



**COMPLIMENT RESPONSES USED BY  
STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF  
SEMARANG STATE UNIVERSITY**

A FINAL PROJECT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan*

in English

by

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**2011**

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Demikian, surat pernyataan ini dapat digunakan seperlunya.

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Yang membuat pernyataan,

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To

The Gracious

Mrs. Supriyadi

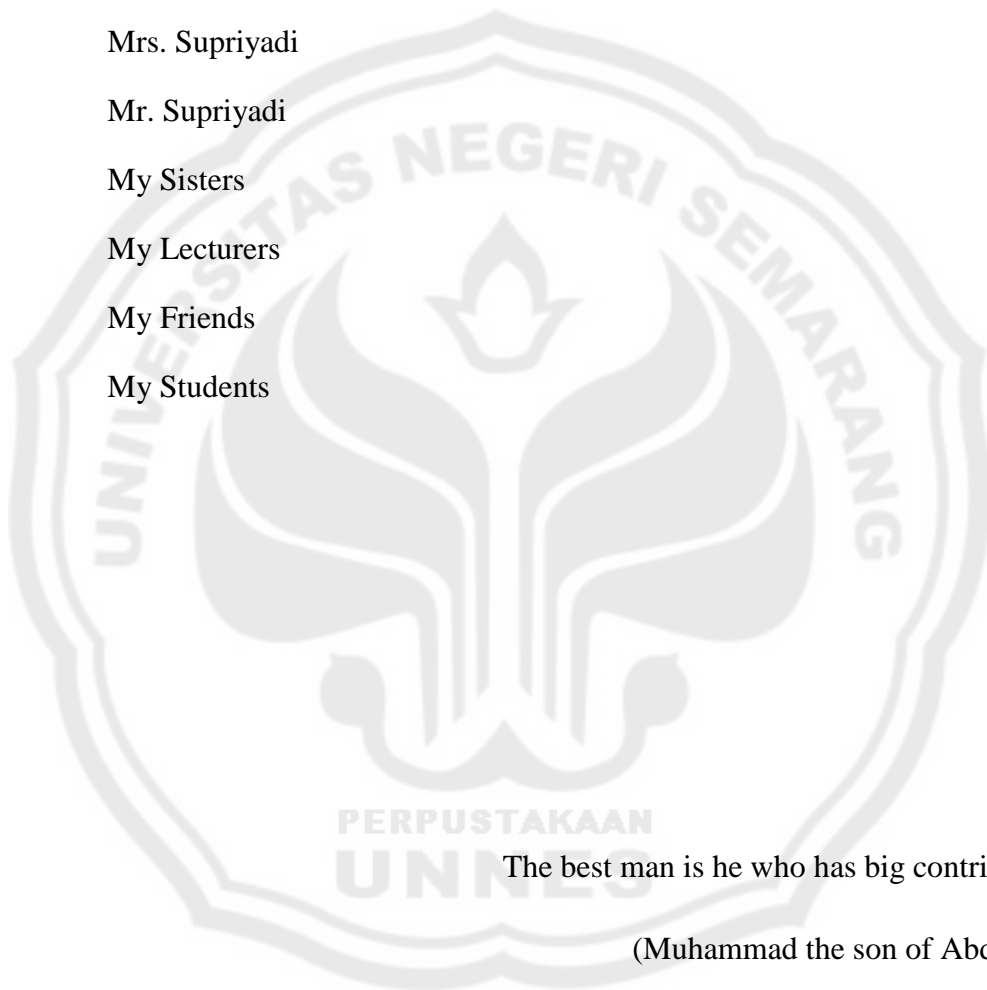
Mr. Supriyadi

My Sisters

My Lecturers

My Friends

My Students



The best man is he who has big contribution

(Muhammad the son of Abdullah)

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Semarang, October 2011

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## ABSTRACT

**Al Fatah, Muhammad Husin.** 2011. *Compliment Responses Used by Students of English Department of Semarang State University.* Final Project. English Education. English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts, Semarang State University. First Advisor: Intan Permata Hapsari, S.Pd, M.Pd. Second Advisor: Dra. Sri Suprpti, M.Pd.

**Key words:** pragmatics, discourse completion test (DCT), compliment responses.

This final project is a pragmatic study about compliment responses of the students of English Department of Semarang State University to respond to English compliments based on the compliment situation given.

The data were collected using a discourse completion test (DCT) used to elicit compliment responses of the participants of the study. The data were analyzed using Tran's framework (2007). If the responses do not fit into Tran's framework, it will be classified as a new classification. There were 600 responses from 60 participants divided into three groups of twenty freshmen, sophomores, and juniors respectively.

The results of this study showed that the students of English Department of Semarang State University used various types in responding compliments given. From fifteen types of Tran's compliment framework (2007), I found thirteen types of compliment responses, they are compliment upgrade, agreement, appreciation token, return, explanation, reassignment, non idiomatic, compliment downgrade, disagreement, expressing gladness, follow up question, doubting question. Appreciation token was the most frequently used in all situations given in this study, while non idiomatic response was the least response used. There was no participant who responded the compliment by using non idiomatic and disagreement token.

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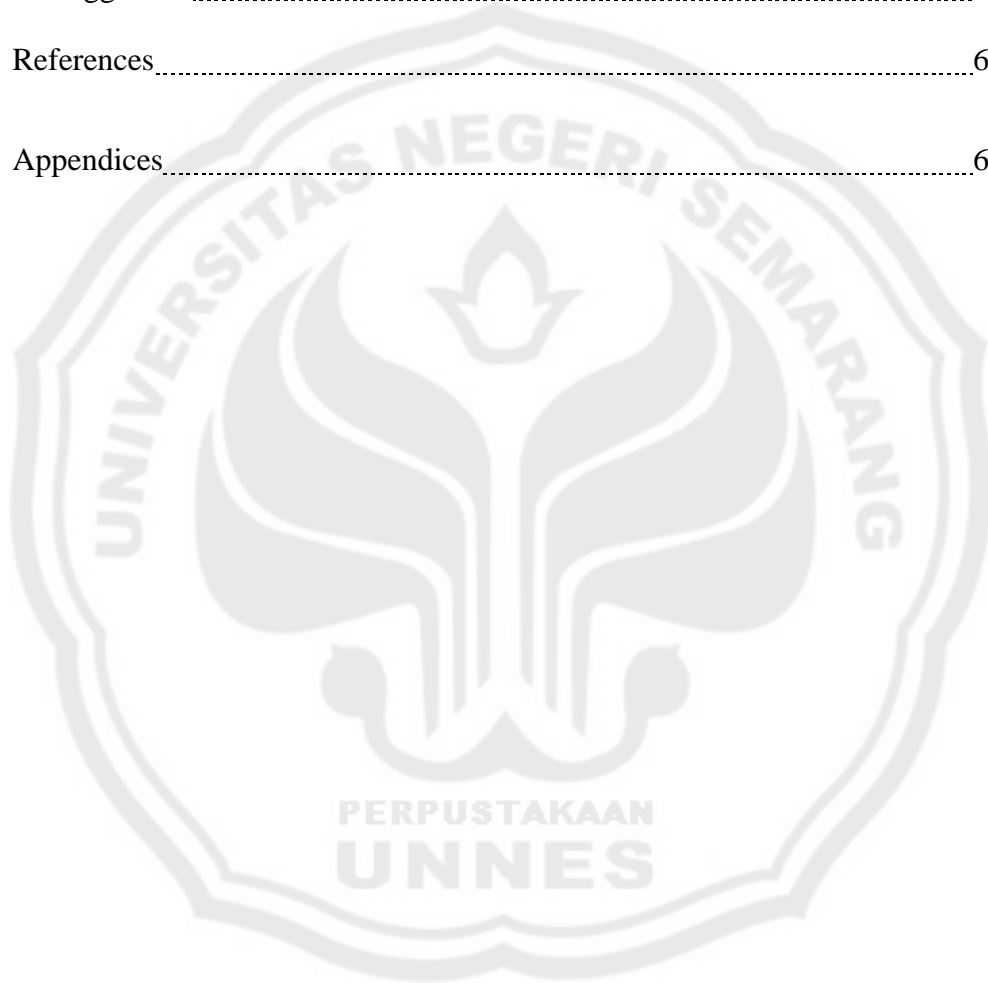
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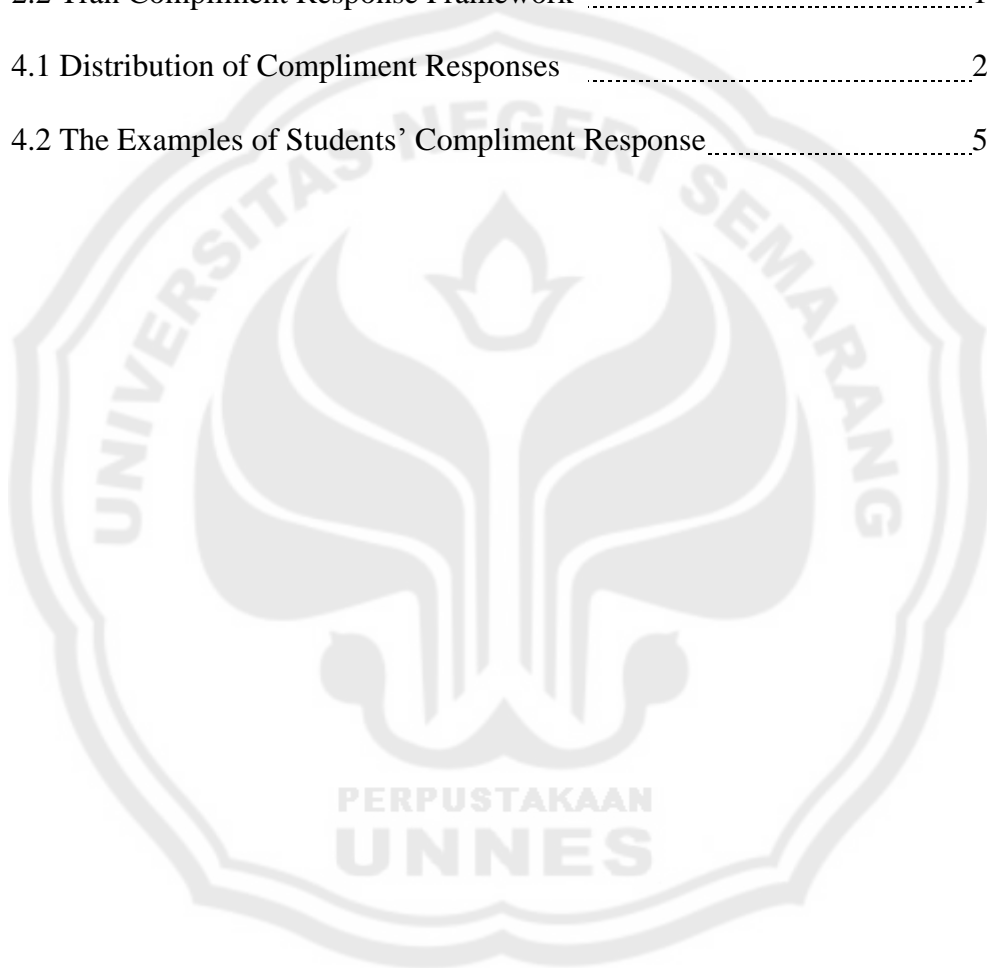
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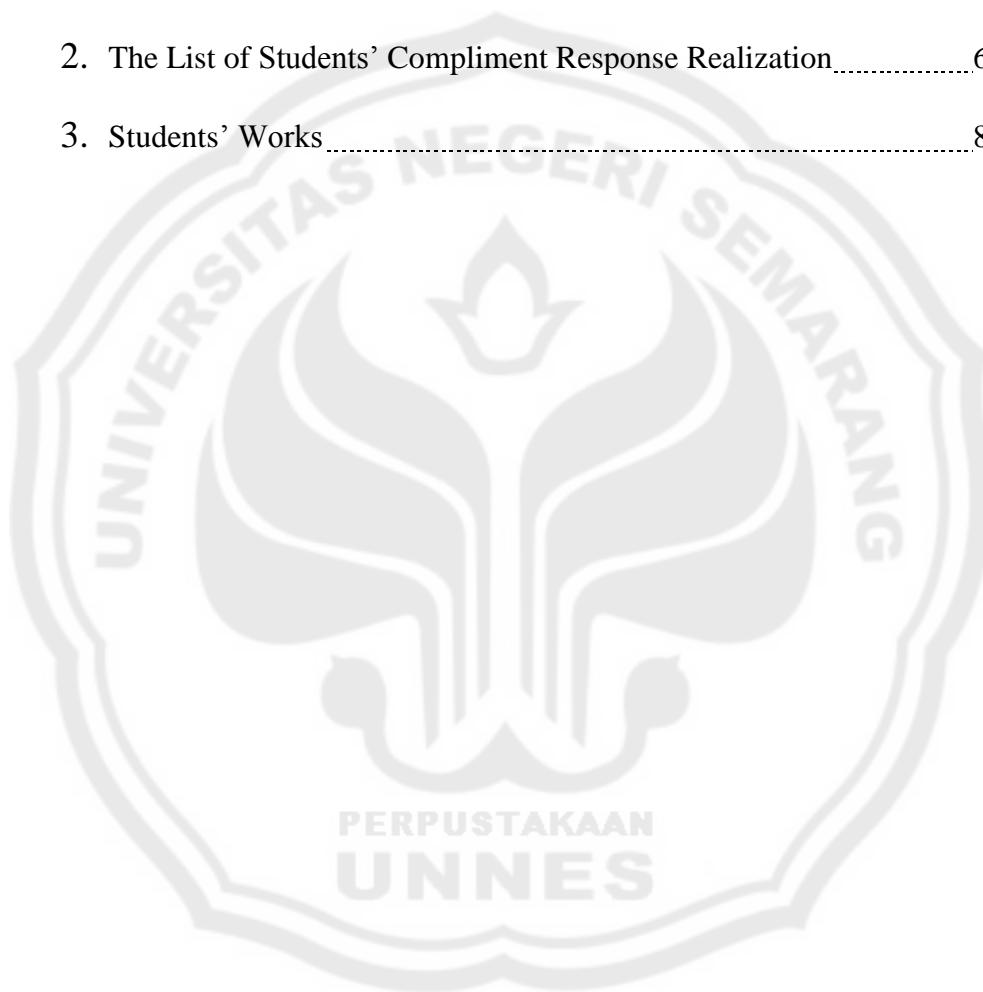
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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, I would like to discuss background of the study, limitation of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and outline of the research report.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Each speech community society has their own characteristics which distinguish with other speech communities, including their interaction. One thing that distinguishes one community with other communities is their language behaviour. Language behaviour of each community has their own rules and norms. To understand communication between one community with other communities, their rules and norms, we need a sociolinguistic study to understand and comprehend communication. Holmes (2001) as quoted by Mukminatien and Patriana (2005) explains that, “sociolinguistic studies the relation between language and society. It explains the difference of communication ways between one community with others communities, and also identifies the social function of language and how to use it.”

The expansion of language makes it recognize not only its culture society but also another society which is interacted with its society. The consequence of language

expansion asks the people to interact with other societies by knowing their rules, norm, and culture.

English has been assumed as an international language by people in the world, because it can be used as a means of communication for encountering globalization era, and it makes people in other countries of Great Britain, USA, and Australia recognize the rule or the cultural background of it. It issues the cross cultural understanding study which study about the cultural lives of English culture.

English has been admitted as the first foreign language by the Indonesian government (Nurkamto: 2003). It is proven by government regulation which is issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture No 096/1967, the regulation has explained about the function and the position of English in the national educational system, (1) English is the first foreign language which is taught in high school, (2) The aim of teaching English has been to develop students communicative competence, (3) The skills that hopefully developed are reading, writing, listening and speaking (Halim: 1980) as quoted by (Nurkamto: 2003). Other indication shows Indonesian government supports the development of English teaching, by issuing the permission of using English as the daily language in teaching and learning process in certain school (Hardjoprawiro: 1998) as quoted by (Nurkamto: 2003).

Learning English are followed by learning and understanding its cultures, rules, and norms. It aims, Indonesian students which study English has a comprehensive communicative competence, so their first language (L1) and culture,



in this case Indonesia culture does not clash with English norms and rules as their second language (L2). Indonesian students acquire English as their second language by learning and teaching process, including cultural understanding that influences their L2 acquisition. Second language acquisition is influenced by individual differences. Ellis (1994: 198) explains there are three factors that make differences in acquiring second language acquisition, (1) language aptitude, (2) motivation, (3) learning strategies. One possibility that they can influence operating second language (L2) is they use learning strategies. Learning strategies are the particular approaches or techniques that learners employ to try to learn an L2. They can be behavioural (for example, repeating a new word aloud to help you remember them) or they can be mental (for example, using the linguistic and situational context to infer the meaning of a new word). The study of learning strategies is of potential value to language teacher. If those strategies that are crucial for learning can be identified, it may prove possible to train students to use them.

Generally, Indonesia students which study English often face misperception and misunderstanding of English as the first foreign language. For example there are many clashes done between Indonesian language context rules as the first language (L1), and English language context rules as the second language (L2). The variety of responding utterances or how to understand context spoken in English, for several students, they are still facing a big problem to understand the social context based on English language rules.

This reality also happens to the students of English Department as L2 learners. As long as my investigation in English Department of Semarang State University, the lack of speaking practice makes communication habit between one student and other students is extremely different. Sometimes, misunderstanding happens between them and it makes the intension of speaker cannot deliver correctly. For example, students which have lack of conversation practice and know less about English culture will respond compliment delivered by their friends inappropriately, they do not respond it as required by English habitual conversation, in which English culture use commonly accepting responses. They will use Indonesian conversation paradigm in responding the compliment. We know that the culture of Indonesian people are not familiar with responding compliment by saying "*Thank you,*" or others as their culture representation. We are familiar with "*Ah biasa saja*", or "*Jangan berlebihan*" in responding all compliments which is completely different with English culture. Herbert (1989) as quoted by Tran (2007) classifies categorizes of compliment response into several types. They are (1) Agreement, (2) No agreement, and (3) Request interpretation. The latest categories of compliment responses which proposed by Tran (2007), he categorizes compliment responses types into fifteen types, are (1) Compliment upgrade, (2) Agreement, (3) Agreement token, (4) Appreciation Token, (5) Return, (6) Explanation, (7) Reassignment, (8) Non idiomatic Responses, (9) Compliment downgrade, (10) Disagreement, (11) Disagreement Token, (12) Expressing Gladness, (13) Follow up Question, (14) Doubting, (15) Opting out. From

frame work above, we know that denying or refusing do not representing English habitual conversation.

Based on this study I would like to investigate the English communication habits which develop among English Department students of Semarang State University. However focus of this study is only observing how the students respond to compliment.

## **1.2 Limitation of the Study**

This study is limited for the analysis of compliment response realization made by the students of English Department in their daily academic life. The analysis of the students' responses to compliment is based on speech function offered by Tran (2007).

## **1.3 Reasons for Choosing the Topic**

There are some reasons in choosing the topic of this study. The first reason is because the topic has not been conducted yet by many researchers. Most of the researchers investigate the area of how someone expresses and realizes the compliment to others, and there are still few researchers whose researches about compliment realization and compliment responses even there is no study about it in English Department of Semarang State University.

For Indonesian learners, this topic hopefully can be useful for the development of their language learning system. As we know, there are still many mistakes and errors happen when they do a communication by using English.

The last reason is the topic will promise a valuable contribution for language development especially to know the language variety and pragmatic usage. The result of this study may give some ideas and contribution for communication development made by the students of English Department in doing communication using English as their second language.

#### **1.4 Statements of the Problem**

The problems that would be discussed in this study are:

- (1) How do the students of English Department respond to compliments?
- (2) How are their responses to compliments realized?

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problems stated above, the objectives of this study are to answer the following problems:

- (1) to find out how the students of English Department respond to compliment, and
- (2) to find out how their responses to compliment are realized.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is expected to be useful for me in understanding the compliment response strategies made by the students of English Department. So that I can improve my understanding of the second language acquisition, especially how to respond to compliment appropriately based on English culture.

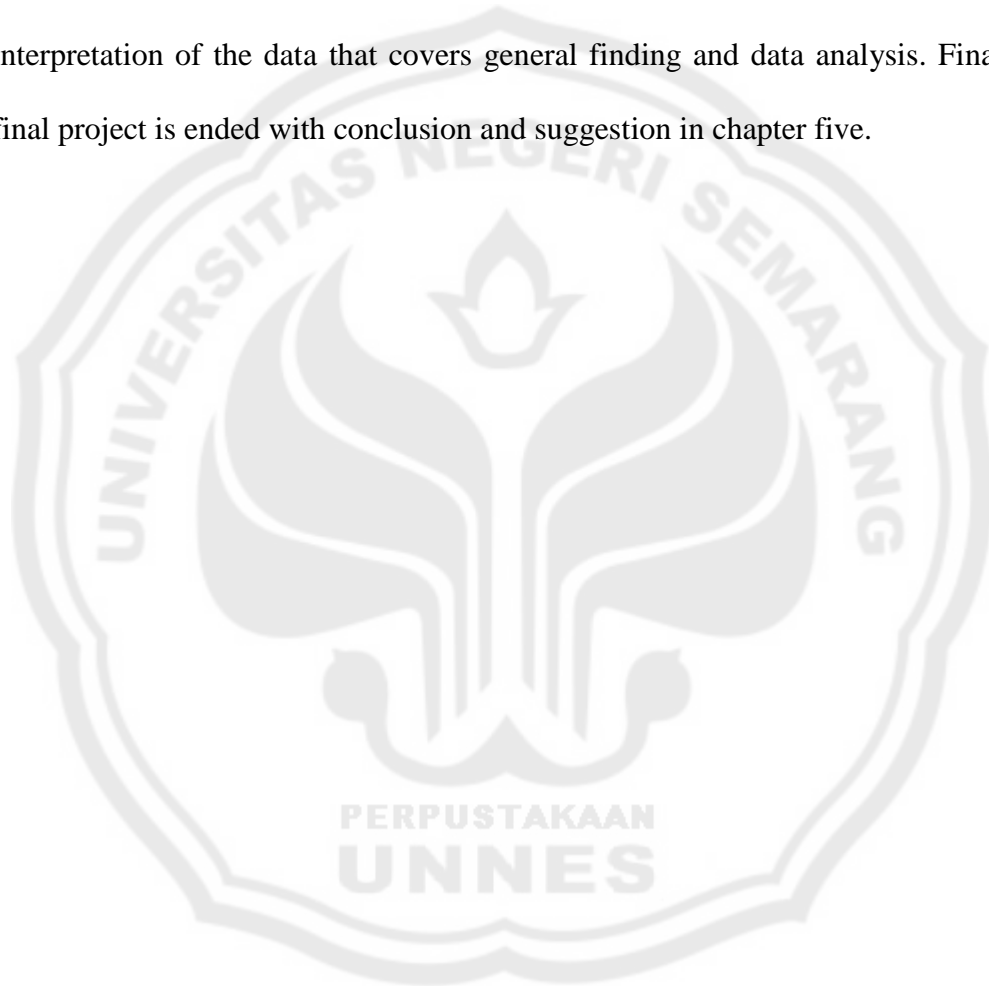
This study deals with the speech act of compliment responses in conversation. Therefore it is hoped that the students of English Department could reflect those speech acts when they communicate in English with their friends and even with native speakers appropriately. Furthermore, they could gain the benefit of communication by knowing the strategies and speech acts used in responding the compliments, in order to avoid misperception and misunderstanding in doing English communication.

For English teachers, this study is supposed to be useful as the reference in teaching English, in term of speaking or writing communicatively, effectively, and appropriately.

## **1.6 Outline of the Research Report**

This research report is organized within five chapters as follows: the first chapter is introduction, which consists of background of the study, limitation of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study and outline of the research report. The second chapter is

review of related literature, which presents reviews of previous studies, theoretical framework of the study, second language acquisition, speech act, compliment theoretical framework. The third chapter is method of investigation that deals with research design, object of the study, role of the researcher, procedure of collecting the data, and procedure of analyzing data. The fourth chapter gives the analysis and interpretation of the data that covers general finding and data analysis. Finally, this final project is ended with conclusion and suggestion in chapter five.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter is concerned reviewing some previous studies which concern with compliment responses used by non-native speakers of English and the literature that is relevant to this study.

#### **2.1 Review of the Previous Study**

Researches toward analyzing students as the second language learners in responding compliment responses are not a new topic of research. A thesis by Al-Khateeb (2009) investigated the speech act of thanking as a compliment response as used by non-native speakers of English. His research participants were Arabic students. The study was an attempt to find whether different cultural backgrounds, specializations, levels of evaluation and the sex of the speakers affect their use of the speech act of thanking as a compliment response.

Another research is conducted by Bu (2010). He offered a hypothesis that culture influences on second language acquisition. He used the naturalized role-play to conduct a research on pragmatic transfer in compliment response strategies by Chinese learners of English. Naturalized role-play is the idea of eliciting spontaneous data in controlled settings. In the naturalized role-play, subjects are aware of being observed and studied in the whole procedure but are not aware of being observed in the moments when they provide spontaneous data

on a communicative act in focus. In his research, he compared the compliment response strategies between the Chinese learners of English and native English groups, and between the Chinese learners of English and native Chinese groups, and he found out there were some differences between non-native speakers of English and native speakers of English in responding to compliment.

Bruti (2006) also did a research about the compliment realization and responses. Her research focused on the strategic function of implicit compliments, aiming to evaluate their contribution to positive and negative politeness and their translation in interlingual subtitles (from English into Italian).

Another research is conducted by Indonesian researcher. Sari (2009) who did a research about Indonesians learning English to respond to English compliments based on the compliment topics (appearance and ability) and social statuses of the addressor (higher, equal, and lower). She used Discourse Completion Test to collect the data. The results of her study show that Indonesians learning English employed various types of compliment responses in responding to the compliments given. Specifically, ten types of compliment responses (appreciation token, comment acceptance, praise upgrade, comment history, reassignment, return, scale down, question, disagreement, and qualification) are categorized on the basis of the taxonomy of compliment responses formulated by Herbert.



## 2.2 Review of the Theoretical Study

In this subchapter I provide some review of the theoretical study which has correlation with this study.

### 2.2.1 Communication

Bienvennu (1967) as quoted by Elleson (1983) states, “Communication is the process of transmitting feelings, attitudes, fact, beliefs and ideas between living beings. While language is primary means of communication encompasses facial expression, silence, gestures, touch, hearing, vision, and all the other non-language symbols and clues used by persons in giving and receiving meaning.” In short, interpersonal communication may include all the means by which individuals influence and understand one another. (<http://www.yourdictionary.com/library/reference/word-definitions/definition-of-communication.html>, accessed at May 13<sup>th</sup>) explains.

“Communication is the process whereby speech, signs or actions transmit information from one person to another. This definition is concise and definitive but doesn’t include all the aspects of communication. There are other definitions, which state that communication involves transmitting information from one party to another. This broader definition doesn’t require that the receiving party obtain a full understanding of the message. Of course, communication is better when both parties understand but it can still exist even without that component.”

An international encyclopedia Wikipedia (2010, at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication_theory), accessed on May 13<sup>th</sup>), states that human communication is understood in various ways by those who identify with the field. This diversity is the result of communication being a relatively young field of study, composed of a very broad constituency of disciplines. It

includes work taken from scholars of Rhetoric, Journalism, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, and Semiotics, among others. Cognate areas include biocommunication, which investigates communicative processes within and among non-humans such as bacteria, animals, fungi and plants, and information theory, which provides a mathematical model for measuring communication within and among systems.”

### **2.2.2 Second Language Acquisition**

Ellis (1994: 180) states that “language plays an institutional and social role in the community (it functions as a recognized means communication among members who speak some other languages as their mother tongues).” For example, foreign language learning takes place in settings where the language plays no major role in the community and is primarily learnt only in the classroom. Examples of foreign language learning are English learnt in France or Japan and Indonesia.

### **2.2.3 Speech Acts**

Wikipedia (2010, at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/speech\\_act\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/speech_act_theory), accessed on June 26<sup>th</sup>) states, “Speech acts are a staple of everyday communicative life, but only become a topic of sustained investigation, at least in the English-speaking world, in the middle of the Twentieth Century. Since that time “speech act theory” has been influential not only within philosophy, but also in linguistics, psychology, legal theory, artificial intelligence, literary theory and many other scholarly disciplines.”

A speech act is an act that a speaker performs when making an utterance, including the following:

- (1) A general act (locutionary act) that a speaker performs, analyzable as including,
- (2) The uttering of words (utterance acts)  
Making reference and predicating (propositional acts), and a particular intention in making the utterance (illocutionary force),
- (3) An act involved in the illocutionary act, including utterance acts and propositional acts, and
- (4) The production of a particular effect in the addressee (perlocutionary act).

Wikipedia (2010, at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/speech\\_act\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/speech_act_theory), accessed on July 26<sup>th</sup>)

#### **2.2.4 Compliment Theoretical Framework**

Compliment is a tool to express approval, and other purposes to show that you like some aspects of other person's appearance, works, achievements, etc. Tillit and Bruder (1985:66) state that "compliment express approval, and their main purpose is to show that you like some aspects of the other person's appearance, belonging or work. This reassures the other person that his or her taste, appearance, etc., is appreciated by other people. Some people use compliments to "butter up" some body, or to flatter in order to increase goodwill. Therefore, overuse of compliments might seem insincere."

#### ***2.2.4.1 Complimentary Language***

Complimentary language is a speech act that caters to positive face needs. Brown and Levinson (1978:62) state that “the positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’ (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactions. Many studies examine complimentary language in relation to gender because of the noticeable differences in compliment topic, explicitness, and response depending on gender of the speaker as well as the gender of the addressee. Analysts use these studies to demonstrate their theories about inherent differences between the genders and the societal impact of gender roles.” Whereas, according to Oxford Advanced Learners’s Dictionary (2005: 234) “compliments have meaning an expression of praise, admiration, approval etc. and this expression is to express the praise or admiration.” A compliment is usually a positive or flattering statement made to or about someone. A compliment is usually about something to do with your appearance, such as clothes, hair etc. It is not the same as praise, which is usually given for something you have achieved. So "You have lovely eyes" is a compliment, while "That was a great presentation you gave" is praise. From the explanation above, compliments is an expression that shows a positive response to ones attitude.

#### ***2.2.4.2 The Compliment Differences***

The statistical results of Wikipedia shows that, on the whole, there existed significant differences between men and women in performing the speech act set. Men and women also showed distinct differences in using compliment response

strategies. These findings suggest that there is a significant relationship between gender and the realization patterns of this speech act set. We argue that females tend to be more polite in performing the speech act set by using more polite strategies because men and women view compliments differently. Wikipedia (2011: at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the\\_compliment\\_differences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_compliment_differences), accessed on July 26<sup>th</sup>)

Men tend to interpret compliments as face threatening acts, whilst women tend to apply them as strategies for maintaining solidarity. Although both males and females have face wants, their sensitivity to face wants is different. These differences can be accounted for from both social and cultural perspectives.

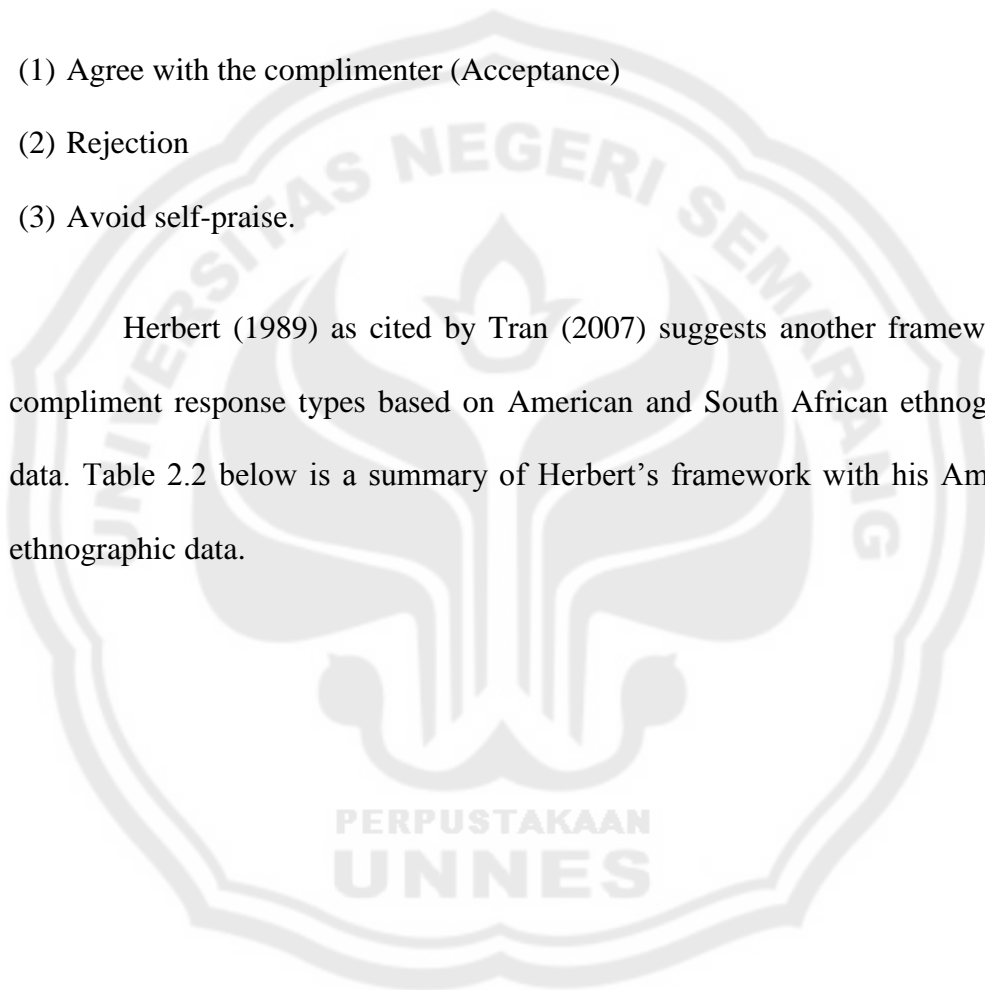
Men and women differ in language use because they often fill different roles in society. Furthermore, education may also contribute to the gender difference in language use. Boys and girls are taught to learn their gender-appropriate linguistic behavior during their childhood. With the development of the society, women's social position has improved a lot. Society shows more and more concern and respect for women. These are reflected in both male and female language use. Wikipedia ((2010: at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the\\_compliment\\_differences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_compliment_differences), accessed on July 26<sup>th</sup>)

### **2.2.4.3 Compliment Responses**

“Complimentary responses are governed by two contradictory conditions that must be met simultaneously,” according to Pomerantz (1978) as quoted by Tran (2007: 2), they are:

- (1) Agree with the complimenter (Acceptance)
- (2) Rejection
- (3) Avoid self-praise.

Herbert (1989) as cited by Tran (2007) suggests another framework of compliment response types based on American and South African ethnographic data. Table 2.2 below is a summary of Herbert’s framework with his American ethnographic data.



**Table 2.2 Herbert Compliment Response Framework**  
(Herbert, 1989 as cited in Tran 2007: 4)

No	Types of Compliment Response	Example
1.	<b>Agreement</b> a. Appreciation token b. Comment acceptance c. Praise upgrade d. Comment history e. Reassignment f. Return	Thanks/thankyou. A: <i>I like your hair long.</i> B: Me too. I'm never getting it cut short again. A: <i>I like your jacket.</i> B: Yeah, it's cool. A: <i>I like that shirt you're wearing.</i> B: You're not the first and you're not the last. A: <i>I love that outfit.</i> B: I got it for the trip to Arizona. A: <i>That's beautiful sweater.</i> B: My brother gave it to me. A: <i>You're funny.</i> B: You're a good audience.
2.	<b>No Agreement</b> a. Scale down b. Disagreement c. Qualification d. Question/Question response e. No acknowledgement	A: <i>That's a nice watch.</i> B: It's all scratched up. I'm getting a new one. A: <i>Nice haircut.</i> B: Yeah, I look like Buster Brown. A: <i>Your haircut is nice.</i> B: It's too short. A: <i>Your portfolio turned out great.</i> B: It's alright, but I want to retake some pictures. A: <i>You must be smart. You did well on the last linguistic test.</i> B: Not really. You did better. A: <i>Nice sweater.</i> B: Do you really think so? A: <i>Nice sweatshirt.</i> B: What's wrong with it? A: <i>That's a beautiful sweater.</i> B: Did you finish the assignment today?
3.	<b>Request Interpretation</b>	A: <i>I like your shirt.</i> B: You want to borrow this one too?

Tran (2007: 4) states that “The frameworks of compliment response categorization by Pomerantz (1978) and Herbert (1989) have been widely used with or without adaptation. Furthermore, Tran (2007: 4) give an example in order to contrast compliment responses by British and Spanish students, Lorenzo Dus (2001) adopted Herbert (1989) taxonomy but used only following compliment response types: compliment acceptance, comment history, return, praise upgrade and reassignments.

#### ***2.2.4.4 Continua of Compliment Response Strategies***

Based on the framework of Herbert (1989) and Pomerantz (1978) in analyzing compliment response and his research, Tran (2007) offers the Continua of Compliment Response Strategies. This new framework consists of two continua of compliment response strategies: a continuum of compliment response strategies from acceptance to denial strategies and continuum of avoidance strategies (Tran, 2007:7).

Tran (2007) also gives a reason why this new framework should be proposed. First, previous studies about compliment response have suggested various framework of compliment response categories such as Herbert (1989), Pomerantz (1978), Al Khatib (2001), Gajaseni (1994), Golato (2002), Saito and Beecken (1997). None of these categorization framework could be analyzed Tran (2007) research in Australian English and Vietnamese. Second, his research indicates that compliment response strategies are not separated but connect with one another and form a continuum.



**Table 2.3 Tran Compliment Response Framework (Tran, 2007: 8)**

No	Types of Responses	Example
1.	<b>The Acceptance to Denial Continuum</b> a. Compliment upgrade  b. Agreement  c. Agreement token  d. Appreciation token  e. Return  f. Explanation/ Comment history  g. Reassignment  h. Non idiomatic response  i. Compliment downgrade  j. Disagreement  k. Disagreement token	A: Nice car. B: Thanks. Brand new.  A: I like your car. It's very good. B: Oh yeah. Thanks, it's not bad.  A: It's really stylist. B: Yeah.  A: What a lovely dress! B: Oh, thank you, thank you.  A: You're looking good today. B: Thanks, so are you.  A: I like your tie. It suits you well. B: Thanks. Mom bought it for me. She likes to buy me nice ties now and again.  A: You look good today. B: Oh, thanks. It must be the jacket.  A: I like your car. Cute looking car. B: Uh. That's OK (nothing special).  A: It's a nice car. I really like it. B: Well, it's just a normal and not very reliable car.  A: Hey, I like your tie. It suits you very well. B: I don't think so.  A: Oh you're looking well. B: Uhm. No.
2.	<b>The Avoidance Continuum</b> a. Expressing gladness  b. Follow up question  c. (Doubting) Question  d. Opting out	A: I read that article you published last week it was very good. B: Well, great.  A: You know, I just read your article last week. I thought it was excellent. B: Thanks a lot. What do you find interesting about it?  A: You're looking very nice tonight. B: Really?  A: I was reading your article. It's good. B: Hmm. A: Oh your car is very luxurious. I want to buy it by the way. B: He he he.

#### 2.2.4.5 *Opposite Gender Compliments*

Studies that use data from American interactions show that male-female compliments are significantly more frequent than female-male compliments, following the general pattern that women receive the most compliments overall, whether from other women or from men. “Much attention has been given to the pronounced difference in compliment topic in male-female versus female-male compliments.” Wikipedia (2011: at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/opposite-gender-compliment#>. accessed on July 26<sup>th</sup>). A particular study done on a college campus found that males gave females almost twice (52%) as many compliments on physical appearance as females gave males (26%). This tendency to praise physical attractiveness (as opposed to “skill, possession, etc.”) was attributed to several theories:

- (1) Females were more vary of giving compliments, especially those regarding physical appearance, for fear of being interpreted as too forward and romantically assertive.
- (2) Alternately, since American males are expected to be relatively more forward, they readily gave more obvious compliments. Male initiation of romantic relations is more socially acceptable, so a misinterpreted compliment would not be viewed as unnatural.
- (3) Males are less accustomed to respond to or expect admiration related to physical appearance that is *not* an expression of romantic interest. This is attributed to the relative rarity of the sincere male-male compliment in comparison to the near-ubiquitous female-female compliment.

- (4) There is an expectation among both genders that females place greater significance on physical appearance than do males, and would therefore be more likely to give and receive compliments based on this quality.
- (5) An additional explanation from Wolfsonposits that in the “American pattern”, since men rarely give/receive appearance-related compliments from other men and rarely receive appearance-related compliments from women, the topic of physical attractiveness is not an appropriate topic for compliments from either men or women. She notes that such compliments only occur when the male is much younger than the female.

#### **2.2.4.6 Same Gender Compliments**

Compliment patterns appear to be quite different when the complimenter and complimentee are the same gender from when they are different genders, and differences between males and females still arise even within same-gender interactions. In data from New Zealand, it was noted that women tended to compliment each other considerably more often than men complimented each other. This statistic is reflected in further data that showed that women gave two-thirds of the recorded compliments and received three-quarters of them. “Compliments between men comprised a mere 9 percent of the data. Similar patterns have been noted in studies of English speakers from other regions as well.” Wikipedia (2011, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/same-gender-compliment#>. accessed on July 26<sup>th</sup>).

#### 2.2.4.7 How to Compliments

Everybody has their own styles and intends. And to what purpose of compliment, also effect how they realize the compliment. (Tillit and Bruder, 1985: 69) states “There are three ways to give a compliment: by saying something nice about the object, by asking how the person made it or where it was bought (but not how much it cost), or by asking for another look or another serving, if it is food.

#### 2.2.4.8 Replying to Compliments

Generally, people reply to compliments in two basic ways, accepting compliments and rejecting them. Accepting a compliment is sometimes more difficult than paying one (Keller, 1988: 84). According to Tillit and Bruder’s (1985: 69), there are two basic ways of replying to compliments: accepting them and rejecting them. In most cases, it is best to accept the compliment. To do this, you can either thank the person or explain something about the thing being complimented, or you can return the compliment by giving the other person a similar compliment.” When accepting the compliment, the dialogue might go like this: The following expressions are example offered by Tillit and Bruder (1985: 69)

Al : *That’s a beautiful dress you have on!*  
 Gay : *Oh, thank you. I just got it yesterday.*

When returning the compliment, it might go like this,

Tillit and Bruder (1985: 69):

Alice : *I just love your hair that way! Did you do it yourself?*  
 Juanita : *Oh, thanks. Yes, I did. Isn’t yours a new cut, too?*  
 Alice : *Yes, it is. Thanks.*

In certain cases, you may accept the compliment but deny what the person has said to compliment you. Some people do this to appear modest,

(Tillit and Bruder 1985: 69):

- (1) Friend : *That was a great dinner. You must have spent all day cooking.*  
You : *Thanks. But it really only took one hour.*
- (2) Friend : *Wow, this is really a nice place!*  
You : *Aw, thanks, but it's really nothing great.*



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

In this research, the method of investigation is divided into five sections: research design, object of the study, role of the researcher, type of data, procedure of collecting data, and procedure of analyzing data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This research deals with qualitative study. It analyzes the responses of English Department students toward compliment given in general. Ramos (1989) described three types of problems that may affect qualitative studies: the researcher/participant relationship, the researcher's subjective interpretations of data, and the design itself. In this final project, I will have description, analysis, and interpretation on compliment responses made by Indonesian students of English Department of Semarang State University

#### **3.2 Object of the Study**

The participants of this study are the students of English Department of Semarang State University and their compliment responses.

#### **3.3 Role of the Researcher**

In this research, I observed, collected, classified, analyzed and interpreted the data. In the observation section, I observed the attitude and the habit of English

students in their academic daily communication such as how they respond to compliment given by their friends or their lecturer, how to express and give compliment, how to say thank you, etc. Then, I collected the data of the student compliment responses by using Discourse Completion Test. After that, I classified and organized the data in the form of table. The last, based on the data description, the data were analyzed and interpreted.

### **3.4 Type of Data**

The type of data in this study was the result of Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which was given to some students that categorized into three groups, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> semester. The DCT consisted of ten scenarios described the different situation and compliment given. Then the students had to give responses to the compliment given based on each situation described.

### **3.5 Procedure of Collecting Data**

The steps in collecting data are as follows:

- (1) Collecting the data was done by giving the DCT into three groups of students of English Department. They are freshmen or 2<sup>nd</sup> semester students, 4<sup>th</sup> semester students, and 6<sup>th</sup> semester students.
- (2) Transferring the data compiled into the table description.
- (3) Identifying the classification of compliment responses according to Compliment Response Framework offered by Tran (2007).
- (4) Analyzing and interpreting the data.

### 3.6 Procedure of Analyzing Data

In a qualitative research, Myers (2002) as quoted by Yuliati (2008) states that “analysis begins when the data is first collected and is used to guide decisions related to further data collection.” In this study I analyzed the data by using processes of Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking offered by Seidel (1998). The purpose of using this model of analysis is to simplify the complex factual analysis.

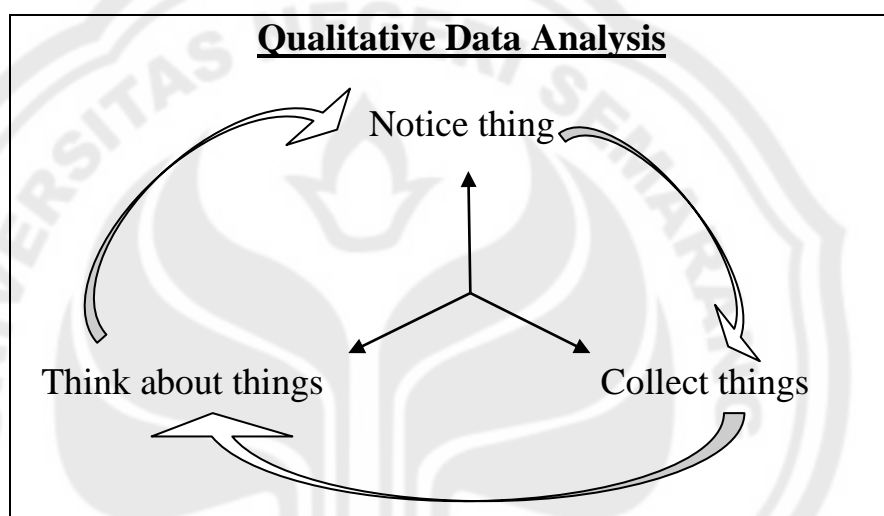


Figure 3.1 The Data Analysis Process (Seidel, 1998: 2)

#### 3.6.1 Notice Things

According to Seidel (1998: 2) on a general level, “noticing means making observations, writing field notes, tape recording interviews, gathering documents, etc. Coding data is a simple process that everyone already knows how to do. For example, when you read a book, underline or highlight passages, and make margin notes you are “coding” that book.” In this first step, I started the analysis by noticing all the results of my observation, such as how the students respond the



compliment, and how their compliment responses are realized. After that, I noted the results of discourse completion test which had been given to the students of English Department in the form of table which describes the types of compliment responses and how they are realized.

### **3.6.2 Collect Things**

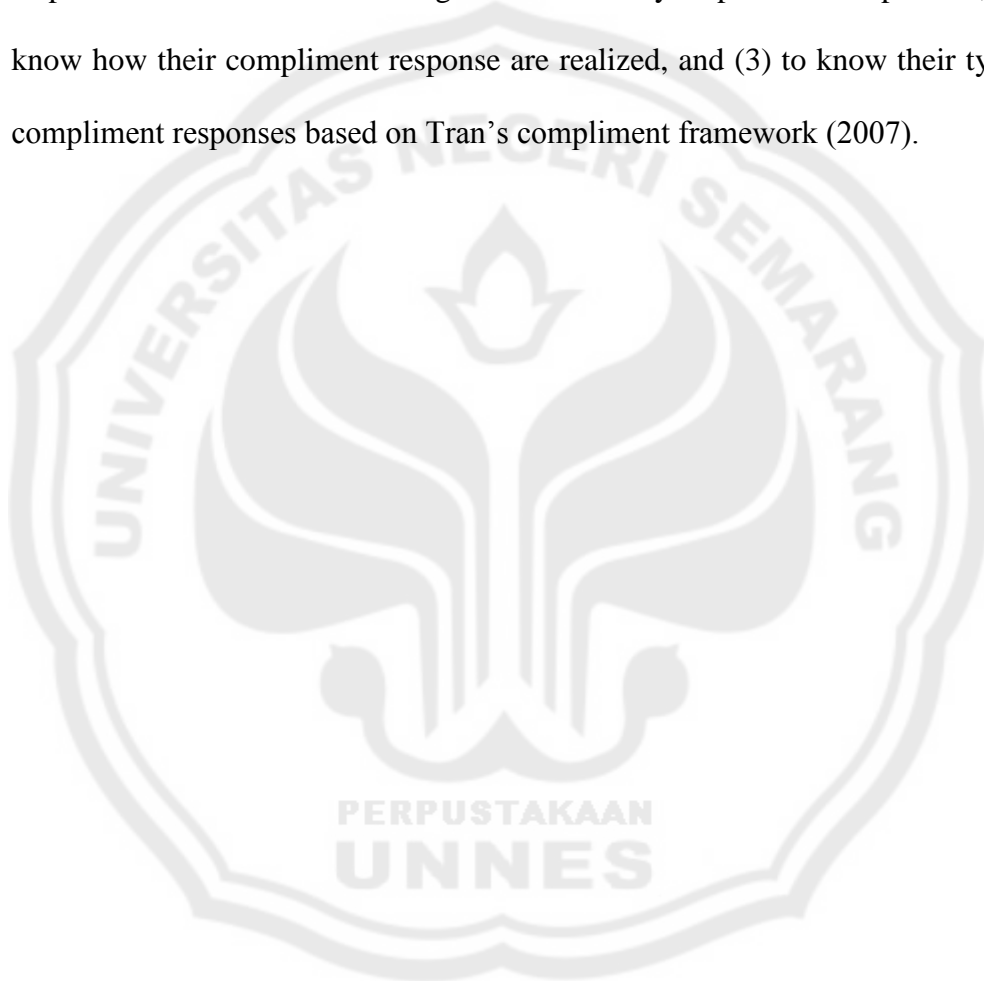
Jorgensen (1989) as quoted by Seidel (1998: 3) states that “analysis is a breaking up, separating, or disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements, or units. With facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data in a meaningful or comprehensible fashion.” Charmaz (1983) as quoted by Seidel (1998: 3) states, “Codes serve to summarize, synthesize, and sort many observations made of the data coding becomes the fundamental means of developing the analysis. Researchers use codes to pull together and categorize a series of otherwise discrete events, statements, and observations which they identify in the data.” Based on these statements, I sorted and shifted the data compliment response based on their classification of ten scenarios offered in DCT form.

### **3.6.3 Think about Things**

Seidel (1998: 5) states that “in the thinking process you examine the things that you have collected. Your goals are: (1) to make some types of sense out of each collection, (2) look for patterns and relationships both within a collection, and also

across collections, and (3) to make general discoveries about the phenomena you are researching.”

In this step, I examined the discourse completion test (DCT) result that I had collected. The goals of this process are: (1) to know how the English Department students of Semarang State University respond to compliment, (2) to know how their compliment response are realized, and (3) to know their types of compliment responses based on Tran’s compliment framework (2007).



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Chapter four is designed to answer the research questions through the data analysis. As stated in the previous chapter that the goal of this study is to find out how the students respond the compliment, and how their compliment responses are realized. I present the result of analysis of compliment response realization based on Compliment Response Framework offered by Tran (2007). The Discourse Completion Test I used to collect the data in this research provides ten situations of compliment which each of situation has difference responses. The data of this study are marked by bold italic written.

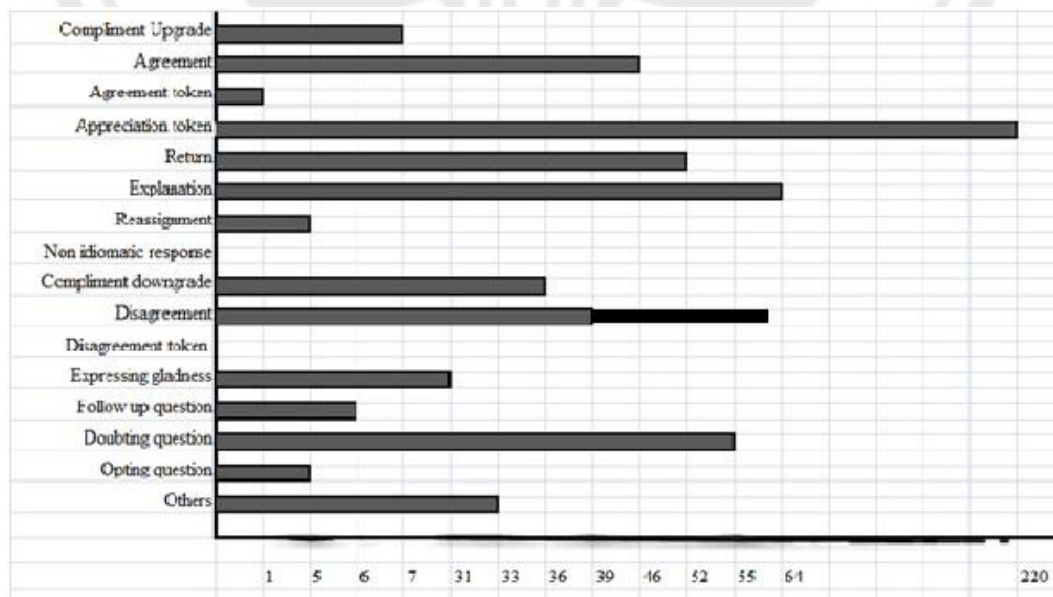
#### **4.1 Types of Compliment Responses**

Based on my analysis the students of English Department have realized the compliment responses according to Tran's framework of compliment responses. There are fifteen types of compliment responses offered by Tran (2007), and the students of English Department respond the compliment mostly eligible with Tran's compliment response framework (2007). There are two types of compliment responses that were not realized by the students of English Department in responding the compliment given. They are non idiomatic response and disagreement token. The table below shows the distribution of compliment responses for each situation given.

**Table. 4.1 Distribution of Compliment Responses**

Types of Compliment Responses	Compliment Response Realization										Total
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	
<b>A. The Acceptance to Denial Continuum</b>											
1. Comp. Upgrade				1			5			1	7
2. Agreement	2	2	2	2	6	5	12	5	5	5	46
3. Agreement Token				26	1						1
4. Appreciation Token	47	19	15	8	23	21	12	42	5	10	220
5. Return	5	8	7	2	12	5	6	1			52
6. Explanation	2	8	7	1	4	5	6	3	22	5	64
7. Reassignment							4				5
8. Non Idiomatic Responses											
9. Compliment Downgrade	1	1	12	3	6	4	4	3	5		36
10. Disagreement		3	8		4	4	4		18	18	59
11. Disagreement Token											
<b>B. The Avoidance Continuum</b>				6							
12. Expressing Gladness	1			2	3	2	2	4	3	10	31
13. Follow Up Question		2	2	9							6
14. Doubting Question	2	17	7		1	13	5	1			55
15. Opting Out						1		1	1	2	5
<b>C. Other Responses</b>									1	22	23
<b>Total</b>	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	600

The students of English Department mostly use appreciation token, explanation, and doubting question in responding compliment. The result is shown in this frequency of responding compliment bar.

**Figure 4.1 Frequency of Responding Compliment Bar.**

#### **4.1.1 The Most Common Compliment Response Used**

The most common compliment response used by the students of English Department is appreciation token response type. From 60 participants who filled up the DCT which consisted of ten scenarios, there were 600 responses totally, and there were 220 participants responded the compliment by using expression “*Thank you*”; “*Thanks so much*”, “*Thanks a lot*”, “*Thanks a million*”, “*Thanks a bunch*”, etc.

#### **4.1.2 The Least Common Compliment Response Used**

The less common compliment response used by the students of English Department is agreement token. There was only one participant who gave an agreement token in responding the compliment. It was “*Yeah.*” Most of the participants from the data provided, expressed their agreement expression by using agreement response, such as; “*Of course, I am*”, “*This is my style*”, “*That’s right*”, “*Yes, this is*”, etc. Agreement response framework offered by Tran (2007) is slightly different with agreement token response, but it has the same meaning.

#### **4.1.3 Other Compliment Responses**

The types of compliment responses which do not fit with Tran’s compliment response framework (2007), were also realized by some of the students, such as; “*You’re welcome*”, “*Maybe*”, and “*Oh, it just regional, not international.*”

In situation number ten in DCT, there were some students had misperception and misunderstanding in responding the compliment given by the

lecturer. 23 participants from 60 students responded the compliment by expressing their gratitude. They responded the compliment by saying “*You’re welcome.*”

## 4.2 Compliment Response Realization

To answer the second problem, firstly, I referred to the data presented in Appendix 3 which consists of 60 data. Then I exposed them into the table, and described the types of responses from each compliment situation given. The italic words in each situation represent the compliment response strategy realized by the participants. A represents the complimenter and B the complimentee.

### 4.2.1 Compliment Upgrade

Example,           C: “*Nice car.*”  
                           R: “*Thanks. Brand new.*”

This compliment response type was used by the participant in responding the compliment in situation 4, 7, 10. The number of this response is 7 participant responses. The following data are the examples of their response.

#### a. Situation 4

You have just got a hair cut. Your male friend compliments it.

A: *What a nice hair cut. It looks good on you!*

B: *I look fresh with my new hair style.*

#### b. Situation 7

You are having a discussion about Cross Cultural Understanding with a female classmate, and she looks impressed.

C: *Wow! You really know a lot about it. I can learn a lot from you.*

A: *“Oh yeah, of course you can.”*

*“Don’t worry, we can learn together.”*

**c. Situation 10**

In a class you are attending, the lecturer keeps coughing while she/he is talking. You fetch her/him a glass of water from the office.

*C: Thank you very much. How thoughtful you are.*

*R: "Anytime."*

**4.2.2 Agreement**

Example, *C: "Hey you're looking really well today."*

*R: "Yeah, Thanks. That's correct."*

This compliment response types was used by the participant in responding the compliment in situation all situation given. The number of this response is 46 participant responses. The following data are the examples of their response.

**a. Situation 1**

Your lecturer compliments your class presentation

*C: Great, Well done!*

*R: "It is like my wish."*

**b. Situation 2**

You are wearing a pair of shoes to campus. You meet your girl/boyfriend. He/She compliments to you.

*C: Honey, those are good on you!*

*R: "Yeah, thanks."*

**c. Situation 3**

You are the only student who got a straight A in your academic writing class. Your classmate congratulates you.

*C: I've never met someone who knows as much as you do about academic writing.*

*R: "That's right."*

**d. Situation 4**

You have just got a hair cut. Your male friend compliments it.

*C: What a nice hair cut. It looks good on you!*

*R: "Sure, thank you."*

**e. Situation 5**

You just won the regional speech contest. Your classmate congratulates you.

*C: It's nice to have a friend that is good on public speaking.*

*R: "Of course, thanks."*























































































































