed Discourse Completion Test. Specifically, with regard to micro pattern the following has been realized. This will be discussed *ad seriatim*. Thus, for Appearance category Appreciation Token followed by Question Accuracy dominates the responses of the students-respondents. Likewise, Combination has been preponderantly used by the interactants in producing their CRs. This result indicates that modesty present among and between interlocutors in the discourse. Second, for Character it has been found that grade 11 students exhibited more Appreciation Token while grade 12 students, Agreeing Qualifying Utterance. Further, Request Reassurance and Informative Comment have been almost equally employed by both groups. This reveals that they try to reduce the intensity of the compliments for them to appear not so boastful which is considered unacceptable

in the Philippine contexts. Furthermore, Combination has been utilized by the students which indicates that they try to at least lower themselves and minimize self-praise but without negating the appreciation they receive from the complimenter. Third, with regard to Ability grade 12 students overwhelmingly exhibited Return Compliment while grade 11 students, Appreciation Token. This may be due to the fact that students from different levels have different levels of competence or ability as they conceive themselves. Combination is likewise prevalent in the CRs regarding ability. This result may be because of the fact that Ability is something a hot topic or is given so much credence and reverie in the educational settings; thereby, students-respondents try to equalize the responses; that is they try not to appear boastful and by appearing appreciative. At last, in so far as Possession is concerned, grade 11 employed Appreciation Token significantly while grade 12, Return Compliment. Both, on the other hand, employed Combination responses. These results indicate that both groups of students from different grade levels have peculiar ways of responding to the compliments which may be due to the fact that their personal manner of response, although both groups are senior high school students, is not as the same as for others.

In summation, this study has a plethora of benefits that can be applied in different contexts. In schools either primary, secondary, or tertiary compliments and CRs may be adopted in day-to-day relations so that productivity will be observed;

For educator and teachers, the results of the study may be used as a basis to modify or otherwise, adopt ways and means for understanding intercultural communication. Also, this may be used as guidelines so. That teachers and educators will have a cogent construct with regard to the peculiarities of compliments and CRs production;

For business agencies or offices, these results can be used to increase the motivation of both the employees and employers alike; thereby, leading to a more competitive and productive settings in the company or offices; and,

For the community at large, this research study will be a beneficial guideline for the public officers and employees to effectively implement the policies and regulations of the society. They may create exercises and activities or otherwise employ compliments and CRs in their day-to-day conduct of public service. Additionally, for private sectors and public sectors of the community, this study can be useful for the furtherance of social cohesion in the community

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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