

STRATEGIES IN EXPRESSING *THANKING* IN ENGLISH REALIZED BY INDONESIAN LEARNERS

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Abstract

This study describes the gratitude strategies realized by Indonesian EFL learners in responding to different situations. Data were collected from 17 undergraduate students of English Department of Education Faculty of Atmajaya Catholic University Jakarta by using (O’Keeffe et.al, 2011) Discourse Completion Tasks. This study revealed that the gratitude strategies employed by the participants of this study ranged from simple, brief thankings to lengthy, complex thankings. All participants produced mixed speech act sets of thanking in the following conditions: a) social status (between a vice-president and a newly hired personnel, b) indebtedness (because of money loan and meal treat), and c) breaking promise. On the other hand, in informal contexts, such as between friends and the setting of public area, the participants tended to use simple or brief thanking.

Keywords: gratitude, strategy, thanking, Indonesian learners

BACKGROUND

When expressing themselves people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they also perform actions via those utterances. Levinson (1983) considers that "in uttering sentences one is also doing things but we must first clarify in what ways in uttering a sentence one might be said to be performing actions" (p. 236). Speech act contains what is commonly called as the illocution (or illocutionary force) such as commanding, offering, promising, threatening, and thanking.

Thanking or expressing gratitude is one of the acts under the category of expressive speech act. Expressive speech act primarily focuses

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on representing the speaker's feelings. In other words, speakers use expressive speech act to express their feelings by making their words fit their internal psychological world (Yule, 1996 & Peccei 1999). Language speakers in any community can express gratitude through words of thanks, praise, compliment, or appreciation (Fishgadam & Zarei, 2011).

Realization of thanking speech act is found in different languages from various cultures. Thanking expressions may be different from one language community to another depending on the contexts and cultures. Indonesian students who learn English as a foreign language are already familiar with the phrases for expressing gratitude, such as *thank*, *thank you*, *thank you so much*, and *thank you very much*. Eiseinstein and Bodman (1986) point that *thanking* phrases are often preceded by or followed by other strategies or speech acts such as apologizing, requesting, promising, etc. depending on the context. Expressing gratitude is also often realized by simple thanking without any lengthy expressions. In addition, since thanking has a societal function, learners should master rules for expressing gratitude in the target language. Speakers of a particular language and cultural background should learn thanking speech acts and the contexts in which they are used in another language (Fishgadam & Zarei, 2011).

The present study examines the *thanking* strategies in English delivered by Indonesian EFL learners. This study attempts to answer the following question: How do Indonesian EFL learners realize the thanking strategies in English in various situations?

THE SPEECH ACT OF THANKING

According to Verschueren and Ostman (2009), there are two arguments that underlie the speech act theory. The first argument is that there is a distinction between the meaning expressed by an utterance and the way in which the utterance is used (i.e., its force). The second argument is that utterances of every kind (assertion included) can be considered as acts. By viewing an utterance as an act, the production of words or sentences can be considered as the performance of a speech act, which is the unit of linguistic communication (Jaszczolt, 2002, p. 295). In other words, the minimal unit of human communication is not a linguistic expression, but rather the performance of certain kinds of communication acts, such as conveying information, asking for information, giving orders, making requests, making threats, giving warning, making bets, giving advice, making a promise, complaining, thanking someone, and so on.

Most of the expressions of gratitude in English involve the word *thank*, *thank you so much*, *thank you*, *thank you very much*, *thanks*, *thanks a lot*.

Yet, as pointed out by Siregar (2011), the expression *thank* serves the following purposes: 1) to express the feeling of generosity at an act accepted by a speaker, 2) as a courtesy to maintain a relationship, 3) to praise, 4) to end a conversation, 5) to reject a gift or a present given by someone in a polite way (p. 118). Siregar further states that although the forms of *thank* are linguistically simple, but pragmatically the forms are complicated enough because it involves sociocultural values which are different from one language to another (p. 118-119). Not all expressions using the word *thank you* refer to gratitude. They can also refer to other language functions such as compliments and closings, for example, thanking expression is only responded by *thanking* only (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993, p. 65)

In terms of formal and situational thanking, Aijmer, as cited in Jacobson (1999), distinguishes simple and intensified *thank you/thanks* in both formal and situational features (p. 66). From this view, it can be inferred that formality and situation are two contextual features in which responses to thanking speech act may be realized differently. In other words, the relationship between speakers, social distance, social status, conditions at a particular time in a particular place constitute factors that cause how speakers express in relation to responding gratitude.

The speech act of thanking, as pointed out by Eisenstein and Bodman (1993), is a complex act, potentially involving both positive as well as negative feelings on the part of the giver and receiver (p. 65). They argue that thanking is a face-threatening act in which the speaker acknowledges a debt to the hearer — thus threatening the speaker's negative face. Meanwhile, Leech (1983) considers thanking as “a convivial function whose goal of stating appreciation helps maintain a polite and friendly social atmosphere.”

Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) point out that the thanking speech act as the act of expressing gratitude is “an illocutionary act performed by a speaker which is based on a past act performed by the hearer. This past act benefits the speaker and the speaker believes it to have benefited him or her. The speaker feels grateful or appreciative, and makes a statement which counts as an expression of gratitude.” (p. 167). Searle (as cited in Fishghadam & Zarei, 2011) described thanking as a reactive act realized by a speaker on the basis of a prior action accomplished by a hearer. According to Huang (2007), “on feeling grateful or appreciative for what the hearer has done, the speaker makes an utterance which serves as an expression of gratitude or appreciation. Thanking is included in the expressive kind of speech act that express a psychological attitude or state in the speaker such as joy, sorrow, and likes/dislikes To thank someone means, simply put, to

say that one feels something good towards him/her because of something good someone has done for him/her” (p. 107).

Expressing the speech act of thanking can be complex and lengthy as it may include other speech acts such as requesting, complimenting, promising, and other strategies. The thanking speech act is very often preceded by another speech act and also followed by another one. Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) considered the lengthy expression preceding and following the thanking speech act as speech act sets (p. 66). Speech act sets are groups of semantic formulae that together achieve the appropriate language for a particular situation. According to *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (2010), speech act sets are the pragmalinguistic realizations of a particular speech act (p. 543). Eisenstein & Bodman further state that the lengthiest speech act sets are usually produced when the recipient feel unusually grateful or indebted to the giver and the members of each set interacted synergistically to express gratitude appropriately (1993, p. 67).

To reiterate, although thanking in English is generally realized by simple forms such as *thanks, thank, thank you* in many cases expressing thanking speech act is very often elaborated. Thanking expression is not only realized by adding intensifiers such as *thank you so much, thank you very much, thanks a lot*, but it is also preceded and followed by other sets of speech acts such as complimenting, promising, and requesting as will be shown in this study.

PREVIOUS RELATED STUDIES

Studies on the expression of thanking in English realized by non-native speakers of English abound. In this study, only some relevant studies were reviewed for the sake of highlighting how non-native speakers of English from different linguistics backgrounds expressed gratitude in English.

Eisenstein & Bodman (1986) studied expressions of gratitude by native and non-native speakers of American English. The researchers looked at 6 DCT situations out of 14, administered first to 56 NSs and then revised and administered to 67 NNSs from five countries. The study found native speakers show consistent use of expressions of gratitude within specifically defined contexts, often in the form of speech act sets. For example, the thanks was accompanied by other functions such as complimenting, reassuring, expressing surprise and delight, expressing a lack of necessity or obligation. Meanwhile, they also found that advanced nonnative English speakers (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish) had considerable difficulty in adequately expressing gratitude in the target

language. The difficulty in responding to particular items in the questionnaire stemmed from linguistic factors as well as cultural factors (Eisenstein and Bodman, 1993, p. 69).

How Japanese EFL learners express gratitude expression was investigated by Miyasaka, & Yamazaki (2000). In their study, they attempted to find out how advanced L1 Japanese EFL learners were likely to express gratitude by saying how they felt on a written dialogue completion task. Their study found out that lexical choice showed little variation: 99.8% of the thanking expressions consisted of *thank you*, *thank you very much*, and *thanks*.

Farnia and Suleiman (2009) in their study on thanking expression found that Iranian and American respondents use the same type of strategies in responding thanking. In this study, they used the DCT containing 14 situations. They reported two findings from the research. First, the American respondents resort to fewer strategies in expressing gratitude in comparison with Iranian respondents. Second, there are no statistically significant differences in type or use of strategies used by Iranian intermediate and advanced EFL learners. Therefore, it can be assumed that there is no correlation between language proficiency and use of strategies. Besides this, there are no statistically significant differences between EFL learners' and Americans' responses.

Farenkia (2012) studied how Canadians realized thanking expression in English. The purpose of this study was to examine strategies employed by a group of native speakers of Canadian English when responding to gratitude expressions. Using the classification of Aijmer (1996), Farenkia (2012) found that the participants employed five different strategies, of which strategy of minimizing the favour was by far the most frequently employed. Minimizing the favor is that the thankee downplays the favour offered to the thanker or indicates that the action taken to do a favour to the other did not cause any trouble, for examples *No problem at all*, *Don't mention it*. It is a negative politeness strategy (p. 3). Minimizing the favour was mostly favoured as response to gratitude expressions from *a close friend* (45 occurrences out of 123 or 36.59%) and *a stranger* (44 examples out of 123 or 35.77%). Within this category forms belonging to the *no problem* sub-category were by far the most preferred realization forms (p. 5). In conclusion, Farenkia states that Canadian English speakers make the same choice as speakers of American English, Irish English and British English when responding to thanks.

The results of the above previous studies show that non-native speakers of English produce thanking expression in English by using various strategies that may be either similar to or different from those of native

speakers of English. Diverse contexts of situation and cultural values are likely to be the factors causing the differences in the use of the thanking strategies. The present study aims at examining how Indonesian EFL learners, produce the thanking expressions in English and what strategies they use in expressing gratitude.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 17 sixth semester students (3 males and 14 females) of the English Department of the Faculty of Education of Atmajaya Catholic University of Indonesia, Jakarta. They were selected by using convenient sampling, i.e. by choosing participants who are available (Dornyei, 2007) and recommended by The Head of the English Department.. Most participants were already working in various fields, such as teachers (5 persons), accounting staff (2 persons), travel consultant (2 persons), marketing staff (1 person), company secretary (1 person), and entrepreneurs (2 persons). The other 4 participants were students. Their ages were between 20 and 39.

Procedures of Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data of this study were the participants' written responses collected by using the Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs). DCTs are a type of language questionnaire whereby participants are given descriptions of situations and asked to elicit what they think they would say in a given situation (O'Keeffe et. al, 2011). In this study, the DCTs made the participants respond with thanking expressions as much as or as little as they wish. The participants were given 10 situations of different contexts and they were instructed to write responses showing the expression of thanking and possible sets of thanking speech acts they may think to write for each situation. The 10 situations in the DCTs (see appendix) were adopted from the questionnaire items (14 items) summarized by Eisenstein and Bodman (1993, p. 75-76). Each situation has different contexts or event settings in which participants themselves often involve in the context settings in their daily life. In other words, participants face daily experience of all situations depicted in the DCT. The contexts respectively include the situations in a bus asking for the driver to stop, in a large company whose manager is going to give a raise of salary, in a supermarket whose cashier is asked to bag groceries, at the table in a restaurant where a friend has something in her face to be rubbed by another friend, borrowing money from friend because of

a sudden need, studying in another city where one of the roommates had done a housework and another one promised to accomplish it, going out to lunch by which a friend will pay for it, having gotten a new style haircut and wanting friend to give comment on it, in an apartment where two friend are relaxing and one of them wants his friend to hand a nearby newspaper, and in a parking garage where a parking attendant gives a parking voucher and accepting the money for the service. The data from the instrument were collected on the 20th of April 2013 from 10 to 10:20 a.m in room 304.

The participants' responses to the DCTs were analyzed in the following steps: 1) reading the participants' written responses carefully, 2) coding the written responses to determine thanking strategies employed by the participants, 3) grouping the speech act sets of thanking expression based on the scheme outlined below, and 4) explaining the data that have speech acts sets and those that do not have speech act sets. The following scheme illustrate how the data were collected before being analyzed and explained:

Scheme 1: Identification → no preceding speech act sets + *thanking* + no following speech acts set

Scheme 2: Identification → preceding speech act sets + *thanking*

Scheme 3: Identification → *thanking* + following speech act sets

Scheme 4: Identification → preceding speech acts sets + *thanking* + following speech act sets

The description of 10 situations, participants' responses, and strategies of thanking expression, and frequencies of the production of speech act sets and the discussion of the research findings are presented below.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The context of Situation 1 was familiar to the participants' daily life dynamics. Undergraduate students experienced going to their campus or any other places by bus almost every day. A bus transportation in cities constitutes an informal area in our social environment and the relationship between the bus driver and the passangers is also informal. These characteristics of context might cause more participants to give simple responses in showing their gratitude to the driver. Yet, there were some participants who gave lengthy expressions, as presented in Table 1 below.

The participants' responses above show that they used various ways of expressing thanking. 8 out of 17 participants wrote the same responses as in (1). These participants responded with simple thanking to the driver who stoped the bus as being asked. Simple thanking is used very frequently in our

society. In our everyday life, we often use or utter *thank you, sir* or *thank you, mam* to express gratitude to someone who has done something good towards us, regardless of his/her age. Simple thanking can be expressed in various contexts, for example in a public area, such as in a bus. By saying or using *thank you* to express gratefulness to the driver, the participants felt that they had shown politeness and respect. However, there were some participants who produced more creative responses than a simple thanking expression, as shown in (2) – (10). They realized *thanking* with lengthy expression of gratitude. In other words, realizing thanking expression is preceded by the other speech acts sets such as requesting, ordering, and apologizing. Besides, thanking is also followed by speech acts such as stating the reason, complimenting, and leave-taking. Realizing the thanking strategies by using the lengthy expression of gratitude is common in Indonesia. Requesting, for example, is very often used by Indonesian in an indirect way. The participants used this types of strategies possibly because of the following two factors: the age of the driver and the lack of familiarity. According to Cutting (2002), “different age and unfamiliarity are among the factors of indirect directives” (p. 20). Unfamiliarity and age difference do not always cause someone to use indirect speech acts, as proved by the fact that some other participants produced simple thanking.

TABLE 1
Situation 1, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| You board the bus, pay your money and take a seat near the front of the bus. Just before your stop, you guess that the driver is not going to stop. You move to the front, and ask the driver to stop and he stops. | | | |
|---|---|-------|--|
| Participants's Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you, Sir | 8 | Thanking |
| 2 | Would you stop on this stop? | 1 | Requesting+No thanking |
| 3 | Excuse me, can you stop the bus please? Thank you | 1 | Start with forgiving, Requesting+Thanking |
| 4 | Excuse me, this next stop will be my destination. If you would kindly stop, thanks. | 1 | Start with forgiving before telling the stop and requesting+Thanking |
| 5 | Sorry to bother you...thank you | 1 | Apologizing+Thanking |
| 6 | Stop! Thank you for stopping me on the right place | 1 | Ordering+Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 7 | Thank you for letting me the bus stop | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 8 | Okay thank you sir, you save my day | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting |
| 9 | Thank you for your kindness | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting |
| 10 | Thank you sir. Have a good week ahead. Bye... | 1 | Thanking+Leave taking |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

Different from the responses given by the participants in Situation 1, in Situation 2 all participants used lengthy expressions. Factors such as the formal relationship between an employee and a company manager and social distance between them cause the long expressions.

TABLE 2
 Situation 2, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You work for a large company, which is usually very busy. You send your manager a request for some days off. The vice-president of personnel calls you into his office. He tells you to sit down. You feel a little nervous, because you have only been working there for six months. The vice-president says, 'You're doing a good job. In fact, we are so pleased with you that I am going to give you a raise'.</i> | | | |
|---|--|-------|---|
| Participants's Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you so (very) much sir. I really appreciate it (that). I will do (keep) my best for this job | 8 | Thanking with intensifier+stating appreciation+Promising |
| 2 | I highly appreciate for your consideration | 1 | Stating appreciation with the reason |
| 3 | Thank you so (very) much for your appraisal/attention | 3 | Thanking with intensifier by stating the reason |
| 4 | Oh, really? Thank you so much for your appreciation sir. I will work harder | 1 | Expressing surprise+Thanking with intensifier+expressing appreciation+Promising |
| 5 | Thank you for the appreciation and it is my job to give my best. | 1 | Thanking+Expressing appreciation+Expressing indebtedness |
| 6 | Well, I am speechless honestly. However, thank you so much for this opportunity and adding a raise | 1 | Expressing surprise+Thanking with intensifier by stating the reason |
| 7 | Oh really? That is a very kind of you sir. Thank you so much | 1 | Expressing surprise+Complimenting+Thanking with intensifier |
| 8 | Wah..thank you very much sir. I am so happy to hear that. | 1 | Surprise+Thanking with intensifier+Expressing delight |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The participants' responses to situation 2 show that expressing gratitude by producing the combined speech acts sets of stating appreciation and promising is more salient. The participants generally combined their thanking

expression with speech act sets such as stating appreciation, promising, expressing indebtedness, and complimenting.

To the situation which is concerned with the context of a public area and the relationship is very informal and there is familiarity between speakers, for example in a supermarket as shown in Table 3 where all participants gave simple responses.

TABLE 3
Situation 3, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>In the supermarket, you ask the cashier to bag your groceries. He does this and then turns to begin serving the next customer. You pay and pick up your bags to leave.</i> | | | |
|---|---|-------|-----------------------------|
| Participants' Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you for your help/serving/service | 8 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 2 | Thank you | 7 | Thanking |
| 3 | Take the change. Thank you | 1 | Offering+Thanking |
| 4 | Thank you. You are very kind | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The participants produced relatively short responses of gratitude expression. Almost all participants used both simple thanking and thanking followed by stating the reason. Thanking to the cashier for service is probably expressed ungenerally and the expression of gratitude in this situation appears to be, as what Eisenstein & Bodman called (1993), a social amenity. In this social context, people just feel it pleasant or comfortable to say thanking simply. Even in many occasions, we do not express thanking to the cashier at all.

Short responses were also elicited when the context is between two friends. In this situation, close relationship between both friends and informal characteristics of a restaurant may cause the participants to give simple responses.

The data from Table 4 show that participants generally responded by employing both simple thanking and thanking by stating the reason. In terms of mentioning the favor, Farenkia (2012) found that favor is responded minimally if the situation is a close friend to show a negative politeness strategy by responding such as *no problem at all* and *don't mention it*. Interestingly, the respondents of this study did not produce the aforementioned kind of responses. In contrast, they maximalized the thanking expression by stating the favor (reason), embarrassment, and complimenting to show positive politeness strategies.

TABLE 4
 Situation 4, Participants' Responses and Strategies

| <i>At the table in a restaurant a friend says, you have something on your face.' You ask where. Your friend tells you. You rub your face and ask, 'Is it off?' your friend says that it is.</i> | | | |
|---|---|-------|---|
| Participants' Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you for telling/informing me that | 5 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 2 | Thank you for your attention | 2 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 3 | Thank you to remind me | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason (positive feeling) |
| 4 | Thank you | 3 | Thanking |
| 5 | Thank you, friend/dear | 3 | Thanking |
| 6 | Thanks, you are a kind man | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting |
| 7 | Thank God you saw it. I'd embarrassed if I leave the restaurant with a stain on my face | 1 | Thanking+Stating embarrassment |
| 8 | Thanks dear, I would be very ashamed if you do not tell me | 1 | Thanking+Stating embarrassment |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

In situation 5, the context also brings about the lengthy expression although both speakers have a friendship relation. In other words, although the relationship between them is very informal, friend's generosity and care become the important factor in producing long expression of gratitude preceded and followed by other speech act sets. In this case, almost all participants used mixed speech act sets preceding and following the thanking expressions. Only one participant produced simple thanking.

The most common strategy of speech act used in responding Situation 5 above is thanking followed by stating appreciation, repayment, and promising. Thanking by stating the reason is also relatively common as in (8). It seems that from the participants' cultural perspective, stating repayment and promising appears to be associated with expression of gratitude. It is very common in Indonesian culture that if someone, especially even a friend generously lend money, we feel indebted and we of course promise to return the money although the friend does not want the money to be paid back. Or at least he does not force us to return the money immediately.

TABLE 5

Situation 5, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You find yourself in sudden need of money--\$500. You mention this to a friend. Your friend immediately offers to lend it you. At first you say, 'Oh no, I didn't mean it as a request. I couldn't take it.' Your friend says, 'Really, it's all right. What are friends for?' Your friend insists again, and you take the check.</i> | | | |
|--|--|-------|--|
| Participants' Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thanks friend. Much appreciated your help and I will do my best to return your money as soon as possible. May God bless you always. | 1 | Thanking+Expressing appreciation+Stating repayment+Praising |
| 2 | I am really grateful for your help. You don't know how much I am in the need of this. I will pay back next week, once again thank you | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason+Expressing deep feeling of the need+Stating repayment+Thanking |
| 3 | Thank you for your kindness to lend me this money. I will return it as soon as possible. | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting+Offering return |
| 4 | Thank you I will pay back soonest (as soon as possible) | 3 | Thanking+Stating repayment |
| 5 | I don't have any words to describe my gratitude to you. I really appreciate your help and thank you so much. I promise I give it back to you as soon as possible | 1 | Expressing affection, Expressing appreciation+Thanking+Promising repayment |
| 6 | Thank you very much. I will give it back to you soon. Later if you need something, feel free to tell me. I will help you as good as I can | 1 | Thanking with intensifier+Stating repayment+Offering promise |
| 7 | Thank you so (very) much. I really appreciated it | 2 | Thanking with intensifier+Stating appreciation |
| 8 | Thank you very (so) much for your kindness/understanding | 5 | Thanking with intensifier+Stating the reason |
| 9 | Thank you so much, you are my best friend | 1 | Thanking+Compliment |
| 10 | Thank you | 1 | Thanking |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The same lengthy production of thanking expression was given by the participants although the relationship between two friends is close or

intimate. In Situation 6, the context shows that both friends are close because they live in the same room. In this case, friend's generosity to clean the house is the special context that cause the lengthy expression.

TABLE 6
 Situation 6, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You are studying in another city. Both you and your roommate work. You come home late from work and find that your roommate has done some work around the house that you had promised to do, but had not had a chance to do.</i> | | | |
|---|--|-------|--|
| Participants' Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Oh, I am so sorry that I didn't keep my promise. Thank you for your help. Next time I will do it for your sake | 1 | Apologizing for breaking promise+Thanking+Stating the reason +Expressing compensation |
| 2 | I am so sorry , I am late to go home because there are some jobs that I have to do. But thank you very much for your help. | 1 | Apologizing by stating reasons+Thanking+Stating reason |
| 3 | I 'm sorry , actually that's my part, I've promised to do, at least thank you for your help | 1 | Apologizing+Promising+Thanking by stating reason |
| 4 | I am sorry . I not yet do my work around the house. Next, I will do my best. Thank you. | 1 | Apologizing+Promising+Thanking |
| 5 | I am sorry too busy. Thanks for helping me do my duty | 1 | Apologizing+Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 6 | Thank you very much my friend. I am really sorry for not doing my house work. I was stuck on the traffic because of the heavy rain this afternoon. Thanks for helping to do all these | 1 | Thanking with intensifiers+Apologizing by stating the reason+Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 7 | I am sorry for coming late. You have done everything at home. Thank you very much. I will do your part the next. | 1 | Apologizing by stating the reason+Thanking with intensifier+Stating compensation |
| 8 | Oh, I 'm terrifying sorry . I haven't had the chance to clean up. What about next week? I will wash yours. | 1 | Apologizing by telling the reason+Offering |
| 9 | Thank so much for doing my work and for helping me. I will buy you dinner tomorrow night | 1 | Thanking with intensifier and stating the reason.+Stating compensation |
| 10 | Thank you my roommate for your kindness. I hope one day I can do it. | 1 | Thanking by stating compliment+Promising |
| 11 | Thank you so much but next time please let me do my turn | 1 | Thanking with intensifier+Offering return |
| 12 | Thank you friend. You have done all of what I have to do | 1 | Thanking+Complimenting |
| 13 | Thank you for cleaning the house | 4 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 14 | It's my fault to involve you in trouble | 1 | Expressing fault |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

Apologizing speech act before thanking dominates the responses written by the participants in Situation 6. This strategy is followed by the other strategies such as stating reason, compensation, and repayment by offering turn or services as shown in (1) – (8). The other data also show that thanking expression was not followed by apologizing strategy but it is followed by speech acts sets such as stating compensation, complimenting, promising, and stating the reason as shown (9) – (13). Based on the context in this situation, it can be inferred that the apologizing strategy is probably caused by the fault of breaking the promise to work around the house. In Indonesian culture, as reflected by the participants' responses, breaking a promise is profoundly regreted or even shown by the deep feeling of sadness.

TABLE 7

Situation 7, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>Your friend suggests going out to lunch. You say that you'd like to go, but you only have \$2. Your friend says. 'Ah, don't worry. I'll treat you today.' Your friend takes you to a very nice restaurant –a much more expensive one than you usually go to. You have a wonderful meal. Your friend pays, and you get up to leave.</i> | | | |
|---|--|------|--|
| Participants's Responsese and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you for today lunch next time my turn to treat you | 4 | Thanking+Stating the reason+Offering turn |
| 2 | Thank you for the lunch dear. It was really a great dinner. I hope we can have lunch together next time, but it will be on my account after I get a monthly pay. | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason+Complimenting+ Offering turn+Stating repayment |
| 3 | Thank you so much friend (buddy). You are so (very) kind | 4 | Thanking with intensifier+Complimenting |
| 4 | Thank you very much for your kindness. I will never froget this moment. | 1 | Thanking with intensifier+Expressing indebtedness |
| 5 | Thank you for the great meal (meal) | 4 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 6 | The food is very delicious. Thank you so much for your treat today. | 2 | Complimenting+Thanking with intensifier by stating the reason |
| 7 | I 'm very grateful to have friend like you. I don't know what to give back to you. Thank you so much for the treat. | 1 | Thanking by stating compliment+Expressing indebtedness+Thanking with intensifier by stating the reason |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The context of friend's generosity in meal-treating in a very nice restaurant is also the factor that made the participants give longer responses

of gratitude expression as shown in Table 7. All participants produced thanking expressions followed by other speech act sets such as stating the reason, offering turn, complimenting, offering repayment, and expressing indebtedness.

In our social culture, treating a friend to have meal is a great thing. We express thanking and compliment the treat; but, at the same time, we feel the need to treat him/her back because of a deeply indebted feeling. In other words, the participants of this study thought that getting a treat from a friend is a debt that must be repayed later on.

Thanking expression does not always represent a real gratitude. In some occasions, for example, asking for self-praise or self compliment, as reflected in situation 8 below, thanking expression does not use for showing gratitude. In this context, two friends have a close relationship and one of them asks for opinion of his new hairstyle.

TABLE 8
 Situation 8, Participant's Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You have just gotten your hair cut in a new style, and you like it better than the old one. Your friend sees it and you ask him what he thinks. He says, 'Hey, you've got a new haircut. It looks nice.'</i> | | | |
|---|---|-------|---|
| Participants's Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Response | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Oh, thank you | 10 | Thanking |
| 2 | Thank you for your compliment. It makes me happy. | 1 | Thanking+Stating compliment+Expressing delight. |
| 3 | Really? Thank you dear | 1 | Surprising+Thanking |
| 4 | Really? What a nice compliment! Thank you | 2 | Surprising+Complimenting+Thanking |
| 5 | Oh really? Thank you for you nice comment | 1 | Surprising+Thanking by stating the reason |
| 6 | Thank you. I look different with new hairstyle. | 1 | Thanking+expressing self-compliment |
| 7 | Really? You think so? Thank you | 1 | Surprising+Thanking |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The data from Situation 8 show more participants used simple thanking strategy as shown in (1). This thanking is not an expression of gratitude. Rather, it functions as a compliment (Eisenstein & Bodman 1993, p. 65). *Oh, thank you* in (1) could not really mean that he is grateful for the compliment. In other words, it is not a genuine thanking without extra

expressions and the recipient may not actually accept the compliment. In Indonesian cultural perspective, basically compliment given by a friend is sometime not regarded as pure one. Sometime, beyond the compliment there is a mockery that follows. The compliment is not sincere. Thanking speech acts in (2) – (7) are a different case. Here thanking is followed by extra expressions, thanking expression (e.g. stating the compliment, expressing delight, surprising, and stating the reason). The recipients (represented by the participants) felt delighted because of the complement for his/her new style hair.

The simple thanking is realized by many participants when the context is also “simple”, as presented in table 9. In this situation the context is very informal, which indicate a close relationship between two friends who share the same apartment.

TABLE 9
Situation 9, Participants’ Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You share an apartment with a friend. You’re both sitting and relaxing in the living room. You ask your friend to hand you the newspaper which is nearby. Your friend gives you the newspaper.</i> | | | |
|---|--|-------|----------------------------------|
| Participants’ Responses and Strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you | 6 | Thanking |
| 2 | Thanks sweet/guy/dear | 4 | Thanking |
| 3 | Thank you very (so) much | 3 | Thanking with intensifier |
| 4 | Many thanks | 1 | Thanking |
| 5 | Thanks for the paper | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 6 | Thank, dear. Sorry to bother you | 1 | Thanking+Expressing regret |
| 7 | Thank you. Really appreciate your help | 1 | Thanking+Expressing appreciation |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

The data from the situation above also reveal that the responses written by the participants are generally brief or simple thankings. Only 3 responses that contain extra speech act sets such as stating the reason (5), expressing regret (6), and expressing appreciation (7). The participants might think that they do not need to express thanks in a lengthy expression to an intimate friend, even in a real everyday life. Simple thanking and thanking followed by stating the reason were realized by the participants when the

context setting is in a public area as shown in situation 10. It is very informal which can be experienced by the participants in their daily life.

TABLE 10
 Situationn 10, Participants' Responses, and Strategies

| <i>You enter a parking garage. As the parking attendant gives you the parking voucher, You hand him the money and ask him about the empty space.</i> | | | |
|--|---|-------|--|
| Participants' responses and strategies | | | |
| No | Responses | Freq. | Strategies |
| 1 | Thank you (sir) | 9 | Thanking |
| 2 | Thank you for you help | 2 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 3 | Thank you for your information | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 4 | I appreciate your help. | 1 | Stating appreciation |
| 5 | Thank you for helping me park my car | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 6 | Any space for my car, Sir? Thank you for your assistance | 1 | Asking for space+Thanking+Stating the reason |
| 7 | Is there any empty space for me , Sir? Oh, here is it. Thanks sir | 1 | Asking for space+Thanking |
| 8 | Thank you for nice serving | 1 | Thanking+Stating the reason |
| Total of Production | | 17 | |

In responding to situation 10, the participants generally used simple thanking speech act as in (1). Most probably, the participants who responded like this are those who always meet the same attendant in the parking garage. However, there were participants who also responded with other sets of speech acts such as stating the reason and appreciation, as shown in (2) – (8). They add the statement possibly because of the age of the attendant or his friendliness. Friendliness, besides age and familiarity, can become contributing factors for people to behave in a polite way and use the polite language.

CONCLUSION

The present study has examined strategies realized by the participants under the investigation. This study revealed that strategies applied ranged from simple, brief thankings to lengthy, complex thankings. All of the participants realized mixed speech act sets of thanking when the contexts are concerned with the following conditions: a) social status (between a vice-president and a newly hired personnel, b) indebtedness (because of money loan and meal treat), and c) breaking promise. In terms of situations in which they illustrate informal contexts such as between friends and the setting of public area, the participants tended to use simple or brief thanking.

This study also has provided possible causes that underlie the choices of the participants' strategies in realizing thanking expression.

There are two implications of this study. Firstly, English teacher can use the DCT (Discourse Completion Tasks) as the means to teach thanking expression in English so that students become familiar with speech acts and their functions. It is also important for the teacher to explain how thanking realization in Indonesian language is different from that of English. Secondly, speech acts must be included in pragmatics subject to make students aware of language functions.

The major limitation of this study lies in the authenticity of the data and small number of the participants. The data might not reflect accurate features of actual verbal interactions. Therefore, it is suggested that further studies address such an issue by collecting natural data, for example, data from corpus.

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Appendix: Instrument (DCT)

Sebelum anda memberi respon terhadap berbagai situasi berikut ini, isilah terlebih dahulu biodata singkat di bawah ini.

Nama :
Usia : **tahun**
Jenis Kelamin :
Pekerjaan anda saat ini :

Instruction: *Write down as many words or utterances as you wanted to express your gratitude (thank) towards each illustrated situation below.*

1. You board the bus, pay your money and take a seat near the front of the bus. Just before your stop, you guess that the driver is not going to stop. You move to the front, and ask the driver to stop and he stops.
You would say:
2. You work for a large company, which is usually very busy. You send your manager a request for some days off. The vice-president of personnel calls you into his office. He tells you to sit down. You feel a little nervous, because you have only been working there for six months. The vice-president says, 'You're doing a good job. In fact, we are so pleased with you that I am going to give you a raise'.
You would say:.....
3. In the supermarket, you ask the cashier to bag your groceries. He does this and then turns to begin serving the next customer. You pay and pick up your bags to leave.
You would say:.....
4. At the table in a restaurant a friend says, you have something on your face.' You ask where. Your friend tells you. You rub your face and ask, 'Is it off?' your friend says that it is.
You would say:.....
5. You find yourself in sudden need of money--\$500. You mention this to a friend. Your friend immediately offers to lend it you. At first you say, 'Oh no, I didn't mean it as a request. I couldn't take it.' Your friend says, 'Really, it's all right. What are friends for?' Your friend insists again, and you take the check.
You would say:.....

6. You are studying in another city. Both you and your roommate work. You come home late from work and find that your roommate has done some work around the house that you had promised to do, but had not had a chance to do.

You would say:.....

7. Your friend suggests going out to lunch. You say that you'd like to go, but you only have \$2. Your friend says. 'Ah, don't worry. I'll treat you today.' Your friend takes you to a very nice restaurant –a much more expensive one than you usually go to. You have a wonderful meal. Your friend pays, and you get up to leave.

You would say:.....

8. You have just gotten your hair cut in a new style, and you like it better than the old one. Your friend sees it and you ask him what he thinks. He says, 'Hey, you've got a new haircut. It looks nice.'

You would say:.....

9. You share an apartment with a friend. You're both sitting and relaxing in the living room. You ask your friend to hand you the newspaper which is nearby. Your friend gives you the newspaper.

You would say:

10. You enter a parking garage. As the parking attendant gives you the parking voucher, You hand him the money and ask him about the empty space.

You would say:.....