

A Gender Pragmatic Analysis of Compliment Responses among BS in Tourism Management Students in Visayas State University

Daisy Mae Catubigan, Joseph E. Padilla, Corazon A. Padilla
Department of Arts, Languages, and Literature
Visayas State University
Visca, Baybay City, Leyte, Philippines

Abstract

Research on compliments and compliment responses (CRs) has largely focused on cross-cultural perspectives. However, few studies have examined gender differences in CRs in the Philippine context, particularly in the Visayas region. Thus, this study aimed to identify the compliment response strategies employed by BS in Tourism Management students at Visayas State University, to determine gender-based differences across specific contexts, and to analyze the influence of genderlect on these CRs. Data were gathered using a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) adapted from Mascuñana, Patron, Caturay, and Duran (2019), and the responses were analyzed using Holmes' (1986, 1988, 1993) CRs strategy framework, while Tannen's (1990) genderlect theory guided the interpretation of gender norms. Findings revealed that Tourism students most frequently employed the 'Accept' strategy, followed by 'Evade', while 'Reject' was the least preferred, indicating differences at the micro-level. Additionally, gender-based analysis showed that female participants predominantly used 'Accept' strategies across topics such as appearance, character, ability, and possession, whereas male participants favored 'Evade' strategies. These differences somewhat align with Tannen's genderlect theory, which suggests that female speakers tend to engage in 'rapport talk' by expressing agreement and emotional connection. In contrast, males tend to engage in 'report talk,' using conversation primarily to convey information and assert status when interacting with peers (friends or classmates). This suggests that male and female conversational styles may vary depending on the interaction's function, context, and social dynamics. This study provides insights into gendered communication patterns that tourism educators and professionals can use to enhance students' soft skills in responding to compliments. It also contributes to a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of gendered communication, fostering effective interpersonal interactions in diverse social contexts, particularly during compliment exchanges.

Keywords: Compliment Responses (CRs), Compliment Responses Strategies, Gender

Introduction

A person's language is heavily influenced by one's culture, norms, and social roles. When individuals communicate, they must consider the appropriate language for the context, which serves different functions and purposes, such as building connections or sharing information with others. One way that this manifests in real-life settings is compliments. Compliment as an expressive speech act refers to the speaker's positive evaluation of someone's appearance, actions, or qualities. It is a common feature of everyday conversation. It can serve as a phatic expression (a conversational opener) to establish or strengthen social connections, particularly between individuals of equal or higher social status (Tang & Zhang, 2009; Slavianova, 2011).

When someone receives a compliment, they are generally expected to respond, a phenomenon known as a compliment response (CR). Although compliments are typically recognized as positive affective speech acts, they can sometimes function as face-threatening acts (FTAs) in certain cultural contexts (Holmes, 1988). Hence, to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding, compliment responses (CRs) are "worth studying because, like all speech acts, they can show us the rules of language use in a speech community" (Yuan, 2001, p. 273). The study of CRs has garnered attention in pragmatics due to its role in reflecting social norms, politeness, and cultural values. In the Philippines, where complex cultural dynamics shape language and social interactions, CRs reflect societal expectations of politeness and respect. Studies by Mojica (2002) and Morales (2012) have examined CR strategies among Filipino speakers, finding that Filipino respondents often employ modesty and humility in their responses, aligning with Filipino cultural values. However, despite these insights, there remains limited research specifically examining how gender differences influence CR strategies within the Visayas (Mojica, 2002; Morales, 2012; Albis, 2016) and within specific fields, such as tourism.

English, spoken as the second language in the Philippines, is used across various sectors, including education, government, business, and tourism. Tourism plays a vital role in the country's economy, cultural exchange, and community development. Tourism students, as future service providers, must develop strong communication skills, cultural awareness, and customer service competence to interact effectively with international

and domestic visitors (Suyunovna, 2023). According to Giannotti (2019), hospitality professionals must also go beyond basic politeness and demonstrate emotional intelligence to build genuine connections with guests. Thus, students must learn to handle interactions thoughtfully, including giving and responding to compliments appropriately, to deliver high-quality service.

This study aimed to fill a gap by identifying the compliment response strategies employed by BS in Tourism Management students at Visayas State University, determining gender-based differences in CRs across specific contexts, and examining the influence of genderlect on the use of these responses. By concentrating on this group, this study contributed to a deeper understanding of CRs' use in the Philippine setting, particularly within professional and academic environments where interpersonal communication skills are crucial. Data collection was conducted through written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) to examine CRs in specific contexts or scenarios. Holmes's (1986, 1988, 1993) framework of CRs strategies was used to analyze these responses, while Tannen's (1990) theory of genderlect was applied to test whether gender norms influence these strategies. This approach provides a structured framework for understanding how Filipino tourism students manage face, maintain social harmony, and navigate politeness in gender-specific ways in certain contexts.

Review of Literature

The following review presents the theoretical framework utilized in this study. Searle's (1979) categorization of compliment responses as expressive illocutionary speech acts served as the study's linguistic foundation; Holmes' (1986, 1988, 1993) CRs strategy framework provided a categorization of compliment responses; and Tannen's (1990) genderlect theory guided the interpretation of gender norms.

Compliments and Speech Acts

The study of compliments began in the late 1970s and early 1980s when researchers in linguistics and pragmatics concentrated more on speech act behaviors, including those associated with apologies, requests, recommendations, compliments, and compliment responses (Bibi & Sartini, 2023). According to Holmes (1998), compliment is "a speech act, which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic,

skill, etc.), which the speaker and hearer positively value" (p. 446). Moreover, when someone receives a compliment, a response referred to as a compliment response (CR) is typically expected. A CR is the expression used by the recipient in reaction to the praise they receive, depending on the social relationship between the individuals (Xu & Zhang, 2024). Through compliments, individuals maintain social relations and promote solidarity. Hence, the main function of both acts is that they are frequently used as speech acts in everyday language (Bibi & Sartini, 2023), and they play an important role as positive politeness strategies to create solidarity between speakers (Holmes, 1988). However, while compliments serve to maintain interpersonal relationships, conflicts in responses may arise when people do not understand each other's speech conventions, leading to misunderstandings of each other's socio-linguistic communication (Tang & Zhang, 2009), as such, understanding how language functions, particularly this kind of speech acts, in social contexts is essential to avoid miscommunication that could impact individual social relationships.

Speech acts, a concept introduced by Oxford philosopher J.L. Austin (1962) in "How to Do Things with Words" and further developed by American philosopher John Searle, refer to how words are used not only to present information but also to perform actions (Nordquist, 2020). Austin's (1962) classification of speech acts was thoroughly examined and greatly improved by his student John Searle. In Searle's book *Expression and Meaning* (1979), Searle proposed five taxonomies of illocutionary acts, namely, representatives or assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. From this category, expressives are speech acts that convey the speaker's psychological state, such as emotions, attitudes, and likes and dislikes, toward a particular situation. They have no direction of fit, and the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed. This means that an expressive act communicates how the speaker feels about something that both the speaker and the listener assume to be true. It serves solely to reveal the speaker's internal psychological state, without aiming to describe or influence the external world. Paradigmatic examples include apologizing, congratulating, thanking, and praising.

Meanwhile, Searle did not explicitly state in his writing that compliments and compliment responses belong to the category of expressives. However, they can be considered expressives based on their alignment with this definition. Prominent scholars who study the said topic, such as Janet Holmes, build on this concept.

Holmes' CRs Strategies (1986, 1988, 1993)

Janet Holmes (1986), a prominent New Zealand sociolinguist, studied the functions of compliments and compliment responses (CRs) among New Zealand students. According to Holmes, compliments are most commonly analyzed and described in terms of their linguistic patterns, including syntactic and lexical features (e.g., I (INT) LIKE NP; I love that skirt). However, she emphasized that “the most illuminating analysis of compliment responses is undoubtedly semantic or functional” (p. 491),

Table 1

Compliment Response Strategies Based on Holmes' Framework

Macro-level CRs	Micro-level CRs	Examples from Holmes' Study
Accept	Appreciation token	“Thanks”; “Thank you”; “Cheers”; “Yes”; “Good”.
	Agreeing utterance	“I know”, “I am glad you think so”; “I did realize I did that well”; “Yeah, I really like it.”
	Downgrading/ qualifying	“It’s nothing”; “It was no problem”; “I enjoyed doing it; “I hope it was ok”; “I still only use it to call people; “It’s not bad.”
	Return compliment	“You’re not too bad yourself”; “Your child was an angel”; “I’m sure you will be great”; “Yours was good too”
Reject	Disagreeing utterance	“Nah, I don’t think so”; “I thought I did it badly”; “Nah, it’s nothing special”; “It’s not”; “Don’t say so.”
	Question accuracy	“Why?”; “Is it right?”; “Really?”
	Challenge sincerity	“Stop lying”; “Don’t lie”; “Don’t joke about it”; “You must be kidding”; “Don’t, come on”
Evade	Shift credit	“That’s what friends are for”; “You’re polite”; “No worries”; “My pleasure.”
	Informative comment	“It wasn’t hard”; “You can get it from [store name]”; “It’s really cheap.”
	Request reassurance	“Really?”

focusing on their meaning and purpose. Based on her research, which centered on the credit-attribution component of compliments and was influenced by Pomerantz’s (1978) categorization of CR strategies, Holmes refined and developed her own framework of compliment response strategies. She proposed three macro-level CRs strategies, which are Accept, Reject, and Deflect or Evade, with 10 micro-level CRs strategies.

According to her, responses may explicitly or implicitly accept the credit attributed given in a compliment. The first macro-level strategy, Accept, has four subcategories: (1) Appreciation or Agreement token, refers to the most explicit way of expressing acceptance—appreciation token include like “thanks” and “agreement token” is introduced to cover terms like, “mm”, “yes”, “yea”, “right”; (2) Agreeing utterances, are compliments that the addressee directly accept the credit for the positive quality mentioned; (3) Downgrading/qualifying, implicitly accept some of the credit attributed; and (4) Return compliment, implicitly indicates that the recipient agrees with the content and accepts credit for the positive evaluation while returning the compliment to the complimenter (p. 493).

In contrast, the Reject category includes responses that the addressee does not agree with the complimenter. These are divided into three subcategories: (1) Disagreeing utterance, which explicitly disagrees with the compliment; (2) Question accuracy, where the recipient queries the validity of the compliment, implying disagreement; and (3) Challenging sincerity, where the recipient questions the sincerity or intent of the compliment.

The third macro-level strategy, Deflect/Evade, is, according to Holmes, the most interesting category. It involves responses that avoid directly accepting or rejecting the compliment and includes five subcategories, although only three are discussed in this paper, as they are commonly referenced in other studies (Razi, 2013; Mascuñana et al., 2019). These are: (1) Shift credit, where the recipient deflects the compliment by attributing credit elsewhere or by evading acknowledgment of the positive affect expressed by the complimenter; (2) Informative comment, where the recipient acknowledges the context but ignores the positive sentiment expressed in the compliment; and (3) Request reassurance, where the recipient asks the complimenter to confirm or repeat the compliment, implying modesty but risking being perceived as questioning the sincerity of the compliment.

Building on this framework, the data she gathered led her to analyze the study from a different perspective. Employing her framework of CR strategies, she identified how men and women exhibit different patterns in giving and responding to compliments (Holmes, 1988). In relation to this study, Holmes’ (1986) CR strategy framework will be used to analyze the compliment response strategies employed by BS Tourism Management students and to examine whether there are differences in how male and female students respond to compliments across specific contexts.

Genderlect Theory

Deborah Tannen is a prominent sociolinguist known for her contributions to the study of gendered communication. In her book, "You Just Don't Understand" (1990), she states that "male-female conversation is cross-cultural communication." This statement suggests that men and women have distinct conversational styles that often lead to misunderstandings due to the differing cultural norms or "speech communities" they grow up in (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, n.d.). Each gender has its own set of rules and expectations for communication, and these differences create challenges similar to those experienced between individuals from different cultures. Thus, their conversations may result in misunderstandings during interactions. Tannen's cross-cultural approach to gender differences departs from much feminist scholarship, which claims that conversations between men and women reflect men's efforts to dominate women (Griffin et al., n.d., p. 385). Instead, she asserts that male and female conversational styles are equally valid—not inferior or superior, just representing distinct "languages" or genderlects.

The Genderlect theory centers on two communication styles: rapport talk and report talk. In rapport talk, Tannen explains that women tend to prioritize building rapport and fostering relationships to establish connections with others. At the same time, men often use language to assert status, independence, and hierarchy in conversation, a style referred to as "report talk." According to this theory, women are more connected, supportive, and emotionally expressive, while men are more independent, competitive, and focused on sharing information (Erkaya, 2018). These differing communication priorities can lead to misunderstandings, as each gender interprets conversational cues through their cultural lens, unaware that the other may have a fundamentally different approach to dialogue. This concept is central to her exploration of genderlect theory, where she emphasizes that recognizing these cultural differences can lead to better understanding and communication between genders. In relation to this study, the analysis of gender-based differences in CR strategies among male and female BS Tourism Management students will test whether the results align with or support Tannen's genderlect theory, providing insights into how gender influences communication strategies.

Research on compliments and compliment responses had been predominantly explored from cross-cultural perspectives, wherein results of the studies shows that native English speakers most frequently responds with acceptance of the compliment (Chen, 1993; Herbert, 1986; Holmes, 1986),

while speakers of other languages, particularly in East Asian regions such as China, Japan, and Korea tend to use downgrading and rejections more often because their culture place strong value on modesty, group harmony and indirect communication (Chen, 2010). Consequently, empirical research on compliment responses showed gender-based differences (Holmes, 1986; Herbert, 1986; Almallah, 2017; Heidari-Shahreza, Dastjerdi, & Marvi, 2011). According to Holmes (1988), employing ethnographic methods and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, her study revealed that women and men differed in how they exchanged compliments, particularly in their frequency, syntactic structure, topic choice, and responses to them (Ye, 1993). Specifically, topics about appearance are most commonly given and accepted by women, while men are more likely to downplay or intentionally avoid them. In contrast, compliments about possessions were preferred among men, though they were less favored when given by men to women (Kurita, 2024, p. 23). Women compliment each other more on both looks and abilities, aligning with the idea that they view these exchanges as solidarity-driven.

Meanwhile, compliments on appearance are sensitive topics among men, who may interpret them less favorably and sometimes view them as face-threatening acts, similar to compliments on skills, which they perceive as challenges to their self-image. Hence, while females may view compliments as a positive politeness strategy, males may perceive them as a face-threatening act (FTA) or a challenge to their self-image (Kurita, 2024). Similarly, Herbert (1986, 1990), who also used student data, found that women were more likely to exchange compliments, although his research focused more on responses to compliments than on the topics.

In contrast, employing Holmes's CRs strategies framework, Heidari et al. (2011) study revealed that females used Accept responses less frequently and chose Evade and Reject responses more often than males, especially for compliments about possessions. The results also indicate that no universal model of CRs applies, as different genders follow distinct protocols in different complimenting contexts. Moreover, age plays a significant role in responding to compliments (Heidari et al., 2011, p. 166).

In the Philippine context, there are limited studies on compliment speech acts (Mojica, 2002). Using a data collection method similar to that employed by Herbert, Mojica's (2002) study on the structures governing compliments and CRs among Filipino college students supports the finding that Filipino compliments often follow formulaic syntactic patterns. It also highlights how Filipino students commonly use acceptance and non-acceptance strategies, with a tendency toward modesty, aligning with Filipino

values of humility and social cohesion to build rapport. Consequently, Morales (2012) further extended the study to gender distinctions by employing Holmes's (1988, 1993) framework, which was subsequently modified and used in Heidari et al.'s (2011) study. He observed that both male and female high school participants preferred acceptance as a response, though men leaned more toward evasion while women frequently shifted credit. Albis (2016), also using Holmes' framework, further examined gender differences and found that both genders most often complimented men's abilities and women's appearance. Acceptance was the primary response, but women were more likely to evade, supporting the studies by Heidari et al. (2011), which underscores the influence of gender in maintaining social harmony. Lastly, Mascuñana, Patron, Caturay, and Duran's (2019) study, adapted a discourse completion task (DCT) from Tang and Zhang (2009) on four situational topics: appearance, character, ability, and possession and utilizing Holmes' (1988, 1993) framework, found that Filipino ESL students predominantly accepted compliments, often modifying them to avoid self-praise, with females using combination/modification strategies to manage face, while men showed a slightly higher tendency to reject or evade. Across this research, cultural values of modesty, humility, and solidarity consistently emerge, shaping how Filipino speakers navigate compliments and responses in varied contexts, particularly in urban areas such as Manila and within specific institutions. However, there has been little exploration of CRs and the influence of gender across various Filipino regions, especially in the Visayas, which has distinct gender norms and languages that could reveal further diversity in CRs strategies. This gap is especially relevant for BS Tourism students because they will work in a multilingual and multicultural environment where they must pay attention to guests' satisfaction, such as giving and responding to compliments, to provide high-quality hospitality services. Understanding the influence of gender could help them become culturally aware and more adaptable in a professional setting. Studying this could help tourism educators and professionals guide students or future service providers to adapt and respond appropriately to compliments in specific situations. In this way, this prepares them to handle diverse guests in a manner that feels natural and respectful. Thus, this will help them develop and enhance essential soft skills, such as empathy, cultural awareness, and interpersonal communication, all of which are crucial for success in the tourism industry.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design using written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT), a data collection instrument commonly used in pragmatics designed to elicit multiple occurrences of speech act data across a variety of situations (Johnston, Kasper, & Ross, 1998). In this case, it was used to elicit compliment responses (CRs) from participants through specific scenarios requiring responses to compliments. According to Lorenzo-Dus (2001), there are two reasons why DCT is a suitable research tool for this particular kind of study: first, it can create a sound template of the stereotypically perceived requirements for socially appropriate CRs in the groups studied; and second, it enables the researcher to obtain sufficient data in a relatively short period of time (p.111). Although DCT responses do not fully resemble naturally occurring data, the administrative advantages make the DCT a valuable and effective data collection method (Johnston et al., 1998), making it an effective and efficient tool that suits this study. The DCT in this study was adapted from Mascuñana et al. (2019), who in turn adapted it from Tang and Zhang's (2009) DCTs on four situational topics related to complimenting, to elicit compliment responses (CRs) from participants regarding scenarios about appearance, character, ability, and possession. The present study further adapted Mascuñana et al.'s (2019) DCT by adding one more situation (Situation 3) to each of the four situational topics. This adaptation aligned the scenarios with the context of Tourism students, enabling them to better relate to the situations. The additional situations were comprehensively read, assessed, and evaluated by three interrater or validators, ensuring the reliability and validity of the DCT. Notably, the complimenters in the DCT are friends or classmates, which could influence how participants respond to compliments in this study.

Specifically, this study was conducted at Visayas State University (VSU), Baybay City, Leyte, with respondents comprising selected fourth-year Bachelor of Science (BS) in Tourism Management students. These students were chosen because their course prepares them for service roles, where their ability to respond politely and effectively to compliments is an essential soft skill, and the location allowed for efficient data collection. Participants were selected using a non-probability technique, specifically purposive and convenience sampling, in which not all members of the population are included (Pandey & Pandey, 2015) but are selected intentionally and conveniently. In purposive sampling, participants are selected based on specific characteristics that are relevant to the purpose of the study. In this case, all six male students from the population were intentionally included

to ensure complete representation of the male subgroup.

Meanwhile, nine female students were selected through convenience sampling based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study (Kapur, 2018). Although this approach does not cover the entire population and poses a risk of selection bias due to the researcher's judgment, non-probability sampling remains appropriate for exploratory research aimed at generating new ideas that may later be tested systematically (Alvi, 2016). Therefore, the data generated from the selected fourth-year Tourism students, where ethical considerations were strictly observed and protected, serve to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, particularly regarding how males and females respond to compliments.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis results, along with a comprehensive discussion of the findings that addresses the three main objectives of the study. First, it examines compliment responses at both the macro and micro levels. Second, it analyzes gender differences across four situational topics: appearance, character, ability, and possession. Third, it explores the influence of genderlect on responses to compliments.

Analysis of Compliment Responses at the Macro and Micro level

Table 2 presents the overall distribution of CRs among tourism students at the macro and micro level, based on Holmes' CRs strategies framework (1986, 1988, 1993): accept, reject, and evade. The analysis reveals that, at the macro level, students follow the same order of preference in using CR strategies: Accept, Evade, and Reject. A result that aligns with Tang and Zhang (2009), Heidari et al. (2011), and Baş (2021), indicating that students generally prefer 'Accept' the most, followed by 'Evade' and 'Reject' the least. This shows that 50.56% of the students accept the compliments, indicating a general tendency to respond positively to them. This is closely followed by the evade strategy, comprising 47.22%, in which students prefer to downplay or redirect the compliment rather than accept it directly. On the other hand, only a small portion, 2.22%, directly rejects the compliments, reflecting a minimal disagreement or rejection.

Based on this, the analysis shows that the predominant acceptance of compliments aligns with findings among native English speakers, where accepting a compliment is the most common response (Chen, 1993; Herbert, 1986; Holmes, 1986). This specific finding reinforces Pomerantz's (1978, as cited in Morales, 2012) conversational principle, which states that complimentees tend to respond positively, either by agreeing with or accepting compliments from complimenters. It particularly aligns with Conversational Principle 1, which highlights the preference for delivering CRs. Similarly, in the Philippine context, studies by Morales (2012), Albis (2016), and Mascuñana et al. (2019) have shown that Filipino students tend to accept compliments positively and reject them least. This suggests that the findings of this analysis contrast with the typical responses observed in other Asian cultures such as China, Japan, and Korea, where rejection or evasion is more common (Chen, 1993; Daikuhara, 1986). Nevertheless, the narrow margin between evasion (47.22%) and acceptance (50.56%) offers valuable insights into students' tendencies to redirect compliments, suggesting a prevailing sense of modesty. The country's conservative cultural values may influence Filipino students

Table 2*Overall Distribution of CRs among Tourism Students at the Macro and Micro Level^l*

MACRO-LEVEL CRs	MICRO-LEVEL CRs (f)	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Accept	1. Appreciation Token (A1)	39	21.67%
	2. Agreeing Utterance (A2)	15	8.33%
	3. Qualifying/ Downgrading (A3)	5	2.78%
	4. Return Compliment (A4)	32	17.78%
Subtotal		91	50.56%
Reject	1. Disagreeing utterance (R1)	0	0.00%
	2. Question accuracy(R2)	2	1.11%
	3. Challenge sincerity (R3)	2	1.11%
Subtotal		4	2.22%
Evade	1. Shift credit (E1)	32	17.78%
	2. Informative comment(E2)	49	27.22%
	3. Request reassurance(E3)	4	2.22%
Subtotal		85	47.22%
Total		180	100%

tendency to downplay compliments or deflect praise, as Mojica (2002) highlighted.

Central to this cultural framework are the Filipino core values of *pakikipagkapwa*, or *kapwa*, which emphasize a “shared identity” (Enriquez, 1978, 1994). This concept involves recognizing others as *kapwa* or fellow human beings, either by getting along with them (*pakikisama*) and conforming (*pakikitungo*) to those considered outsiders or by building rapport, understanding, and mutual acceptance (*pakikipagpalagayang-loob*) with those they are close to or consider as part of their inner group (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Hence, this cultural framework helps explain the tendency to accept praise in a manner that reflects humility and preserves social harmony, supporting Heidari et al.’s (2011) assertion that cultural differences contribute to variation in preferred response strategies.

Consequently, the examination of micro-level CR strategies across macro-level categories of Accept, Reject, and Evade reveals a clear preference among tourism students for more indirect or positive responses. Among the ten micro-level strategies, Informative comment, a subcategory under Evade, emerged as the most frequently used, accounting for 49 instances (27.22%). This suggests that rather than directly accepting or rejecting the compliment, tourism students often choose to elaborate on its context, softening the response while maintaining politeness. This is followed by the use of the Appreciation token, accounting for 39 instances (21.67%), suggesting that students preferred to directly acknowledge or accept compliments. This finding supports Tang and Zhang’s (2009) study, which identifies Appreciation token as one of the most favored micro-level strategies, often used as a phatic expression considered polite and respectful to the complimenter.

In contrast, direct rejection strategies, such as Disagreeing utterances, were entirely absent, highlighting a general avoidance of confrontation or disagreement. Overall, the findings indicate that tourism students favor strategies that promote social harmony and minimize face-threatening acts in compliment exchanges. This confirms Holmes’ (1988) and Xu & Zhang’s (2024) notion that CRs function as phatic expressions and positive politeness strategies aimed at maintaining social relationships and promoting solidarity.

Analysis of Gender Differences across Four Situational Topics: Appearance, Character, Ability, and Possession

Table 3 presents the overall distribution of CRs among male and female tourism students regarding appearance. The responses are categorized into three macro-level strategies: Accept, Reject, and Evade, which encompass a total of ten micro-level CR strategies. The analysis reveals that females

explicitly accept compliments about appearance (77.78%) more often than males (61.11%), supporting the findings of Holmes (1988) and Almallah (2017), which report that females tend to accept compliments regarding appearance more often than males do. As Holmes (1988) emphasizes, women often use compliments to build solidarity, particularly in peer contexts. In this study, the fact that most complimenters were friends or classmates supports the idea that these interactions were not just about appearance, but also about reinforcing social bonds. However, this contradicts the findings of Heidari et al. (2011), who reported that females accepted fewer compliments about their appearance than males did. This discrepancy may be due to cultural or contextual differences in the studies, highlighting the role of social setting and participant relationships in shaping responses to compliments. Moreover, two explicit types of CR strategies were evidently preferred: Appreciation Token and Return Compliment. On the other hand, both groups showed minimal preference for the Reject strategy. This absence may indicate that rejecting compliments is considered socially inappropriate or face-threatening in this context. A finding consistent with Heidari et al. (2011), who reported neither group frequently employed rejection strategies when responding to compliments about appearance. Whereas, in Evade strategies, both genders favored the Informative comment, with males using it more frequently than females. Females, however, uniquely used Shift credit and requested reassurance. Overall, these patterns suggest that female participants are generally inclined to positively acknowledge compliments on appearance, either directly or through strategies that maintain politeness and social harmony. At the same time, males preferred modest, indirect responses.

Table 3

Overall Distribution of CRs among Male and Female Tourism Students on the Topics of Appearance

Macro-Level CRs	Micro-Level CRs	MALE		FEMALE	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Accept	1. Appreciation Token (A1)	4	22.22%	14	51.85%
	2. Agreeing Utterance (A2)	2	11.11%	1	3.70%
	3. Qualifying/Downgrading(A3)	1	5.56%	0	0.00%
	4. Return Compliment (A4)	4	22.22%	6	22.22%
Subtotal		11	61.11%	21	77.78%
Reject	1. Disagreeing utterance (R1)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	2. Question accuracy(R2)	1	5.56%	0	0.00%

	3. Challenge sincerity (R3)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		1	5.56%	0	0.00%
Evade	1. Shift credit(E1)	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
	2. Informative comment(E2)	6	33.33%	3	11.11%
	3. Request reassurance(E3)	0	0.00%	2	7.41%
Subtotal		6	33.33%	6	22.22%
Total		18	100%	27	100%

Table 4 illustrates the overall distribution of CRs among male and female tourism students regarding character. As shown in the table, both male and female participants predominantly employed Evade strategies when responding to compliments about character, followed by Accept strategies, while neither group used Reject strategies. The analysis reveals a stronger tendency for both groups to evade compliments. The only notable difference is that males show a slightly higher tendency (77.78%) than females (74.04%) at the macro level. The findings are consistent with those of Tang and Zhang (2009) and Chen (1993), who found that both groups were more likely to use Shift credit as a self-praise avoidance strategy at the micro level. This suggests a cultural tendency to redirect praise to others, reflecting humility and self-praise avoidance. Likewise, both groups completely avoided Reject strategies, indicating a shared preference for either accepting the praise with modification or redirecting it to the complimenter, reflecting humility and a desire to avoid self-praise. Females, on the other hand, demonstrated a slightly higher preference for acceptance strategies (25.93%), especially Return compliment (18.52%), while males favored Informative comments (27.78%) under the Evade category. This suggests that relational context, considering the complimenters in this study were primarily peers (friends or classmates), likely influenced the choice of CRs. According to Holmes (1988), compliments among close peers not only express admiration but also function as acts of solidarity. In this light, use of Shift credit and Return compliment strategies, particularly among female participants, suggests an effort to preserve relational harmony through humility and reciprocal praise. This tendency aligns with Morales' (2012) findings that females often prefer implicit CR strategies, such as Shift Credit, while males' preference for Informative comments implies that they are more inclined to provide contextual elaboration when complimented on character. This reinforces Wolfson's (1993), Manes's (1983), and Holmes's (1988) claims that men use compliments as a form of encouragement or evaluative feedback. On the

other hand, the absence of direct rejection of compliments about character may be socially discouraged in this context. Further supporting the idea that such responses may be viewed as face-threatening within close peer interactions, where maintaining politeness and mutual respect is prioritized.

Table 4

Overall Distribution of CRs among Male and Female Tourism Students on the Topics of Character

Macro-Level CRs	Micro-Level CRs	MALE		FEMALE	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Accept	1. Appreciation Token (A1)	1	5.56%	1	3.70%
	2. Agreeing Utterance (A2)	1	5.56%	0	0.00%
	3. Qualifying/Downgrading(A3)	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
	4. Return Compliment (A4)	2	11.11%	5	18.52%
Subtotal		4	22.22%	7	25.93%
Reject	1. Disagreeing utterance (R1)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	2. Question accuracy(R2)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	3. Challenge sincerity (R3)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Evade	1. Shift credit(E1)	9	50.00%	16	59.26%
	2. Informative comment(E2)	5	27.78%	4	14.81%
	3. Request reassurance(E3)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		14	77.78%	20	74.07%
Total		18	100%	27	100%

Table 5 presents the overall distribution of CRs among male and female tourism students regarding ability. The findings reveal a significant gender-based difference in how male and female tourism students respond to compliments about ability, with male students using fewer Reject strategies. Females, in particular, show a stronger preference for accepting compliments about ability (77.78%) than males (33.33%), often using appreciation tokens and returning compliments. This tendency aligns with Tang's (2020) study, which reports that women are more inclined to use acceptance-related strategies when responding to compliments on their abilities, often using appreciation tokens and returning compliments, which may serve as phatic expressions to maintain solidarity. Another factor that may influence their responses is their relationship to their complimenter. In the DCT the

complimenter is presented as a friend or a classmate, the females’ acceptance of compliment may reflect an effort to maintain relational harmony and solidarity, again confirming Holmes’ (1995) claim that when women accept compliment from peers it often functions as “positive politeness”, strengthening in-group ties. However, this finding also contradicts Herbert’s (1990) study, which observed that males are more inclined to accept compliments directly, especially those related to possessions or achievements.

In contrast, males demonstrated a greater tendency to use evasion strategies (55.56%) than females (22.22%), often deflecting compliments about their character through informative comments and shifting credit. These results further support the claims of Wolfson (1993), Manes (1983), and Holmes (1988), who argue that men may use compliments as evaluative feedback. As such, when complimented by peers on their abilities, men may shift the focus away from themselves and may perceive the compliment as an evaluation of their worth and performance, thereby avoiding self-praise in this context.

Overall, these patterns suggest that female participants are generally inclined to acknowledge compliments on ability, often using appreciation tokens and returning compliments to maintain politeness and build solidarity (Holmes, 1988). Whereas, males preferred to use evading strategies to minimize self-praise or preserve face through modesty, possibly viewing compliments as a form of evaluative feedback (Wolfson, 1993; Manes, 1993; Holmes, 1988).

Table 5

Overall Distribution of CRs among Male and Female Tourism Students on the Topics of Ability

Macro-Level CRs	Micro-Level CRs	MALE		FEMALE	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Accept	1. Appreciation Token (A1)	1	5.56%	7	25.93%
	2. Agreeing Utterance (A2)	3	16.67%	1	3.70%
	3. Qualifying/Downgrading (A3)	0	0.00%	2	7.41%
	4. Return Compliment (A4)	2	11.11%	11	40.74%
Subtotal		6	33.33%	21	77.78%
Reject	1. Disagreeing utterance (R1)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	2. Question accuracy (R2)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	3. Challenge sincerity (R3)	2	11.11%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		2	11.11%	0	0.00%
Evade	1. Shift credit (E1)	4	22.22%	0	0.00%
	2. Informative comment (E2)	6	33.33%	5	18.52%

	3. Request reassurance(E3)	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
Subtotal		10	55.56%	6	22.22%
Total		18	100%	27	100%

Table 6 presents the overall distribution of CRs among male and female tourism students regarding possession. As observed in the table, the analysis reveals a significant gender-based difference in how male and female tourism students respond to compliments about possession, including the minimal use of Reject strategies. Specifically, males show a stronger preference for evading compliments about possession (77.78%) than females (33.33%), often deflecting praise using informative comments and shifting credit. This indicates that males use evading strategies to minimize self-praise when responding to such compliments, a finding that contrasts with Heidari et al. (2011), Holmes (1988), and Herbert (1990), who reported in their studies that males are more likely to accept compliments about possessions. Another factor that may influence these responses is the nature of the relationship between the recipient and the complimenter. In the DCT scenarios, the complimenter is portrayed as a friend or a classmate. The male's tendency to evade compliments may reflect a contextual sensitivity to social proximity, perhaps to avoid appearing boastful or overly confident in peer interactions. According to Holmes (1988), men may perceive compliments as face-threatening acts, leading them to deflect or downplay praise. In this context, male participants possibly used evade strategies in responding to compliments about possession to avoid appearing self-centered within their peer group. This finding aligns with Morales' (2012), study which found out that male tend to adopt evade strategies, particularly the implicit strategy such as providing informative comments, to mitigate the impact of compliments. Such behavior implies that male participants in this context downplay compliments to reduce self-praise, hence reflecting a preference for modesty. Conversely, females demonstrated a higher tendency to accept compliments about possession (62.96%) than males (22.22%), often using appreciation tokens and agreeing with utterances. This suggests that female participants are generally inclined to accept and respond positively to compliments as a means of maintaining politeness and solidarity in interpersonal communication. This, again, stands in contrast to previous findings (Herbert,1990; Holmes,1988; Heidari et al., 2011), which suggest that females tend to evade and reject compliments about possessions. On the other hand, the minimal use of reject strategies by both groups suggests that both males and females are generally reluctant to reject compliments

on possessions directly, likely due to the potential social discomfort or perceived impoliteness that such rejections might cause to their complimenter, particularly when the complimenter is a friend or classmate.

Table 6

Overall Distribution of CRs among Female and Male Tourism Students on the Topics of Possession

Macro-Level CRs	Micro-Level CRs	MALE		FEMALE	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Accept	1. Appreciation Token (A1)	1	5.56%	10	37.04%
	2. Agreeing Utterance (A2)	2	11.11%	5	18.52%
	3. Qualifying/Downgrading(A3)	1	5.56%	0	0.00%
	4. Return Compliment (A4)	0	0.00%	2	7.41%
Subtotal		4	22.22%	17	62.96%
Reject	1. Disagreeing utterance (R1)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	2. Question accuracy(R2)	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
	3. Challenge sincerity (R3)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		0	0.00%	1	3.70%
Evade	1. Shift credit(E1)	2	11.11%	0	0.00%
	2. Informative comment(E2)	11	61.11%	9	33.33%
	3. Request reassurance(E3)	1	5.56%	0	0.00%
Subtotal		14	77.78%	9	33.33%
Total		18	100%	27	100%

The last section presents findings on the influence of genderlect on the compliment responses (CRs) of BS in Tourism Management students.

Influence of Genderlect on Compliment Responses (CRs)

Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 display the overall distribution of CR strategies across four situational topics: appearance, character, ability, and possession, highlighting gender differences in responding to compliments. As reflected in these tables, both male and female participants follow the same order of preference in using CR strategies, which is Accept, Evade, and Reject, although with variations in frequency. This consistent pattern suggests that, while both groups employ similar strategies, their application varies by

gender.

Specifically, at a macro level, female participants predominantly used Accept strategies across four situational topics, while males favored Evade strategies. On the other hand, both groups used Reject strategies minimally. Notably, neither group used Reject strategies in response to compliments about character. However, males were more likely to reject compliments related to appearance and ability, whereas females were more likely to reject compliments about possessions. These findings suggest that female Tourism students are generally more inclined to accept or agree with compliments regardless of the topic, often through appreciation tokens or return compliments. Such responses serve as phatic expressions, helping maintain social harmony. Female participants used Evade strategies only once, indicating a polite form of reservation in which the compliment is neither fully accepted nor entirely dismissed.

This pattern of response may reflect modesty or uncertainty about the sincerity of the compliment. Nevertheless, given their predominant use of Accept strategies, women are more likely to accept compliments as a way of maintaining politeness and solidarity in interpersonal communication (Holmes, 1995 & 1988; Herbert, 1990; Mills, 2003), especially within their peer groups (friends or classmates). By warmly accepting or returning the compliments, the interaction becomes mutually affirming, fostering connection, rapport, and empathy. These findings support Tannen's (1990) theory of genderlect, which posits that female speakers tend to engage in "rapport talk," emphasizing agreement and emotional connection. The preference for Accept strategies, particularly through expressions of appreciation and return compliments, reflects women's tendency to prioritize supportiveness and relational closeness in conversation. This behavior illustrates their active and mutual engagement in sustaining positive interpersonal relationships.

Conversely, male participants showed a stronger preference for using Evade strategies when responding to compliments across four situational topics, often through informative comments and shifting credit to others. Notably, males were more likely to reject compliments on appearance and ability, possibly because they perceived such compliments as face-threatening. This reflects a discomfort with self-praise and an effort to maintain modesty in these contexts. These findings suggest that male Tourism students are generally inclined to evade compliments by providing elaborate feedback or redirecting praise to the complimenter, as a way to downplay and minimize self-praise while preserving social harmony. This pattern suggests that men may perceive compliments as evaluative acts

(Wolfson, 1993), interpreting them not merely as expressions of kindness or flattery but as judgements of their ability, character, or performance, thereby assessing their worth in relation to others (Holmes, 1988). Hence, males preferred modest, indirect responses to avoid threatening social harmony, thereby reflecting humility and modesty.

This finding supports, to some extent, Tannen's (1990) concept of genderlect, which posits that men tend to engage in "report talk," using conversation primarily to convey information, assert status, and demonstrate independence, particularly in a professional context (such as the workplace). However, there are notable differences between the way men engage in conversation in Tannen's (1990) study and in the current findings. According to Tannen, men typically engage in direct conversation to assert status and establish dominance. In contrast, in this study, although men employ Evade strategies by providing elaborate explanations to minimize self-praise, this interaction represents an indirect response aimed at assessing and protecting their social standing in peer interactions, preserving group harmony rather than asserting authority or strengthening their status.

This suggests that male conversational styles may vary depending on the function of the interaction, the context, and the nature of social relationships with others. Nonetheless, the overall findings align with Tannen's (1990) study on the conversational perspective on language, gender, and communication, particularly the concept of genderlect, which posits that males and females belong to distinct subcultures and communicate in distinct ways, shaped by social norms and gender identity. Thus, the findings highlight how conversational choices between males and females are influenced by the interplay among context, communicative intent, and the social proximity between the speakers and recipients.

Conclusion

The findings align with the study's objective and reveal that both male and female Tourism students follow the same order of preference in using CR strategies, which is Accept, Evade, and Reject, although with variations in specific strategies, frequency, and context. Notably, the narrow margin between acceptance and evade, suggests a prevailing sense of modesty that reflects the country's conservative cultural values and the tendency to accept compliments as a means of maintaining positive politeness and solidarity, as influenced by the Filipino core values of *pakikipagkapwa* or "shared identity". Furthermore, the results highlight gender-based differences in how males and females respond to compliments across four situational topics:

appearance, character, ability, and possession. At the macro level, female participants predominantly used Accept strategies across four situational topics, often through appreciation tokens and return compliments. In contrast, male participants favored Evade strategies, often through informative comments and shifting credit to others. These differences somewhat align with Tannen's theory of genderlect, which suggests that female speakers tend to engage in "rapport talk" by expressing agreement and emotional connection. In contrast, males tend to engage in "report talk," using conversation primarily to convey information and assert status when interacting with their peer groups (friends or classmates). However, there are notable differences between the way men engage in conversation in Tannen's (1990) study and in the current findings. In Tannen's (1990) findings, men typically engage in direct conversation to assert status and establish dominance. In contrast, in this study, men employ Evade strategies as an indirect response to assess and protect their social standing in peer interactions, thereby preserving group harmony rather than asserting authority or strengthening their status. This indicates that male and female conversational styles may vary depending on the function of the interaction, the context, and the nature of social relationships with others. As such, these findings emphasize the importance of identifying disparities in gender-norm communication to prevent misunderstandings and miscommunication arising from culturally constructed roles or stereotypes (Tannen, 1990). For instance, females' predominant acceptance of compliments across all situational contexts should not be interpreted as boastfulness or a lack of femininity, just as males' tendency to avoid compliments should not be interpreted as a sign of weakness, lack of independence, or diminished masculinity. This highlights the importance of gendered conversation styles to minimize misinterpretation.

The result of this study may inform tourism educators and professionals in understanding gendered nuances in communication and in developing a curriculum that enhances students' compliment responses when interacting with diverse guests. Educators can use these patterns to design role-plays and simulations that teach students how to balance modesty with professionalism and warmth, ensuring that compliments are managed and enhance guest satisfaction rather than create awkwardness or misunderstanding. In this way, tourism students or future service workers can become more aware of their own gendered tendencies in responding to compliments and learn to adapt when engaging with international tourists whose expectations of politeness may differ. By integrating these insights into curriculum and training modules, institutions strengthen students' soft

skills such as empathy, cultural sensitivity, and interpersonal communication, all of which are essential in the tourism and hospitality industry. Thus, this study may contribute to a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of gendered communication, helping foster effective interpersonal interactions within diverse social contexts, especially in the context of compliment exchanges.

Moreover, future researchers could address the limitations of this study by employing triangulation methods to gather data, such as observations of natural conversations and interviews, to complement DCT data and capture more authentic compliment responses. Combining multiple data sources would provide a fuller, more reliable picture of complement responses, ensuring results are valid, reliable, and realistic. This approach would provide a comprehensive view of how compliments are used in the Philippines, guiding pragmatists and sociolinguists in understanding the use of CRs across different cultures and the influence of gender on these responses, thus offering guidelines and a framework for interpreting such compliment exchanges.

References

- Aithal, A., & Aithal, P. S. (2020). Development and validation of survey questionnaire & experimental data—a systematical review-based statistical approach. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Social Sciences (IJMTS)*, 5(2), 233-251. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3724105>
- Albis, E. C. (2016). *Sex-based differences in compliments among college students in Bicol, Philippines: A discourse analysis* [Unpublished undergraduate thesis]. Ateneo de Naga University Research Council. 10.5176/2251-3566_L316.27
- Baş, M. (2021). Variations in compliment responses across gender in different discursual settings. *Dil Dergisi*, 172(1), 86–107.
- Bibi, F., & Sartini, N. W. (2023). Gender and social power dynamics in compliment responses: A cross-cultural pragmatic study of university students in Indonesia and Pakistan. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(1), 2262076. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2262076>

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chen, R. (1993). Responding to compliments: A contrastive study of politeness strategies between American English and Chinese speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 20, 49–75. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(93\)90106-Y](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(93)90106-Y)
- Chen, R. (2010). Compliment and compliment response research: A cross-cultural survey. *Pragmatics across languages and cultures*, 79–101.
- Enriquez, V. G. (1978). Kapwa: A core concept in Filipino social psychology. *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, 42(1–4), 100–108.
- Enriquez, V. G. (1994). *Pagbabangong-dangal: Psychology and cultural empowerment*. Akademya ng Kultura at Sikolohiyang Pilipino.
- Erkaya, M. (2018). *Revisiting Deborah Tannen's Genderlect Theory*. Academia.edu. https://www.academia.edu/38311017/_Revisiting_Deborah_Tannens_Genderlect_Theory
- Giannotti, F. (2019, June 28). The role of communication skills in the hospitality industry. *EHL Insights*. <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/communication-skills-in-the-hospitality-industry>
- Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (n.d.). *Genderlect styles – Deborah Tannen* (pp. 384–395). In *A first look at communication theory* (Archived chapter). McGraw-Hill Education. <https://www.afirstlook.com/docs/genderlect.pdf>
- Heidari-Shahreza, M. A., Dastjerdi, H. V., & Marvi, S. (2011). Discoursal variation and gender: The case of compliment responses among male and female Persian speakers. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(3), 159–168.
- Herbert, R. K. (1986). Say “Thank You” - Or Something. *American Speech*, 61(1), 76–88. <https://doi.org/10.2307/454710>

- Herbert, R. K. (1989). The ethnography of English compliment responses: A contrastive sketch. In W. Oleksy (Ed.), *Contrastive pragmatics* (pp. 3–35). Benjamins.
- Herbert, R. K. (1990). Sex-based differences in compliment behavior. *Language in Society*, 19(2), 201–224. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4168132>
- Holmes, J. (1986). Compliments and compliment responses in New Zealand English. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 28(4), 485–508. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30028355>
- Holmes, J. (1988). Paying compliments: A sex-preferential politeness strategy. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 12(4), 445–465. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(88\)90005-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(88)90005-7)
- Holmes, J. (1993). New Zealand women are good to talk to: An analysis of politeness strategies in interaction. *Journal of pragmatics*, 20(2), 91–116. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166\(93\)90078-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(93)90078-4)
- Johnston, B., Kasper, G., & Ross, S. (1998). Effect of rejoinders in production questionnaires. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 157–182. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/19.2.157>
- Kapur, R. (2018). *Research methodology: Methods and strategies*. Department of Adult Education and Continuing Extension, University of Delhi.
- Kurita, H. (2024). *Pragmatic Analysis of Compliment Responses by Gen-Z: Focusing on differences between Japanese and American women and the gender of the complimenter* (Master's thesis, Purdue University).
- Lorenzo-Dus, N. (2001). Compliment responses among British and Spanish university students: A contrastive study. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33(1), 107–127. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(99\)00127-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(99)00127-7)

- Manes, J. (1983). Compliments: A mirror of cultural values. In N. Wolfson & E. Judd (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language acquisition* (pp. 82–95). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Mascuñana, E. F., Patron, M. J. T., Caturay, W. S., & Duran, H. B. (2019). Compliment responses by college male and female Filipino second language learners of English. *Corpus Pragmatics*, 3, 67–91. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41701-018-00048-3>
- Mills, S. (2003). *Gender and politeness* (No. 17). Cambridge University Press.
- Mojica, L. A. (2002). Compliment-giving among Filipino college students: An exploratory study. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 3, 115–124.
- Morales, R. C. (2012). Compliment responses across gender in Philippine context. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*, 18(1).
- Nordquist, R. (2020, August 27). Speech act theory. *ThoughtCo*. <https://www.thoughtco.com/speech-act-theory-1691986>
- Pandey, P., & Pandey, M. M. (2015). *Research methodology: Tools and techniques*. Bridge Center.
- Pe-Pua, R., & Protacio-Marcelino, E. A. (2000). Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Filipino psychology): A legacy of Virgilio G. Enriquez. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 3(1), 49–71. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-839X.00054>
- Razi, N. (2013). A contrastive study of compliment responses among Australian English and Iranian Persian speakers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 61–66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.038>
- Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge University Press.
- Slavianova, L. (2011). Contrastive analysis of compliments in contemporary Bulgarian and English language. *Научни Трудове На Русенския Университет*, 50(6.3), 141-144. Ruse University.

- Suyunovna, A. F. (2023). Enhancing communicative proficiency in tourism education. *EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)*, 8(10), 196–197. <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra2016>
- Tang, C. (2020). The interplay of cultural expectation, gender role, and communicative behavior: Evidence from compliment-responding behavior. *Pragmatics and Society*, 11(4), 545–569. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.16041.chi>
- Tang, C. H., & Zhang, G. Q. (2009). A contrastive study of compliment responses among Australian English and Mandarin Chinese speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(2), 325–345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2008.05.019>
- Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. Ballantine Books.
- Xu, Y., & Zhang, Y. (2024). Compliments and compliment responses on Chinese social media: Gender variation. *Annals of Language and Literature*.10.22259/2637-5869.0801005
- Yuan, Y. (2001). An inquiry into empirical pragmatics data-gathering methods: Written DCTs, oral DCTs, field notes, and natural conversations. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33(2), 271–292. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(00\)00031-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(00)00031-X)